

# WJZ-TV STARTS *Elaborate Inaugural Program*

WJZ-TV New York, ABC's first owned and operated television station and the sixth video outlet to begin operations in New York, opened for business last week amidst festivities reminiscent of the gayest Hollywood movie premiere.

Its inaugural program ran from 7 until 11:40 p.m. Aug. 10 and included everything from Beatrice Lillie, one of the world's great comedienne, to fragments left over from a recent Fifth Ave. parade.

Civic, religious and business leaders participated in the opening ceremonies. More than 100 executives of ABC affiliated stations were invited and came to New York to see the show, and the net-

"We are and will continue to be years and years ahead of any other nation in the employment of this magical electronic instrument."

This was followed by a half-hour television presentation of *Candid Microphone*, an ABC sound broadcasting feature, and a pre-

view of several video features which will be on the station regularly. At 9 p.m., the show moved to the Palace Theatre, now a movie house but formerly one of the biggest vaudeville theatres in the city. The program was almost pure vaudeville, with performers doing

their specialties in turn. Ray Bolger, famed dancer, was m.c.

Among the outstanding performers at the Palace were Mr. Bolger, who in addition to his duties as an introducer of the other acts, did a few turns of his own; Beatrice Lillie, star of the current Broadway hit, "Inside U. S. A." James Barton, actor and one-time vaudevillian; Ella Logan, singer, Mary Raye and Naldi, ballroom dancers, Pat Rooney Sr., a vaudeville dancer and Paul Whiteman, ABC vice president and musical director, who led an orchestra in "Rhapsody in Blue."

Folk Dancing, Too

During an intermission at the Palace, the program returned to the ABC studios for half an hour of folk dancing by various national groups. This event had been originally scheduled for either Times Square or Duffy Square, but the police and fire departments did not approve.

Before the start of the Palace show at 9 p.m. the more than 100 station executives attended a buffet supper in the Hotel Astor. They then went to the Palace for the show. The several score advertiser and agency representatives were feted at a buffet in the Waldorf-Astoria. A large crowd of press was fed in the Rainbow Room lounge atop the RCA Bldg. and they watched the entire evening's program on special receivers installed there.

Following its mammoth debut program, WJZ-TV, which operates on Channel 7, took up routine programming Aug. 11, the next day. The schedule for Aug. 11 was: 5:30-6 p.m., *Cartoon Teletales*; 7-7:15, *News and Views*; 7:15-7:30, *Three About Town*; 7:30-8, film; 8-8:30, *Gay Nineties Review*, and 8:30-9, film.



Edward J. Noble, chairman of the board of ABC, is televised at inaugural.



Part of the inaugural program originated at New York's Palace Theatre.

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work sales department staged a debut party for scores of advertisers and agencies.

Early in the inaugural show ABC presented a "creed" which it plans to follow in its television broadcasting. The creed:

The American Broadcasting Co. is deeply aware of a high responsibility to the people in its approach to television. We are also deeply aware of a grave responsibility to ourselves. We shall, therefore, do our utmost to bring into your home the kind of programs we would want in our homes. We believe television will become one of the great forces in the world, and for that reason we regard our role not only as a privilege but also as a challenge. Thus, television imposes on us the profound obligation to use it with dignity, with skill, with honesty and care. We shall discharge that high obligation to the very best of our ability.

Edward J. Noble, chairman of the ABC board, and Mark Woods, the network's president, were televised in greetings to the WJZ-TV audience. Grover A. Whalen, chairman of the mayor's committee for the reception of distinguished guests, appeared as special representative of New York's Mayor William O'Dwyer who was absent on official business.

At the conclusion of these opening talks, the cameras went to the streets of Rockefeller Plaza, outside the RCA Bldg. where ABC is housed, to pick up various elements of a parade which was a feature of New York's summer-long golden anniversary celebration.

Kiernan Describes Parade

The televised parade included policemen dressed in uniforms of 50 years ago, carriages drawn by horses, some marching societies, bands, drum corps and fire fighting equipment. Walter Kiernan described the parade.

The program then returned to ABC studios. Following this Wayne Coy, FCC chairman, spoke from Washington, predicting that "in two years from now I expect to see 400 stations either in operation or under construction." He added:

## GIVEAWAY

MAJOR NETWORKS last week were putting the legal eagle eye on their giveaway programs to see how they stacked up against FCC's proposed anti-lottery regulations [BROADCASTING, Aug. 9], while private attorneys eyed the rules to decide how to advise their station, agency and other clients.

It was one long field day for the attorneys, most of whom agreed that the rules proposed by the Commission plainly seemed broader than those recently invoked by the Post Office Dept. with respect to lottery suspects.

Some private attorneys said they were prepared to advise clients that programs which select participants on the basis of skill—writers of the "best" letters on a given subject, for example—would pass muster under the proposed rules even though they obviously required "consideration" (as in answering the telephone, or listening to the program) and

equally obviously handed out prizes.

Others contended that, though they may agree with the objective of FCC's proposal, the job is not for the Commission but for the Justice Dept. or Congress. They pointed out that the lottery law (Sec. 316, Communications Act) is not directed against stations alone, but also against "persons," over whom FCC has no jurisdiction.

Argue on Application

Further, they argued, lotteries are not a proper subject for regulation—the law, they noted, specifically provides for punishment by fine or imprisonment, but does not mention license revocation or denial of license renewal. They insisted FCC should either refer specific programs to the Justice Dept. for prosecution, or should take its proposed rules to Congress and ask that they be enacted.

The public, meanwhile, was letting the Commission know that

## Legal Battle Brewing

for the most part it disapproved of the rules. Mail started mounting a few days after the regulations were announced. FCC authorities conceded that from a public relations standpoint they could hardly have made a more unfavorable move.

No network had yet prepared comment for submission to the FCC, which will accept comments until Sept. 10. But it was obvious that all were giving close attention to their own programming. After reaching a decision as to the status of their own shows under the proposal, they would decide what position to take officially.

Most agreed, however, that any reasonable guide post for future application of federal laws against lotteries would be welcome. Heretofore, some network attorneys have sought opinions concerning the legality of shows from the Post Office Dept. rather than from the

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