

# Electronic Media

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DECEMBER 21, 1987

## AT PRESS TIME

### NATPE sets debate

LOS ANGELES—The National Association of Television Program Executives and Sun Broadcast Associates, a division of Southwest Multimedia, will co-host a televised live debate among Democratic presidential candidates on Sunday, Feb. 28, during NATPE International's 25th annual convention in Houston. The 90-minute special will be produced and distributed by an ad hoc network of independent TV stations. "Deciding America's Future" will originate from the George R. Brown Convention Center at 4 p.m. (CT) before an audience of NATPE attendees.

### Fairness fight foreseen

WASHINGTON—Congress and the White House on Friday appeared headed for a collision over the fairness doctrine. At press time, a measure to codify the fairness doctrine remained intact in a massive government funding bill, but President  
*(Continued on Page 27)*

## NBC to pay all production costs for hour show

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

LOS ANGELES—In a potentially precedent-setting move, NBC has agreed to pay all the production costs of a new one-hour action series from Stephen J. Cannell Productions.

This means Mr. Cannell's company will produce the show, titled "Sonny Spoon," with no deficit and still retain all syndication rights.

"That was the only way we could get this show done," said John Agoglia, executive vice president of NBC Productions, which will make the series in association with Cannell.

Although Mr. Agoglia would not specify the show's budget, a source within Cannell said "Sonny Spoon" would cost NBC about \$1.1 million per episode.

Company sources also said that

Cannell wouldn't shoot the show in Canada, as it does to cut production costs on most of its other series.

The seven-segment order is expected to cost NBC nearly \$8 million.

The move follows loud complaints by Brandon Tartikoff, NBC Entertainment president, earlier this year that a soft syndication market for off-network hours had made it very difficult to get commitments from producers to deficit-finance new hour-long shows.

Mr. Tartikoff noted in a major industry speech last April that several companies have declined production orders from the networks for fear that early cancellation would leave them deeply in debt.

Neither NBC officials nor Cannell executives would discuss the deal in detail.

However, at a seminar on syndi-  
*(Continued on Page 27)*

## Checkerboard slate hit with fatal blow

By MARIANNE PASKOWSKI  
New York bureau chief

NEW YORK—The NBC owned-and-operated stations late Friday officially canceled their prime-access checkerboard, effective next fall.

Wes Harris, vice president of programming for the NBC-owned stations, announced that the stations will drop the checkerboard's five sitcoms and air the new "Family Feud" game show in the access time slot next fall.

The NBC stations' decision is the latest blow to the checkerboard programming concept, in which a station airs a different show in the same time slot each day of the week.

The concept is regarded as risky, but there had been a glimmer of hope for NBC's slate when it generally got off to a good start in the ratings this fall.

The cancellation, however, was expected. The shows gradually slipped in the ratings, and the NBC  
*(Continued on Page 27)*

### Dear Santa... Media personalities reveal their wish lists

In keeping with the holiday spirit, ELECTRONIC MEDIA asked various players in the industry what gift they are hoping for most this year. Here are their responses:  
**Eddie Fritts, president, National Association of Broadcasters:** "I wish for a day without a meeting, members without a beef and fairness without a doctrine."  
**FCC Chairman Dennis Patrick:** "Two Republican commissioners under the Christmas tree, with a bow."  
**Alfred Barber, executive vice president, NBC TV Network:** "Thursday night for NBC lengthened by 15 to 20 hours."  
*(Continued on Page 26)*

# Cable cautious after must-carry ruling

By DOUG HALONEN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—The National Cable Television Association isn't celebrating the recent affirmation of cable's First Amendment rights contained in the court decision that struck down the must-carry rules.

Instead, it's warning its members against moving too quickly to take advantage of their new freedom.

That was one of the responses as industry leaders here tried to sort through the ramifications of the Dec. 11 court decision that struck down the rules, which required cable systems to carry certain local TV stations.

Last week, Eddie Fritts, president of the National Association of Broadcasters, and Jim Mooney, NCTA's president, met to see whether there was a chance that they could arrive at a new agreement on how best to proceed.

But sources said the talks did not get off to a good start. Mr. Mooney, according to sources, charged that the Association of Independent Television Stations wretched on the industry's previous must-carry agreement.

What apparently has the NCTA riled is that INTV, in a filing with the Federal Communications Commission, took a swipe at the cable compulsory license, which it had vowed not to do in an industry compromise that became the basis for the must-carry rules.

INTV has denied that it violated the letter of the agreement.

Sources here believe the two industry representatives will talk some more.

They say the stakes are too high for the industries to risk winging it alone. And they say an industrywide consensus on how to proceed may be the best way each party can keep its potential losses to a minimum.

Part of NCTA's problem, sources say, is that this new piece of deregulation comes at a time

when the cable TV industry is perceived in some quarters as having won more than its fair share of regulatory battles.

Also, cable has been under attack by the motion picture industry, the cities and independent stations, with some of those critics claiming that cable companies are becoming too big and powerful.

Observers here also are noting that NCTA had agreed to abide by the must-carry rules, which were set to expire in 1992, on the condition that broadcasters not push for elimination of cable's compulsory copyright license.

"Now the compulsory license is fair game again," says John Summers, the former senior executive vice president for the National Association of Broadcasters.

Under the compulsory license, cable operators pay a fee for the distant broadcast TV stations they carry on their systems, rather than negotiating for the rights to each of

the shows on those signals.

Broadcasters argue that the compulsory license allows cable systems to carry broadcast TV signals without having to pay a fair price.

Yet the broadcasting industry also finds itself in an unenviable bargaining position in the wake of the must-carry decision.

For starters, industry observers don't seem to be holding high hopes that the Supreme Court will reverse the appellate court decision.

And one high-level FCC official told ELECTRONIC MEDIA that the prospects are grim that the agency would agree to fashion new rules, in another attempt to pass constitutional muster.

"I think it's now up to Congress to correct the imbalance in the marketplace," the official said.

Observers say Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings, D-S.C., chairman of the Senate Commerce (Continued on Page 26)

*Thank You  
for Caring*

**A**t this special time of year, we at ABC want to express our appreciation to those who have worked so hard in the cause of literacy during the two years since Capital Cities/ABC and the Public Broadcasting Service jointly announced a new and innovative public service campaign called PLUS—Project Literacy U.S. Our special thanks to...

...our colleagues at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Public Broadcasting Service, National Public Radio, the Public Television Outreach Alliance, PBS member stations—especially WQED-TV—for a rewarding and productive partnership.

...the General Managers and staffs of the 222 ABC affiliated stations—especially the "literacy coordinators"—for their remarkable local programming and community involvement in support of PLUS.

...the ABC network programmers, both television and radio, and the many creative people for consistently fine programming in all dayparts to help raise awareness of the serious national problem of adult illiteracy.

...the community leaders for devoting their time, energy, and resources to creating and maintaining 366 local PLUS Task Forces.

...the leaders of the 117 national organizations that have endorsed the PLUS campaign and encouraged their members to participate in the national literacy movement.

...the people of the literacy organizations for working so hard to serve the growing number of Americans seeking to improve their basic skills.

...the leaders in education, business, labor, government, and the religious community for their encouragement and support.

*And, most of all...*

Thanks to the hundreds of thousands of individual Americans across the country who have responded—the learners for their courageous decision to overcome illiteracy and those who are helping them learn to read.

As PLUS enters its third year, we thank you for caring and extend our warmest holiday wishes to you.

**PLUS**    
PROJECT LITERACY U.S.

## S. Africa threatens CBS News

By DIANE MERMIGAS  
Senior reporter

The South African government has warned that it might take action against CBS News for a recent prime-time documentary that viewed the issue of apartheid through the eyes of children there.

At press time, there still was no indication whether that retaliatory action would be total expulsion of the network's bureau from the racially tense country or a less severe form of reprimand.

"I think we can expect to see something happen. It could just be that our bureau chief there is asked to leave," said one CBS News source, who requested anonymity.

At the heart of the controversy is whether CBS News personnel willfully violated South African laws requiring that journalists secure government approval for reporting and information-gathering done there.

The documentary, "Children of Apartheid," reported by correspondent Walter Cronkite and produced by Brian Ellis, aired on Dec. 5.

A Dec. 11 letter to CBS News' Johannesburg bureau chief William Mutschmann from the South African administrator of home affairs, Stoffel Boata, expressed concern that Mr. Cronkite and Mr. Ellis entered the country on visitor's passes last year, then secretly went about their work.

The letter to CBS News accused the network news division of offering viewers "tainted pictures of aspects of present-day South Africa" and "sinking to such levels of disrespect for accepted norms and standards of professional journalism."

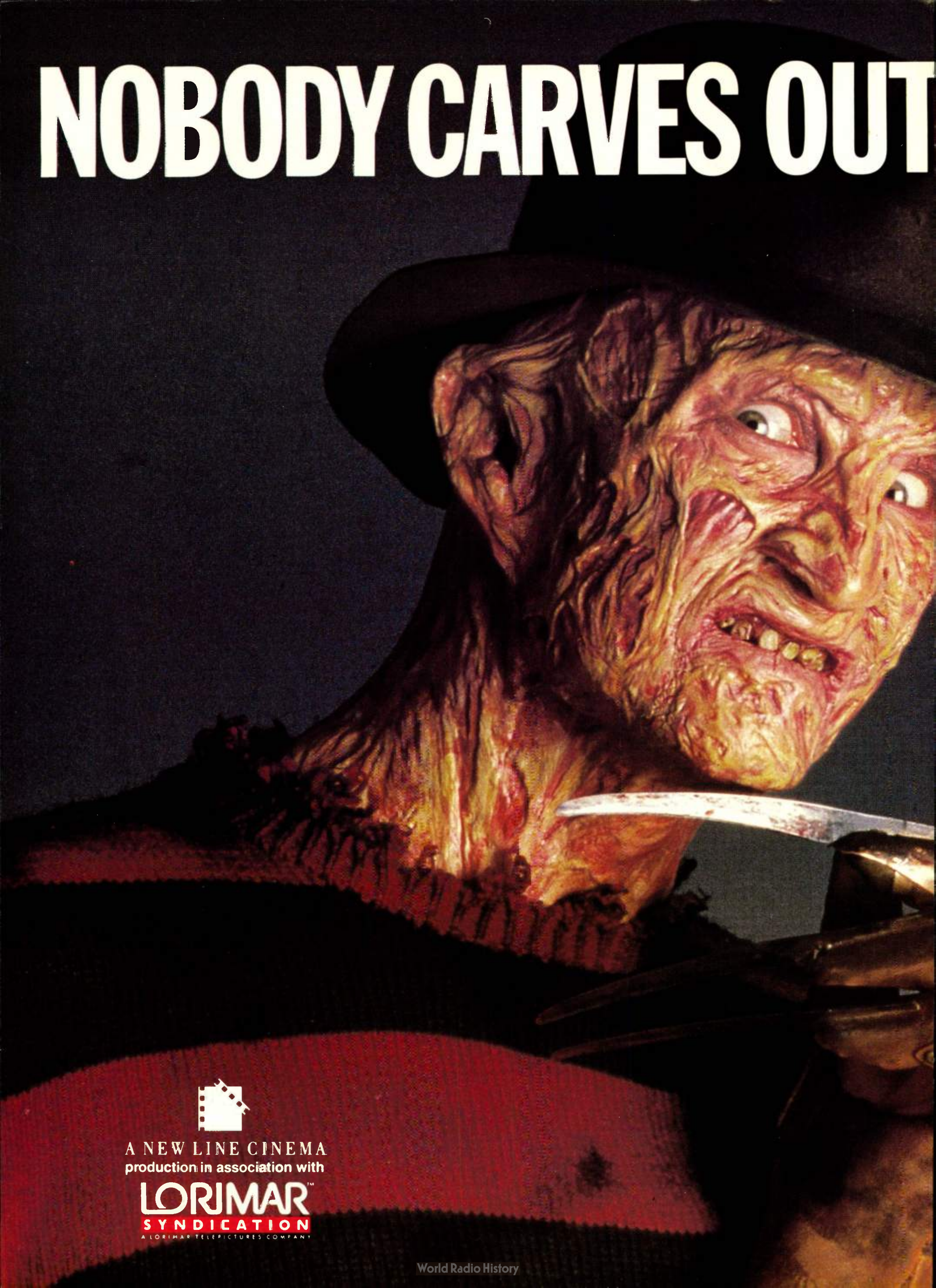
The letter indicated that a full investigation of the circumstances surrounding the production of the documentary is under way.

CBS News President Howard Stringer responded last week in a memo that read, in part: "I am appalled that the government of South Africa has chosen to attack the professional standards of Walter Cronkite and CBS News and to threaten our bureau there with retaliatory action without input from us."

Mr. Stringer said the broadcast was "entirely lawful" and "did not breach the South African emergency media regulations." He called the hour-long documentary "thoughtful and balanced."#

**TOUGH TIMES  
CALL FOR SHOWS  
THAT CAN  
HACK IT.**


# NOBODY CARVES OUT



A NEW LINE CINEMA  
production in association with

**LORIMAR**<sup>TM</sup>  
**SYNDICATION**  
A LORIMAR TELEPICTURES COMPANY

# A NICHE LIKE FREDDY.



The man of your dreams is coming to television this Fall. And how. His weekly first-run hour is going to be a nightmare for your competition.

Freddy Krueger, the sinister sandman, has already hooked the country through his incredible performance at the box office and in home video. He's very sharp.

Now he comes to television well armed to cut out a huge slice of the late night audience. Don't miss your share.

Take a stab at greater ratings with Freddy. The hottest face on TV.

**A Nightmare**  
ON ELM STREET  
*Freddy's Nightmares*

## CALENDAR

## January

Jan. 6-10, **INTV**, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Sheila Jefferson, 202-887-1970.

Jan. 6-March 9, **Working With the Media**, a 10-part series sponsored by UCLA Extension, Dodd Hall, UCLA campus, Los Angeles. Information: Norma Auerbach, 213-825-0641.

Jan. 7-10, **Winter Consumer Electronics Show**, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Information: Dennis Corcoran, 202-457-8700.

Jan. 11-12, **13th annual course on investing in broadcast stations** sponsored by Federal Publications, Georgetown Inn, Washington. Information: J.K. VanWycks, 202-337-7000.

Jan. 11-12, **Burns Media Consultants radio studios seminar**, Registry Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Elizabeth Curran, 800-821-8035.

Jan. 12-14, **Marketing Your Station for Success** management seminar sponsored by the Television Bureau of Advertising, TvB headquarters, New York. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.

Jan. 12-March 12, **Writing and Producing the TV News Feature**, sponsored by UCLA Extension, Kinsey Hall, UCLA campus, Los Angeles. Information: Norma Auerbach, 213-825-0641.

Jan. 13, **International Radio & Television Society Newsmaker luncheon**, Waldorf-Astoria, New York. Information: Marilyn Ellis, 212-867-6650.

Jan. 15, **Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau cable TV political advertising workshop**, Cannon House Office Building, Washington. Information: Lloyd Trufelman, 212-751-7770.

Jan. 16-18, **Cable session for the January press tour** sponsored by the National Cable Forum, Sheraton Redondo Beach, Redondo Beach, Calif. Information: Jim Boyle, 202-775-3629.

Jan. 18-20, **National technical seminar** sponsored by the Florida chapter of the Society of Cable Television Engineers, Hyatt Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Information: Richard Kirn, 813-924-8541.

Jan. 19, **How to Find Investors for Your Entertainment Project** seminar sponsored by the Chicago chapter of the Recording Academy, Loop College, Chicago. Information: Jay Ross, 312-372-1575.

Jan. 22, **Ninth annual ACE Awards—non-televised presentation**, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Susan Detwiler, 202-775-3611.

Jan. 23-26, **Team Rado '88: The New Ballgame**, the Radio Advertising Bureau managing sales conference featuring Kelsey Tyson, co-author of "One Minute Manager," and Herb Cohen, author of "You Can Negotiate Anything," as guest speakers, Hyatt Regency, Atlanta. Information: Wayne Cornils, 212-254-4800.

Jan. 24, **Ninth annual ACE Awards—televised presentation**, Wiltern Theater, Los Angeles. Information: Susan Detwiler, 202-775-3611.

Jan. 25-29, **MIDEM International Record, Music Publishing and Video Music Market**, Palais de Festival, Cannes, France. Information: Barney Bernhard, 212-967-7600.

Jan. 29-30, **Technology in Transition**, the 22nd annual television conference of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, Opryland Hotel, Nashville. Information: John Varrasi, 914-761-1100.

Jan. 30-Feb. 3, **National Religious Broadcasters 45th Annual Convention and Exposition**, Sheraton Washington and Omni Shoreham Hotels, Washington. Information: Faye Woodward, 201-428-5400.

## February

Feb. 1, **Minnesota Broadcasters Association sales seminar**, Sheraton Park Place Hotel, Minneapolis. Information: Laura Niemi, 612-926-8123.

Feb. 2-3, **Arizona Cable Television Association's 1988 annual meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Phoenix, Ariz. Information: 602-257-9338.

Feb. 4, **International Radio & Television Society Newsmaker luncheon**, Waldorf-Astoria, New York. Information: Marilyn Ellis, 212-867-6650.

Feb. 8-13, **International Film, Television and Video Market of Monte Carlo**, an international programming market, Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo. Information: Andre Asseo, 45-62-31-00.

Feb. 11-13, **Country—America's Music**, the 19th annual Country Radio Seminar, Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tenn. Information: Frank Mull, 615-327-4488.

Feb. 12, **Southern California Broadcasters Association Third Annual SUNNY Creative Radio Awards**, hosted by Phyllis Diller, Registry Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Gordon Mason, 213-466-4481.

Feb. 23, **Television Bureau of Advertising regional sales conference**, Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.

Feb. 25-29, **NATPE conference**, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston. Information: Nick Orfanopoulos, 213-282-8801.

## March

March 2, **Fourth Annual Communications Awards dinner** sponsored by the National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters, Sheraton Washington Hotel, Washington. Information: Lynne Taylor, 202-463-8970.

March 3, **International Radio & Television Society Gold Medal Banquet** honoring CBS's "60 Minutes," Waldorf-Astoria, New York. Information: Marilyn Ellis, 212-867-6650.

March 6, **Ninth annual college awards presentation** sponsored by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, Registry Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Murray Weissman, 818-763-2975.

March 7, **Television Bureau of Advertising regional sales conference**, Red Lion Hotel, Seattle. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.

March 7-8, **13th annual course on investing in broadcast stations** sponsored by Federal Publications, La Playa Hotel, Carmel, Calif. Information: J.K. VanWycks, 202-337-7000.

March 9, **Television Bureau of Advertising regional sales conference**, Meriden Hotel, San Francisco. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.

March 11, **Television Bureau of Advertising regional sales conference**, Marriott City Center, Denver. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.

March 11-14, **National Association of Recording Merchandisers 30th Annual Convention**, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Stan Silverman, 609-596-2221.

March 13-15, **West Virginia Broadcasters Association meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Charleston, West Virginia. Information: Marilyn Fletcher, 304-344-3798.

March 15, **Television Bureau of Advertising regional sales conference**, Marriott Hotel, Dallas. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.

March 15, **International Radio & Television Society Newsmaker luncheon**, Waldorf-Astoria, New York. Information: Marilyn Ellis, 212-867-6650.

March 17, **Television Bureau of Advertising regional sales conference**, Hilton Hotel, Atlanta. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.

March 22, **American Women in Radio and Television 13th annual national commendation awards ceremony** chaired by Jane Pauley, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York. Information: Diane Walden, 202-429-5102.

March 29, **Television Bureau of Advertising regional sales conference**, Hyatt Regency, Cincinnati. Information: Lee Barney, 212-486-1111.#

## Metropolitan Broadcasting Corporation

*has sold the assets of*

**WASH (FM)**  
Washington, DC

*to*

**Outlet Broadcasting, Inc.**

*The undersigned acted as financial advisor to  
Metropolitan Broadcasting Corporation in this transaction.*

**MORGAN STANLEY & CO.**  
Incorporated

December 3, 1987

# IBEW approves new pact with CBS

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

CBS will be able to hire more technicians on a daily basis under a new three-year contract approved last week by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The union, which represents about 1,300 CBS technicians and technical directors, voted Dec. 15 in favor of CBS's contract proposal. The vote was 947-352.

CBS presented its final contract offer on Sept. 30, the day that the last IBEW contract expired.

The new contract, slated to go into effect Dec. 20, will expire on Sept. 30, 1990.

Under the new network contract, CBS's IBEW employees will receive a bonus worth 3 percent of their annual salary in the contract's first year.

That will be followed by 3 percent raises in the second and third years of the agreement, according to Paul Wagner, business manager of IBEW's Local 45 in Los Angeles.

Mr. Wagner said the union won some concessions from CBS, but lost on other issues such as the use of so-called "daily hires."

The use of daily-hires, or temporary workers for specific projects, was also a significant sticking point in the three-month strike against NBC by the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians.

Mr. Wagner said the IBEW won a guarantee that its members won't be laid off if the network increases its use of temporary broadcast technicians.

Mr. Wagner also said the union's jurisdiction over the operation of video cameras and video-cassette recorders was weakened under the new contract. CBS will now have more flexibility in

assigning employees to operate the equipment, he said.

He confirmed that the union's leaders recommended that the members approve the contract even though the leadership had reservations about the agreement.

"We were not all that satisfied with the economic package or the jurisdictional givebacks," Mr. Wagner said.

But the union never called a strike to press for concessions on the daily-hire and jurisdictional issues.

Jack Stanley, who is with the union's international office in Washington, said "the climate" of the broadcasting business made a strike unfeasible. "Times are not so good," he said.

Noel Berman, vice president of industrial relations for CBS, declined to comment on the IBEW contract negotiations. #

## JOBS

### Broadcast TV

**WLIG-TV** in Woodbury, N.Y., is seeking an experienced **local sales manager** to direct the sales team. Send resumes to: Marvin Chauvin, general manager, WLIG-TV, 300 Crossways Park Drive, Box 84, Woodbury, N.Y. 11797. Phone: 516-364-1500.

**WDIV-TV** in Detroit is seeking an **account executive** to handle a variety of television sales assignments, including preparation of revenue forecasts and market analyses. A minimum of one to two years experience in broadcast television sales is preferred. Send resumes to: Personnel Department, WDIV-TV, 550 W. Lafayette, Detroit, Mich. 48231. Phone: 313-222-0444.

**WAPT-TV** in Jackson, Miss., is seeking a **sales account executive**. Previous experience in broadcast sales is required. Send resumes to: Karen Phillips, local sales manager, WAPT-TV, P.O. Box 10297, Jackson, Miss. 39209. Phone: 601-922-1607.

**KPTV-TV** in Portland, Ore., is seeking a **television maintenance engineer**. A strong Sony tape background is required. Send resumes to: Personnel, KPTV-TV, P.O. Box 3401, Portland, Ore. 97208. Phone: 503-222-9921.

**The Corporation for Public Broadcasting** in Washington is seeking an **assistant program fund operations manager**. A college, business school degree or equivalent experience is required along with a minimum of two years experience in broadcasting or relevant experience in media-related areas. Send resumes to: Marcia Grossman, personnel manager, The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 1111 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. Phone: 202-955-5100.

### Radio

**WGVC-FM** in Allendale, Mich., is seeking a **development/promotion manager**. Considerable fund-raising experience is required and a knowledge of public radio is preferred. Send resumes to: Sam Eiler, station manager, WGVC-FM, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, Mich. 49401. Phone: 616-895-3128.

### Academic

**The Youngstown State University department of speech communications** in Youngstown, Ohio, is seeking an **assistant or associate professor** to instruct courses in advanced theory, policy and video production beginning Sept. 15, 1988. Applicants must possess or be completing a Ph.D. in mass communications. Three years of media/teaching experience is preferred. Send resumes to: Alfred Owens, chairman, department of speech communications, Youngstown State University, 410 Wick Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio. 44555. Phone: 216-742-3630.

The "Jobs" column is an editorial feature compiled by Elizabeth Edgerton of our Chicago staff. Media companies having job openings they would like to list in this column should send the job title and a brief job description to Ms. Edgerton at ELECTRONIC MEDIA, 740 N. Rush St., Chicago, Ill., 60611. She can be reached by telephone at 312-649-5453. Items submitted for publication must include a telephone number for obtaining further information and an address where resumes can be sent. Please advise us when the job has been filled. Decisions on which items are published and what wording is used are made entirely by the editorial staff. #

## Metropolitan Broadcasting Corporation

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**WIP (AM)**  
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**MORGAN STANLEY & CO.**  
Incorporated

December 8, 1987



World Radio History

**LORIMAR**  
**SYNDICATION**  
A LORIMAR TELEPICTURES COMPANY

SOURCE: NTL SON Season To Date Thru 11/15/87



# Mama's Ready To Strip!

She's the #1 continuing first-run comedy. And that's the naked truth. A talent like Mama's deserves the maximum exposure. And with 110 great half-hours available in Spring '89, she can have it five days a week. So put her on, sit back and watch her take off.

**MAMA'S  
FAMILY**

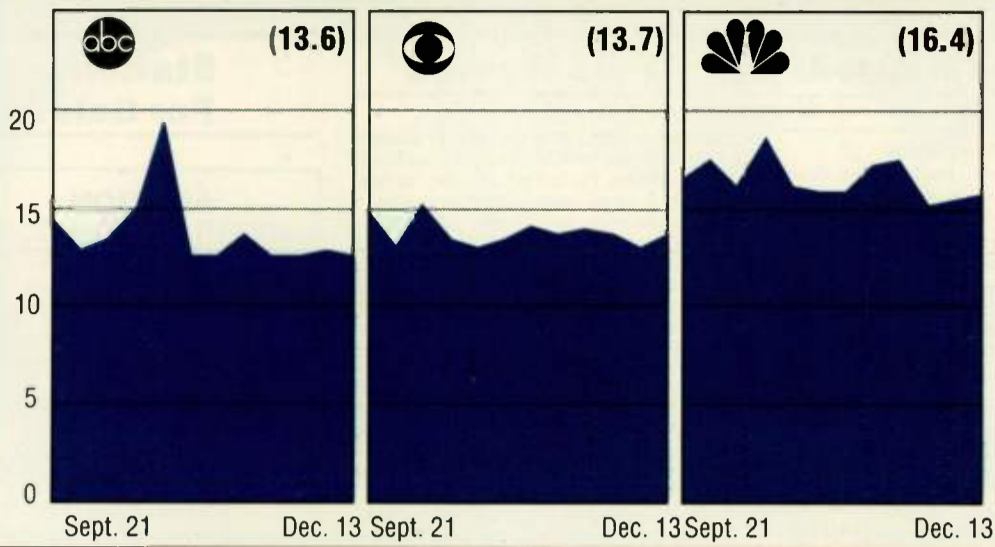
A JOE HAMILTON PRODUCTION

*Watch Her Take Off!*

**SEASON-TO-DATE RATINGS (AVERAGES)**

**WEEKS 1-12: SEPT. 21 THROUGH DEC. 13**

**NETWORK PRIME TIME**



**IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

**"Late Night" ratings/shares**

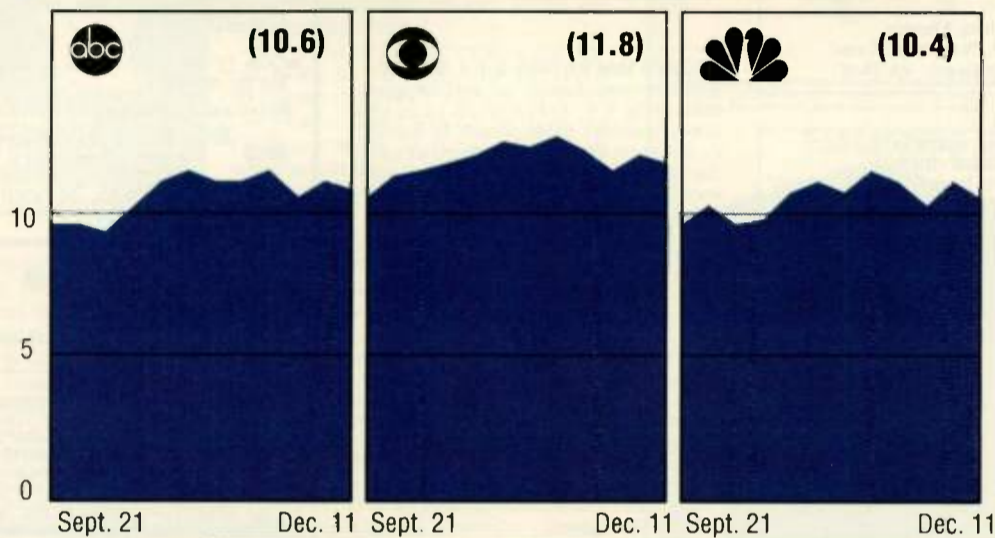
1982	2.6/15
1983	2.7/16
1984	2.8/16
1985	3.3/18
1986	3.6/21
1987	3.8/20*
	3.5/20**



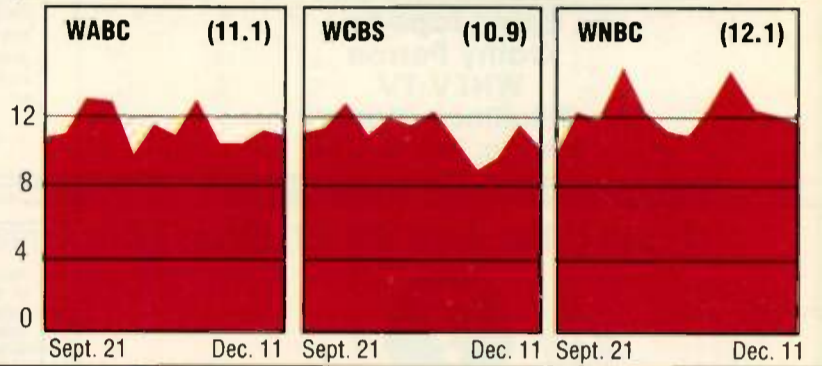
David Letterman

\*NTI to Sept. 20  
\*\*people meter Sept. 20 to date

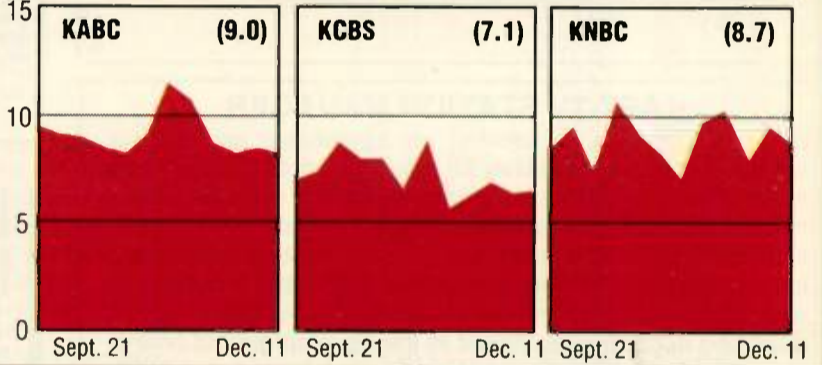
**NETWORK EVENING NEWS**



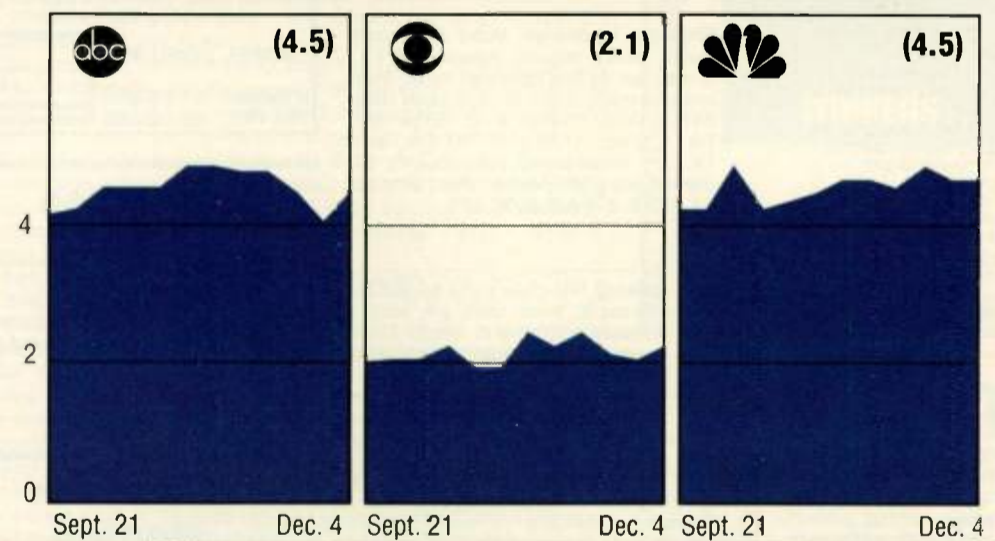
**NEW YORK 11 P.M. LOCAL NEWS**



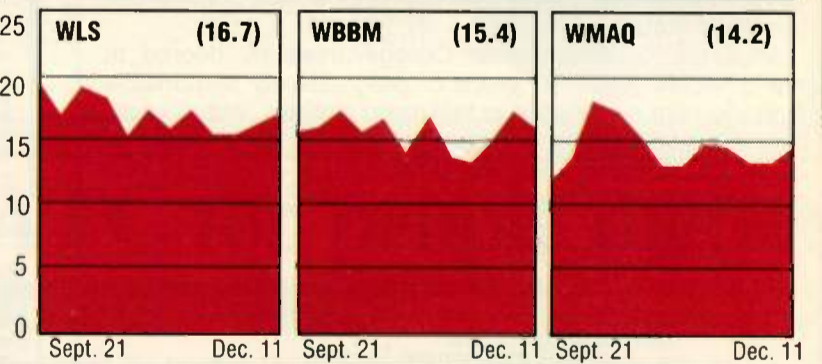
**LOS ANGELES 11 P.M. LOCAL NEWS**



**NETWORK MORNING NEWS—SEPT. 21 TO DEC. 4**



**CHICAGO 10 P.M. LOCAL NEWS**



**SEASON-TO-DATE RATINGS/SHARES OF REGULAR PRIME-TIME NETWORK PROGRAMS**

1. The Cosby Show	NBC 29.1/46	21. Dallas	CBS 17.1/29	(f) Cagney & Lacey	CBS 13.8/23	61. Spenser: For Hire	ABC 10.4/18
2. A Different World	NBC 26.5/42	(f) 227	NBC 17.1/31	42. Equalizer	CBS 13.2/23	(f) Oldest Rookie	CBS 10.4/17
3. Cheers	NBC 25.0/39	(f) NBC Sunday Night Movies	NBC 17.1/27	(f) St. Elsewhere	NBC 13.2/23	63. I Married Dora	ABC 10.3/16
4. Night Court	NBC 23.7/37	24. Matlock	NBC 16.9/26	44. Beauty & the Beast	CBS 13.0/23	64. Full House	CBS 10.0/18
5. Growing Pains	ABC 23.6/36	25. NBC Monday Night Movies	NBC 16.8/26	45. Frank's Place	CBS 12.9/20	(f) Houston Knights	CBS 10.0/16
6. Who's the Boss?	ABC 22.3/35	26. Head of the Class	ABC 16.6/26	46. MacGyver	ABC 12.7/20	(f) Rags to Riches	NBC 10.0/18
7. Golden Girls	NBC 22.2/39	27. Hooperman	ABC 16.5/24	(f) J.J. Starbuck	NBC 12.7/20	67. ABC Thursday Night Movie	ABC 9.6/16
8. 60 Minutes	CBS 21.8/35	28. Designing Women	CBS 16.2/25	48. 20/20	ABC 12.6/23	68. Hotel	ABC 9.1/18
9. Murder, She Wrote	CBS 21.1/31	29. Perfect Strangers	ABC 15.9/26	49. Jake & the Fatman	CBS 12.3/19	69. Ohara	ABC 8.9/16
10. Moonlighting	ABC 20.6/33	30. Kate & Allie	CBS 15.4/23	(f) Simon & Simon	CBS 12.3/19	70. Pursuit of Happiness	ABC 8.6/15
11. L.A. Law	NBC 19.4/33	31. Knots Landing	CBS 15.2/26	51. Crime Story	NBC 12.2/22	71. CBS Saturday Movie	CBS 8.2/14
12. Family Ties	NBC 19.0/28	(f) Facts of Life	NBC 15.2/26	(f) Our House	NBC 12.2/19	72. Charmings	ABC 7.9/13
13. ALF	NBC 18.7/29	33. Dynasty	ABC 14.8/26	53. A Year in the Life	NBC 11.9/19	73. Sable	ABC 7.8/14
14. CBS Sunday Movie	CBS 18.4/29	34. Falcon Crest	CBS 14.7/27	54. Wiseguy	CBS 11.7/18	74. Sledge Hammer!	ABC 7.6/12
15. Amen	NBC 18.0/32	35. Dolly	ABC 14.6/22	55. Law & Harry MacGraw	CBS 11.0/20	75. My Sister Sam	CBS 7.3/14
16. My Two Dads	NBC 17.6/26	36. Magnum, P.I.	CBS 14.4/23	56. Buck James	ABC 10.8/18	76. West 57th	CBS 7.0/14
17. Newhart	CBS 17.4/26	(f) Miami Vice	NBC 14.4/24	57. Disney Sunday Movie	ABC 10.7/17	77. Max Headroom	ABC 6.6/12
(f) Hunter	NBC 17.4/34	38. thirtysomething	ABC 14.1/25	(f) Mr. Belvedere	ABC 10.7/18	78. Everything's Relative	CBS 6.5/11
19. NFL Monday Night Football	ABC 17.2/30	39. Highway to Heaven	NBC 14.0/23	59. Tour of Duty	CBS 10.6/17	79. Leg Work	CBS 6.2/11
(f) Valerie's Family	NBC 17.2/26	40. 'Slap' Maxwell	ABC 13.8/22	(f) Private Eye	NBC 10.6/20	80. Once a Hero	ABC 4.1/8

# TV talk show host faces assault charge

(Continued from Page 3)

According to newspaper accounts and discussions with Mr. Humm's attorney and a spokeswoman for Mr. Downey's station, the talk show host clashed with the gay activist during an argument about Catholicism.

Mr. Humm has charged that Mr. Downey punched him in the chin.

A spokeswoman for WWOR described the blow as "a tap on the chin."

Viewers won't see the incident because WWOR won't air the program, the station's spokeswoman said.

But videotape of the incident might be used as evidence in court.

Mr. Humm's attorney, Christopher Lynn, said he filed two civil suits against Mr. Downey last week—one in a federal court in New York City and the other in a New Jersey state court.

WWOR's studios are in Secaucus, near New York.

Each civil suit asks for \$500,000 in "punitive and actual damages," said Mr. Lynn, who insisted that he be identified in print as "an openly



**MORTON DOWNEY JR.**  
Trial scheduled for tomorrow

The attorney said the civil suits ask that videotape of the incident be entered as evidence.

The WWOR spokeswoman said it's too early to tell if station management would provide the tape.

She referred questions to Mr. Downey's attorney, Thomas Roth, who could not be reached for comment last week.

Mr. Downey also was unavailable for comment.

On his nightly, hour-long program, Mr. Downey uses an argumentative style of interviewing that was popular on TV about 20 years ago and works for many radio stations today.

The program is produced by Quantum Media, the New York-based production company headed by Bob Pittman, founder and former president of MTV.

The program, which was originally aired live, is now taped and aired a day later because WWOR wasn't able to control some of the language used by guests and members of the studio audience, the station's spokeswoman said. #

gay lawyer."

"Mr. Humm is a public figure who was humiliated by Mr. Downey," the lawyer said.

# 'Aryan Nations Hour' canceled

(Continued from Page 3)

discussions of racial separatism.

Since "The Aryan Nations Hour" premiered, Mr. Hinton said his life has been threatened, and \$1,800 worth of the station's equipment has been destroyed by vandals.

Although KZZI sells no ads during its brokered radio shows, the station does have a number of advertisers during the rest of its programming schedule, which Mr. Hinton said consists of "typical" radio talk shows.

The advertisers left the station during the last few weeks because of pressure from groups such as the Jewish Defense League, Mr. Hinton said.

Mr. Hinton admitted that the program's subject matter is unpopular, but he defended Mr. McCarthy's right to buy time and air his views.

"All I was doing was offering a forum for freedom of

choice of different topics," Mr. Hinton said. "But because I honored a legal contract, I was nearly put out of business. That proves to me there's no freedom of speech in this country."

Mr. McCarthy wasn't available for comment last week, but he did hold a news conference to announce the cancellation of his show.

He blamed a "liberal, Marxist, homosexual, Zionist coalition" for killing the show, according to an Associated Press report.

"In no way should the enemies of God or our race view this as a victory. For they have, with this violation of my civil rights, exposed the false Israel and shown their bloody red banner and how much they despise our constitutional rights," Mr. McCarthy was quoted as saying in the AP report. #

# Attorney, Miami DJ battle over broadcasts

(Continued from Page 3)

The agreement establishes that an arbitration panel of "three unbiased individuals" will convene at an unspecified date to judge whether Mr. Rogers violated the guidelines.

Mr. Rogers' producer and on-air sidekick, Glen Hill, said Mr. Rogers wouldn't comment on the matter. But, he said, Mr. Rogers "has nothing to hide."

"His show is not indecent," Mr. Hill said. "This is like 'Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood' around here."

But that's not what Mr. Thompson says. Since last August, he has been complaining about the content of Mr. Rogers' routines. He says Mr. Rogers' program is filled with sexual innuendos and "bathroom humor."

Mr. Thompson says he wrote a letter of complaint to the station last August for the simple reason that "as part of this community, I have to be concerned about what goes on in the community. If there's something wrong in my community, it affects me."

Among other things, he said Mr. Rogers solicits men for sex on the air and lately has joked about department store Santa Claus becoming sexually aroused by children sitting on their laps.

In response to his letter of complaint, Mr. Thompson says Mr. Rogers repeatedly named him on the air and gave out his address and telephone number. He suggested that listeners contact the attorney.

Then, Mr. Thompson said, he received several death threats, including at least one bomb threat. "He incited people to threaten my life," he said.

Mr. Thompson said he sued

Mr. Rogers and a Miami court ordered the air personality not to refer to him on the air.

But, he says, the on-air mentions continued. "Rogers was bashing me on the air in violation of a court order," he said.

That's when he began calling advertisers with commercials airing during Mr. Rogers' show to tell them about the program.

He also filed a formal complaint with the Federal Communications Commission that was forwarded to the agency by U.S. Rep. Dante Fascell, D-Fla. A commission spokeswoman said the FCC is taking the complaint very seriously.

Mr. Thompson says he was successful in convincing many of the station's advertisers to withdraw, costing WZTA "thousands of dollars."

The financial loss couldn't be confirmed, however, because the station's general manager, Gary Lawrence, refused to comment.

The station then filed a countersuit against Mr. Thompson, claiming he was interfering with the relationships between WZTA and its advertisers.

In response to that suit, Mr. Thompson threatened to sue the station for defamation because, he charged, Mr. Rogers referred to him as "a mental patient" on the air.

On Dec. 2, Mr. Thompson said, the station and the attorney signed the agreement and "wiped out" the two opposing lawsuits.

It remains to be seen whether Mr. Thompson will be able to collect any of the money that he says is owed to him. He insisted that he didn't propose the deal for financial gain.

"Everything I get is going to charity," he said. #

## BRIEFLY NOTED

### Broadcast TV

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is looking into the propriety of a \$30,000 bonus PBS President Bruce Christensen received last year. Under federal law, PBS and National Public Radio employees are barred from being paid more than other top-level government officials. But PBS last week contended that bonuses are excluded from the pay cap. The CPB is also looking into the salary received by NPR "Morning Edition" host Bob Edwards, who was paid slightly more than the cap of \$86,200 last year.

ABC's "Nightline" on Dec. 15, which featured revived Democratic candidate Gary Hart, scored a 7.4 rating in 15-market overnight results from A.C. Nielsen Co. The show drew an 8.6 rating for the first half-hour and a 6.2 for the final half-hour. NBC's "Tonight Show" scored a 6.7 for the hour, while CBS's "Diamonds" had a 5.6.

Great American Broadcasting announced a major management realignment of Worldvision Enterprises, its distribution subsidiary. John Ryan, senior vice president of domestic sales, was named president and chief executive officer. Bert Cohen, senior vice president of international sales, was named executive vice president and chief operating officer. Great American

was formerly Taft Broadcasting.

MGM/UA Television has received an eight-episode order from NBC for "Baby Boom," a new prime-time TV series based on the parent studio's theatrical film of the same name. Casting of the sitcom, about a young urban professional who starts a successful gourmet baby food company in rural Vermont, is not expected to include any of the movie's principals, including Diane Keaton and Sam Shepherd.

### International

Officials at Great Britain's Independent Television Network say the service has added about 100,000 new viewers since it replaced a portion of its early morning "chat" show with U.S. reruns of the 1960s network hit "Batman." The half-hour spoof is distributed by Warner Bros. and EPS Entertainment Ltd.

### Sports

ABC's "NFL Monday Night Football" ran up its second-highest A.C. Nielsen Co. score of the season for the Chicago Bears-San Francisco 49ers game Dec. 14 with a 21.9 rating, bringing the "Monday Night Football" season average rating to a 19.1, ahead of its 1986 pace.

ESPN continued hitting big cable

## NATIONAL SYNDICATION STANDINGS

For the week ended Dec. 6

	Rating	Stations	Coverage
1. Wheel of Fortune	18.0	215	97%
2. Jeopardy!	14.6	208	97%
3. TV Net Movie	11.8*	199	96%
4. WWF Wrestling Federation	11.2*	235	95%
5. Star Trek: Next Generation	11.0*	223	96%
6. Geraldo-Modern Love	10.9*	147	93%
7. Oprah Winfrey Show	9.0	202	99%
8. The Gunfighters	8.6*	128	87%
9. People's Court	8.5*	195	96%
10. Nat'l Geo Explorer	8.2*	138	91%
11. Best of Nat'l Geographic	6.9*	136	90%
12. Entertainment Tonight	6.8*	168	92%
13. Donahue	6.5	206	96%
14. Hollywood Squares	6.1	134	90%
15. Mama's Family	6.0*	144	89%

\*Includes multiple airings. (b) Show broken out for individual plays due to pre-emptions.

Source: Nielsen Fast Weekly Syndication and Occasional Network Report. Includes only subscribers to the service and only barter or cash/barter shows.

numbers in its rookie NFL season with an 11.2 rating, representing 5 million households, for the Dec. 13 Seattle Seahawks-Denver Broncos game. The game scored a combined broadcast/cable rating of 12.5, according to ESPN. ESPN's Sunday night series has a six-game average rating of 10.8 on cable and a 12.5 broadcast/cable average, thus far

exceeding the network's projections.

Gayle Sierens will take her place in the NBC broadcast booth as the first woman doing NFL play-by-play coverage for the Seattle Seahawks-Kansas City Chiefs season closer on Dec. 27. The Tampa Bay, Fla., sportscaster and news anchor

will work with Dave Rowe on the regional telecast.

College basketball ratings showed the beginnings of what figures to be a season-long horse race between the three broadcast networks with results from three big games on Dec. 12. CBS's coverage of the Louisville-Kentucky game led the day with a 3.6 rating in results from A.C. Nielsen Co. NBC hit a 3.2 rating for DePaul-Notre Dame, and ABC drew a 2.7 rating for its St. John's-UCLA coverage.

### Other

A battle could be shaping up between two financial giants for control of Orion Pictures. Last week, Sumner Redstone, owner of Viacom International, disclosed in a Securities and Exchange Commission filing that he has increased his stake in Orion from 23.9 percent to 25.1 percent for "investment purposes only." Several weeks ago, Metromedia President John Kluge declared in a similar filing that he now controls more than 19 percent of Orion's stock.

Jerry Falwell's "Old-Time Gospel Hour" last week laid off 100 workers in the direct-mail operation at the TV ministry's Lynchburg, Va., headquarters. "Gospel Hour" spokesman Mark DeMoss said the layoffs were not the direct result of a drop in viewer donations. #

# Personalities in the media reveal wishes

(Continued from Page 1)

**Jerry Dominus, vice president of sales, CBS Television Network:** "That (A.C.) Nielsen (Co.) gets its act together."

**Geraldo Rivera, host of "Geraldo!" and prime-time specials:** "I want to fulfill the movement already under way to defeat the network monopoly in news and information programming."

**Bruce Christensen, president, PBS:** "I would like to add the revenue from the sale of Super Bowl spots to our December pledge drives."

**Larry Grossman, president, NBC News:** "One week off in the sun and a scoop a week for NBC News."

**Ted Turner, chairman, Turner Broadcasting System:** "Peace on Earth."

**Roger King, chairman, King World:** "Show number four."

**Michael King, president and chief executive officer, King World:** "Show number five."

**Dennis Miller, president, Access Entertainment:** "I would like to become an adopted son of the King brothers."

**Robert Kipperman, vice president and general manager, CBS Radio Networks, New York:** "Double-digit growth for the radio network business and a little bit of Charlie Osgood in everybody's stocking."

**Preston Padden, president, Association of Independent TV Stations:** "A diary measurement service that accurately measures viewership."

**FCC Commissioner James Quello** wants a new three-year holding rule for broadcast stations: "Like a fine California wine, sell no station before its time. I also want to extend the spectrum auctioning proposal to its logical conclusion and auction off commissioner slots."

**Gene Jankowski, president, CBS/Broadcast Group:** "Peace and contentment this holiday season and always."

**Judge William B. Keene of "Divorce Court":** "Fewer divorces in the coming year and more marital harmony."

**Arthur Watson, president, NBC Sports:** "A new Major League Baseball contract."

**Robert Iger, vice president of programming, ABC Sports:** "I wish that we have yet another successful Olympic Games and a 49-48 (score for the) Super Bowl."

**Seth Abraham, senior vice president of programming operations and sports, HBO:** "I wish that Butch Lewis could buy a shirt so I could sue the shirt off his back." (HBO has been feuding with Mr. Lewis, a boxing promoter who is known to go shirtless when wearing a tuxedo).

**Phil Corvo, executive director, National Association of Television Program Executives:** "I wish the turmoil of our TV industry takeovers, mergers and shake-outs would become as calm as our Southern California weather."

**Kay Koplovitz, USA Network president and chief executive,** wants to go to the Okavango Delta in Africa, where she didn't get to go this year. Her safari was canceled.

**Sumner Redstone, chairman, Viacom International:** "Continued growth for Viacom, lower interest rates and health and happiness for all of Viacom's employees and associates."

**Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings, D-S.C., Senate Commerce Committee chairman:** "The fairness doctrine."

**Jonathan Frakes, Commander William Riker on "Star Trek: The Next Generation":** "To get some sleep. Doing 'Star Trek' is a wonderful but tiring experience."

**Dick Robertson, office of the president, Lorimar Telepictures:** "For my sister and niece to be with me at Christmas this year."

**FCC Commissioner Patricia Dennis:** "Peace on earth, good will toward men, and women, commissioners."

**James Dowdle, president, Tribune Broadcasting Co.:** "A healthy and happy New Year."

**Donald Ledwig, president, Corporation for Public Broadcasting:** "A permanent, stable source of funding for public broadcasting" and a world in which "cable systems would carry all public television stations."

**Ellen Agres, vice president of corporate planning, NBC:** "A level playing field, in terms of regulating restrictions on the networks. The networks should be freed from the restrictions that prevent them from competing with new networks, like Fox, and cable MSOs, like TCI."

**Bryan Burns, executive vice president of broadcasting, Major League Baseball:** "The elimination of the compulsory license."

**Marina Sirtis, Counselor Deanna Troi on "Star Trek: The Next Generation":** "The continued success of "Star Trek: The Next Generation," and also to have the opportunity to perform live on stage with my favorite group, Bon Jovi."#



ABC will move "The Charmings" (above) on Thursdays to 8 p.m. (ET) from 8:30 p.m., effective Jan. 14. "Sledge Hammer!" will move from 8 p.m. Thursdays to 9 p.m. Fridays.

## ABC shift of 'Dolly' to Saturday strikes at 'Star Trek' pre-emptions

(Continued from Page 3)

isn't sure what he'll do regarding "Dolly."

"It's a little early for us to tell," echoed Carolyn Stevens, program director at WCTI-TV, Greenville, N.C., which also pre-empts for "Star Trek" on Saturday. But she speculated that the ABC affiliate will probably take "Dolly" on Saturdays and move "Star Trek" to Fridays.

Meanwhile, ABC also said it will remove three other series next month and relocate six others.

The network will remove "I Married Dora," "Hotel" and "Buck James" from its schedule in January, but said all three shows will return later this season.

"I Married Dora" will have its last broadcast on Jan. 8, "Hotel" on Jan. 9 and "Buck James" on Jan. 10.

On Jan. 14, "The Charmings" will move to 8 p.m. Thursdays from 8:30 p.m., and the next night "Mr. Belvedere" goes to 8:30 p.m. Fridays from 9 p.m., while "Sledge Hammer!" hops from Thursdays at 8 p.m. to Fridays at 9 p.m.

"The Thorns," a previously announced new series from producer Mike Nichols, will appear at 9 p.m. on Fridays beginning Jan. 15, instead of the 9:30 p.m. slot it was to inhabit.

Also, "Ohara" will go back to Saturdays at 9 p.m. from 8 p.m. beginning Jan. 16 and "Spenser: For Hire" moves to

Saturday at 10 p.m. from Sunday at 8 p.m.

The network will also bring back "The ABC Sunday Night Movie" at 9 p.m. on Jan. 17.

"Juarez," a new series the network planned to premiere at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 16, is being withheld and will be added later.

"Further rescheduling, with additional new shows, is planned following ABC's airing of the Winter Olympic Games in February," ABC Entertainment President Brandon Stoddard said in a statement.

Olympics coverage is expected to preempt most of the network's prime-time schedule from Feb. 13 to Feb. 28. #

## Cable acts cautiously after must-carry dies

(Continued from Page 4)

Committee, which would have jurisdiction over must-carry legislation, isn't likely to be inclined to do favors for the NAB.

The NAB recently led a campaign that resulted in the defeat of the senator's proposal to tax sales of communications properties. It also has opposed efforts to re-establish the fairness doctrine, a proposal that Sen. Hollings favors.

"My sense is that if we fail to get the fairness doctrine, the effort (to do so) will not stop, and that will remain on the top of our agenda," said Rep. Al Swift, D-Wash, in an interview last week.

According to one high-level broadcasting industry source, who asked not be identified, broadcasters are also likely to be divided over what sort of must-carry

relief to seek.

The source said some of the major TV stations, which realize they'll be carried on cable even in the absence of a rule, will settle for legislation blocking cable systems from charging them for the carriage privilege.

But that won't take care of the concerns of the smaller stations, which will argue for new must-carry rules, according to this scenario.

The source, however, said the major TV stations won't accept all the trade-offs that Congress is likely to want in return for providing must-carry protection.

Instead, the source said the major stations are likely to seek a change in the copyright law to limit use of the compulsory license to cable systems that don't charge broadcasters for carriage. #



AL SWIFT

Fairness doctrine "on top of agenda"

## Joe Hamilton Productions sues The Disney Channel

By RICHARD MAHLER  
Los Angeles bureau chief

BURBANK, CALIF.—Joe Hamilton Productions has filed a \$2 million lawsuit claiming that The Disney Channel is developing a series based on the characters in its "Mama's Family" series.

The Hamilton company filed its suit against The Walt Disney Co. in Los Angeles Superior Court.

The suit claims the pay-cable service is moving ahead with an untitled show based on "Mama's Family" characters and created by writers Dick Clair and Jenna McMahon, who are also named in the complaint.

Although Disney officials declined to comment, sources said the show in question had not been announced and is not in pro-

duction.

"We've had extensive negotiations with the Disney people and they told us they intend to go forward" with a competing TV series, said Hamilton attorney Robert Albrecht, in a prepared statement.

"Mama's Family" is a sitcom series distributed in first-run syndication by Lorimar Syndication.

The Disney series reportedly would cast Carol Burnett, Joe Hamilton's ex-wife, and Vicki Lawrence, a former regular on "The Carol Burnett Show," in starring roles that recreate the characters of "Eunice" and "Mama," respectively.

Mr. Albrecht said his client is seeking an injunction to halt production of The Disney Channel show, along with \$1 million in compensatory damages and another \$1 million in punitive damages. #

## Group W picks up magazine series

By RICHARD MAHLER  
Los Angeles bureau chief

LOS ANGELES—Group W Productions has picked up national syndication rights to "Good Company," an in-house daily magazine series on Hubbard Broadcasting's KSTP-TV, Minneapolis-St. Paul.

The one-hour show, now in its seventh season on KSTP, will be offered by Group W as a daytime strip beginning in fall 1988.

A spokesman for the syndicator said the move has no impact on "The Wil Shriner Show," the daytime series introduced by Group W last September.

Some industry analysts have been less than impressed with "Wil Shriner's" ratings and predict it will not return for the 1988-89 season.

"We'll go with three shows if necessary," said the Group W spokesman, referring to the

two daytime strips and the previously announced daily "Getaway" series, also set for a September 1988 debut.

"Good Company," hosted by the husband-and-wife team of Steve Edelman and Sharon Anderson, has not been available in syndication.

Hubbard's Conus network of Ku-band satellite up-links will be used to feed the program to stations, as well as provide live reports from remote locations around the country.

For KSTP, the show has performed well in the 3 p.m. time period almost since its 1982 inception, especially among women ages 25 to 54.

The program's mix of entertainment and information includes celebrity interviews, health news, consumer advice, fashion reviews and beauty tips.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed. #

## NBC to pay for production of hour show from Cannell

(Continued from Page 1)

cation last month, Michael Dubelko, president of Stephen J. Cannell Studios, did give some insight into the thinking on the "Sonny Spoon" arrangement.

"In terms of (NBC) wanting to give us a license fee for the show, there is absolutely no way in the world, sitting down and looking at the equation, that we can make money on a show like this," he said at that time.

Under the NBC deal, he explained, Cannell will "have virtually all of the cost covered. We've traded the deficit for ownership."

Currently, deficits on hour-long shows run as high as \$300,000 to \$400,000 per episode for an action-adventure hour, with no certainty of making that money up in syndication even for a successful network hour.

Other producers of hour-long shows welcomed the deal, which some observers were describing last week as a strategic move by NBC to strengthen its position among producers should the current ban on network ownership and syndication of programming be relaxed.

Producer Glen Larson, who created and produced "Knight Rider," is now producing a new action show for NBC titled "The Highwayman," in association with New West Productions.

Last week, Mr. Larson admitted that he has had to use his own money to deficit-finance "Highwayman" to get it on the air, and he welcomed deals such as the "Sonny Spoon" arrangement. "Any time a network is willing to put up more money for production, it's a good sign," he said. "I think that NBC is the network that is really committed to the hour business."

CBS officials had no comment on the NBC deal, but an ABC spokesman said his network's long-term develop-

ment deal with producer Steven Bochco was structured in a similar way.

In the case of "Sonny Spoon," Mr. Agolia said NBC developed the project and then approached Cannell about making the show.

The show stars Mario Van Peebles as an unorthodox detective who's also a bit of a con artist and operates out of an out-of-order telephone booth.

It's one of two programs joining the NBC schedule, while two others depart and a third pair swap time periods.

The network canceled "Rags to Riches," a co-production of New World and Twentieth Century Fox Television that premiered last season, and the expensive but low-rated "Private Eye," a freshman series from Universal Television. Spared the ax was "J.J. Starbuck," which is said to remain in danger after being relocated in last week's revamp.

NBC will bring in Mr. Larson's "The Highwayman" to replace "Rags" in the 8 p.m. Friday slot, starting March 4. "Highwayman" stars Sam Long as an undercover law enforcer who operates out of a gadget-laden 18-wheel truck that can perform unusual feats.

"Sonny Spoon" will replace "Private Eye" at 10 p.m. on Fridays, starting Feb. 12.

NBC's Mr. Tartikoff also announced last week that two Peacock Network shows will swap time periods: "Hunter" and the new "J.J. Starbuck," which stars Dale Robertson.

Beginning this Saturday, "Starbuck" will appear at 10 p.m. Then beginning Dec. 29, "Hunter" will start running in "Starbuck's" old time period on Tuesdays at 9 p.m., opposite ABC's "Moonlighting." #

### AT PRESS TIME CONTINUED

Reagan was still said to be threatening a veto.

● CHICAGO—King World Productions offered last week to let stations air "The Oprah Winfrey Show" in late-night time slots, but the plan was halted by WLS-TV, the ABC station in Chicago that produces the talk show. Joe Ahern, WLS general manager, said WLS's contract with King World for "Oprah" says both parties had agreed not to offer the show in other dayparts. King World, in pitches to station representatives early last week, said it would allow stations currently airing "Oprah" during daytime to run it again in late night.

● LOS ANGELES—Fox Broadcasting Co. said Thursday it is revamping its Saturday night series "Second Chance" and will retitle it "Boys Will Be Boys" beginning Jan. 16, when all four of Fox's Saturday shows will switch time periods. (See related story, Page 8)

● LOS ANGELES—California Superior Court Judge Norman Epstein last week indicated he intended to dismiss a \$10 million lawsuit brought by actress Martha Raye against NBC "Late Night" host David Letterman. Ms. Raye had alleged that Mr. Letterman's reference to her as a "condom user" in a March 5 monologue implied she had frequent intercourse with people suffering from AIDS.

● GREENSBORO, N.C.—A federal bankruptcy judge here last Thursday temporarily blocked the Internal Revenue Service from revoking PTL's tax-exempt status. Judge Rufus Reynolds said revoking PTL's tax-exempt status would be the TV ministry's "kiss of death."

● CULVER CITY, CALIF.—Lorimar Television and New Line Cinema Corp. have reached a two-year agreement to produce a first-run syndicated TV program, tentatively titled "Freddy's Revenge," based on New Line's horror movie series, "A Nightmare on Elm Street."

● NEW YORK—Capital Cities/ABC's WPLJ-FM, one of New York's top-rated radio stations, changed its call letters to WWPR-FM at 5 p.m. last Thursday. The Contemporary Hit Radio station chose the new call letters because they come closer to identifying the station as "Power 95," the identifier used by WPLJ since 1985. #

## Checkerboard receives fatal blow

(Continued from Page 1)

stations' recent purchase of "Family Feud" from LBS Communications raised speculation that the checkerboard would be axed.

Another key factor, according to Mr. Harris, was the lack of available sitcoms for 1988 to replace any of the shows that were faltering.

"Conceptually the (checkerboard) idea is appealing, but we were faced with the practical problem of finding replacements," he said.

He said the original strategy was to run with the checkerboard over a period of several years, and substitute the lower-rated comedies with fresh product.

But he said there were not enough new first-run sitcoms in development for 1988 to make that strategy really work. He pointed out that when the NBC stations were developing the checkerboard strategy last year, they had more than 30

shows to look at, compared with five or six possibilities this time around.

Mr. Harris said the decision to cancel the shows also was made after a careful analysis of the October and November ratings books.

Richard Lobo, vice president and general manager of NBC's WMAQ-TV in Chicago, said the checkerboard fell about 4 or 5 share points below the station's projections and that the slate dropped off "slightly more" in the November book. But he called the checkerboard a "noble try."

Although the checkerboard becomes history next fall, Mr. Harris said that some adjustments have been made in the interim. Effective the week of Jan. 11, two of the five sitcoms will be rescheduled.

LBS's "You Can't Take It With You," currently airing on Wednesdays, will move to Fridays. In turn, MGM/UA's "We Got It Made," now airing on Fridays,

moves to Wednesdays.

At least temporarily, the other three sitcoms will remain where they are: Paramount's "Marblehead Manor" on Mondays; Lorimar's "She's the Sheriff" on Tuesdays; and MCA's "Out of This World" on Thursdays.

Mr. Harris said that it was also possible that some of those sitcoms may be replaced for the short term. He said only two of the five have succeeded: "She's the Sheriff" and "Out of This World."

Given the experience of the NBC stations in maintaining the checkerboard, Mr. Harris predicted that few stations would give the idea another whirl.

Last month, WCAU-TV, the CBS-owned station in Philadelphia, canceled its checkerboard, effective January 1988.

At press time, station executives for NBC stations in Los Angeles, New York and Washington didn't respond or weren't available for comment. #

## NBC's Walsh set to retire early

(Continued from Page 2)

from 1978 to 1979 before heading NBC's owned television stations operation.

He will retain his current title as he continues overseeing the reconfiguration of NBC's radio holdings and the company's involvement in new business ventures for another year. Mr. Walsh also will continue to help coordinate NBC's 1988 Summer Olympics coverage.

Mr. Walsh said last week his priorities for the next year include guiding NBC to another major-market TV station acquisition and a partnership with a principle cable TV service.

Beginning early next year, NBC Sports President Arthur Watson will begin reporting to Mr. Barber, and NBC Television Stations group president Al Jerome will begin reporting directly to Mr. Wright. Messrs. Jerome and Watson have been reporting to Mr. Walsh.

Sources say at least six other top-level NBC executives will indicate early next year that they also will exercise the early retirement option by the end of 1988. #



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