

make voyages of discovery into the city around them; they must learn to *think* in show terms, to work with all kinds of people and talent; suddenly they are doing big-style programming or at least trying to, on a so-called music-and-news station.

Listening to a representative program on KDKA reveals both moments of high achievement, such as the great on-the-spot broadcast from Levittown, Pa., during the struggle over a Negro resident, and weak portions that have been inadequately conceived.

What is perhaps most interesting to the observer at this stage is the effect on the programmers at the stations. In attempting to meet the challenge of *Program PM*, they have to call upon new personal resources, develop their capacities, actively move into—for them—untried program areas. The personal growth is evident.

Real success with *Program PM* could help stimulate a nighttime radio renaissance, and for this reason it has the moral support of many in the industry who know what is happening. The sales staff is highly encouraged by response from buyers. In October, the number of clients in *Program PM* totaled 91 on five stations. Nighttime billing is up sharply over last year. Cleveland was sold out by October. Pittsburgh was up 80%, Ft. Wayne was up 70%.

"Program PM" serves major entertainment function

In industry terms the real significance of the nighttime experiment of WBC lies in its coming to grips with the fundamental question that has confronted radio since the rise of television. It is now an accepted principle, by Westinghouse as well as by many others, that in open and direct competition for feature entertainment, radio doesn't have a chance against television. And the WBC programmers insist they are not trying to compete with TV. Yet, *Program PM*, in its attempt to create excitement, flash and glamor, does appear to be serving the very major entertainment function now supposedly reserved for television.

This is why, even within the Westinghouse organization itself, there is divided opinion on whether the new approach can do anything to raise sets-in-use substantially.

The Westinghouse argument, says Bill Kaland, who is credited with being the moving spirit behind the show, is that the nighttime audience is large enough without worrying about TV. Evening sets-in-use, he points out, are about the same as that of the afternoon, though well below the peak morning period. If *Program PM* can appeal to the biggest percentage of *available* listeners, then, regardless of whether the TV viewers listen or not, it will be highly successful.

THE ATTITUDE TOWARD MUSIC

It should be clear by now that Westinghouse is moving along lines that are different from these of the successful music-and-news practitioners who operate from a set of fixed principles and gimmicks. Recent years have witnessed the rise of the young, objective independent operator, who bases his programming on "what the public wants." Todd Storz and Gordon McLendon are typical. Their "controlled" programming built around top-40 record lists, and hopped-up news treatments, and, in some instances, heavy reliance on

give-away promotions, has been highly successful. The pattern has been rapidly spreading around the country. (See "The Storz Bombshell," May issue of TELEVISION MAGAZINE.)

Those who are familiar with the exciting sounds that come out of the Storz-type station are at somewhat of a loss to describe the character of the Westinghouse sound, except to say that it is "conservative" by comparison. It lacks the simple and clearly defined pattern of the top-40 structure. It sounds "good," but somehow it's difficult to put one's finger on what makes it tick.

The explanation lies in the fact that a generation of station men looking for formulas and gimmicks is confronted with something arising out of a very different musical tradition—that of the first great music-and-news independent, WNEW, New York. To understand what Westinghouse is trying to build, it is necessary to keep in mind that its two national program chiefs both had their basic music programming training at WNEW. WNEW's program director at one period was Bill Kaland, now Westinghouse national program director, and his predecessor there was Dick Pack, now Westinghouse program v.p. Westinghouse's Boston and Chicago program directors are graduates of the Storz operation, but it is Kaland and Pack who are guiding spirits of the over-all WBC program thinking.

It is difficult to spell out the basis of the Westinghouse musical diet, for the simple reason that it involves an *approach* to music rather than a set of rules. Here is how Westinghouse programmers tackle the musical problem, as explained by Dick Pack:

"I would describe our format this way. It is a blend of:

"1. The top hits—not as compiled by any one authoritative source, but the top hits generally, on which there is usually a pretty good consensus.

"2. Standards—in about equal proportion. But how do you define a standard? I would say it's familiar music, but probably played by today's performers.

"3. A sprinkling of new releases.

"4. A sprinkling of numbers for regional tastes.

Program hit tunes—but not a steady diet of top 40

"At WBC, we do not go in for top-40 programming. We don't consciously program that way. But hit music and plenty of it certainly does belong on a station. On Saturdays we have "top" shows like the *Hit Parade* sort of thing. But, we believe that an all-day diet of the 'top' approach is dull."

Unlike Todd Storz, who says: "It may be that program balance is a myth." WBC's program men are convinced it is basic. Says Pack: "I think balance in music becomes of major importance as competition gets fiercer. Pretty soon, most stations in a market will begin to sound pretty much the same. That's when quality will make the difference."

Bill Kaland holds that "There is a great democracy in radio today. Everyone has access to the same program elements—records. It is how you program those elements, the 'quality' you achieve, that makes the difference." (The Storz-type broadcaster, it may be noted, is also convinced that 'quality' is all-important, but he appears to mean something different by the term.)

This is an approach that can encompass a variety of music ▶