

radio is affiliated, network will quit WSIX-TV (Draughon), reported soon to be sold. WLAC-TV owners are Casualty Insurance Co. (Paul Mountcastle, Guilford Dudley Jr.), 50%; T.B. Baker, exec. v.p. & gen. mgr., 25%; A.G. Beaman, secy.-treas., 25%. Latter 2 sold their 250-watt WKDA, Nashville, for \$312,000 recently in order to get merger grant (Vol. 10:19); they also sold their interests in WCOP, Boston, to financier-publisher John Fox (Boston Post), now TV applicant. WLAC-TV chief engineer is Ralph Hucaby. Its base rate is \$550. Rep is Katz.

KGEO-TV, Enid, Okla. (Ch. 5), 67 mi. northwest of Oklahoma City, began first test patterns July 6 with 10-kw RCA transmitter and 12-bay antenna on 650-ft. Emsco tower. It interconnects with ABC-TV. Grantee is Streets Electronics Inc., appliance dealer. Owners include P.R. Banta, paving contractor, pres., 21.3%; George Streets, secy. & gen. mgr., 21.3%; L.D. Banta, 21.3%. Radio KCRC (Enid News and Eagle) have option to buy 20%. Tom Belcher is commercial mgr.; Marilyn Ellis, program mgr.; Wm. Teitzel, chief engineer. Base rate is \$225. Rep is Pearson.

**MORE UHF's LEAVING AIR AS SENATORS PONDER:** Two more uhf stations decided to suspend for economic reasons this week -- even as Sen. Potter's Commerce subcommittee on communications was quizzing FCC commissioners on what to do about uhf problem.

Curiously, uhf set circulation wasn't the big problem for either of the two stations requesting FCC permission to go off the air. WFTV, Duluth (Ch. 38), asked to suspend operations for 90 days, effective as soon as Commission gives its OK. It has been on air 13 months, having started as first TV in Duluth-Superior area, where it had 8-month head start before 2 vhf competitors went on air.

WFTV had programs from all 4 networks until the 2 vhf opened up last Feb. -- thereafter it got nothing from the top networks, and national spot fell off correspondingly, even though all sets in area were uhf-equipped from start and area's uhf reception reportedly was very good. WFTV's principal owners are Herbert Scheftel & Alfred Burger, who hold majority interest in Telenews as well as one-third of the reputedly successful uhf WICS, Springfield, Ill., and principal ownership in uhf CPs for Little Rock, Ark. and Sioux City, Ia.

WRAY-TV, Princeton, Ind. (Ch. 52) says it's shutting down July 15-Sept. 11 "pending financial reorganization." Owned by farm & hatchery operator M.R. Lankford, it's been on air 7 months in virtually uhf-only territory, the nearest vhf being in Louisville, 100 mi. away. In this case, competition was mainly uhf -- 2 stations in nearby Evansville-Henderson area having major network affiliations, while Princeton station listed no affiliation at all.

Facts seem to indicate that neither the Duluth-Superior nor the Evansville-Henderson-Princeton market could readily support 3 TV stations, uhf or vhf, at present. We know of other uhf stations grappling with problem of whether to quit now.

One such uhf operator summed up his problems to us thus: "When the local vhf station came on the air, we lost our good network programs. Even that wouldn't have been a fatal blow if we could have sold some local time -- we have about 50% conversion and there's nothing wrong with our signal. In many cases, though, we'll have a local distributor sold on the idea, but he can't get the OK from the manufacturer of the products he sells -- so many big companies have a flat 'no uhf' rule. So we're losing \$15-18,000 a month, with no prospects of things getting any better."

Senate communications subcommittee and FCC got together behind closed doors for nearly 4 hours July 8 to review every proposal made during the public hearings on uhf. All subcommittee members -- plus Sen. Edwin Johnson (D-Colo.) -- attended session, as did all commissioners except Sterling, who is on vacation.

Commissioners were grilled individually on the suggestions made by witnesses at hearings, and it was indicated that the views they expressed were substantially the same as their responses to questions by the Senators during public hearings. Subcommittee probably will now ask commissioners to sum up in writing -- for inclusion in hearing record -- their views on how best to help uhf.

Subcommittee's next step will be executive session within next 2 weeks, when it may come up with some recommendations. As of now, subcommittee as a whole has reached no decisions on the problem.