

which would be out of place on the top-40 type of station, just so long as the inclusion can be legitimately justified from a program point of view and is not weirdly out of place.

IMPORTANCE OF THE DISC JOCKEY

Who chooses the music? It varies from station to station, depending on the abilities of the disc jockeys. Where possible, Westinghouse likes to encourage disc jockey participation in program creation: ideally, every disc jockey should be his own producer working within the framework of an over-all station programming outlook, and guided by the program director. In a few instances, however, the numbers are still elected by the program director.

The attitude toward the disc jockey may be best illustrated by a comparison with the opposed view of one of Westinghouse's competitors, Plough, Inc., which owns WCOP in Boston. The Plough concept of radio as a music, news, weather and time-signal service assumes the audience wants the specific service and not the talk of disc jockeys. Consequently, the disc jockey is merely used as a device to bridge the various program elements and to provide a convenient way to describe the program to the public, as *The John Smith Show*, and the like. His utterances are rigidly controlled. The Plough formula has had a considerable measure of success (See "The Storz Bombshell"). It is a Plough thesis that the disc jockey can be switched at will, without affecting the audience one way or the other.

To Westinghouse, this view is almost beyond comprehension, for the personality of the disc jockey is viewed as a basic attraction, almost as important as the music itself. Moreover, the Westinghouse view is that he is above all a local product, whose effectiveness increases in direct proportion to his ability to create a local identity. For this reason, the company seldom shifts its personalities from one market to another.

WBC does not attempt to mold its personalities

Among the Westinghouse disc jockeys will be found a variety of personalities, techniques, approaches. The New York program heads are frank to admit that sometimes the hold of one or another of the Westinghouse personalities on the audience is a mysterious thing, but that it is a fact of life one must learn to live with. It makes more sense, they believe, for them to try to adjust their own thinking to different entertainment values that appear to be highly effective, than to force every program into the mold they might be personally happier with.

It is interesting that since WIND, Chicago, came into the fold already the city's rating leader, the Westinghouse people have been able to resist tampering with WIND's proven format.

Westinghouse is firmly convinced that the approach via "philosophy" as opposed to formula will pay off in the long-run battle, and it is playing exclusively for the long run. This is why it is not given to trying to achieve overnight rating successes through the use of spectacular give-aways. However, it does believe in stunts, promotions, and give-aways as legitimate devices for stimulating excitement and calling attention to the station, and is always actively seeking to de-

velop them. But the focus continues to be on the program content, and gimmicks, though they may often be wild, are not viewed as basic ingredients, but as occasionally useful program aids.

THE EMPHASIS ON NEWS

It is in the area of news that Westinghouse appears to be concentrating most heavily in its effort to acquire a distinctive identification in its various markets, for it is in news that Westinghouse believes it can best live up to the local character it aspires to. As have other independents in various parts of the country, the Westinghouse stations have enlarged their news staffs, made use of mobile units and beeper phones, in short, have attempted to do a serious job of local coverage. It is the antithesis of the common "rip-and-read" approach.

The news directors have been raised in status; they now sit on the program boards of the stations, and are brought into New York for round-table bull sessions. Except for Cleveland, radio and TV news departments are separated—though this is not necessarily a fixed policy.

Independent can be the news station in its market

Westinghouse is out to build itself as the "news station" in every market. That this can be done by an independent radio station has already been demonstrated, a notable case being that of KLF, Dallas. To owner Gordon McLendon, news is the greatest of all promotions, and he describes his approach as that of "the newspaper of the air."

It is in its Washington bureau that Westinghouse may be fashioning its most significant news contribution. The problem: given the local character of radio news, which is the cardinal Westinghouse tenet, how do you enlarge your national and international coverage while still preserving the local focus?

The Westinghouse answer is a Washington correspondent, Rod MacLeish, who functions as such for each station in turn. MacLeish reports the national news with an emphasis and a slant suited to local interests.

MacLeish will occasionally feed a story to all the Westinghouse stations at once, as happened during the 1956 Hungarian crises, with the broadcast from the U.N. Such feeds may take place a half-dozen times a year. But most of the time, he will make separate feeds to each station. For example, on October 2nd, he reported to WBZ, Boston that Secretary of State Dulles had assured two New England Congressmen that the U.S. would not consent to the exchange of news reporters with communist China. That same day, he reported Senator Wayne Morse's acid comments on Governor Faubus to KEX, Portland, Oregon. Administratively, MacLeish reports to Pack in New York, but his feeds are all subject to local editing.

There is considerable excitement over this effort at Westinghouse, where the feeling is strong that it is paying off in important, if intangible, benefits. At the present time there is talk of adding a TV reporter.

To strengthen the feeling that MacLeish belongs to the station rather than Westinghouse, he is always referred to as the station's Washington correspondent in the introduc-