

TV CONVERTERS

McDonald, Wilson Disagree

COMMDR. E. F. McDonald Jr., president of Zenith Radio Corp., took RCA Victor's Executive Vice President J. G. Wilson to task last week for saying high-band television converters can be built when high-band TV standards have not been fixed.

Zenith has been criticized on the same grounds in connection with its advertisements making high-band claims for its low-band receivers.

Mr. Wilson had said TV receiver obsolescence fears are "unfounded" and that suitable converters can be provided, but that it is impractical to design a high-band set until it is known which UHF channels will be available [BROADCASTING, April 4].

Commdr. McDonald quoted Mr. Wilson as saying "investigations have not reached the stage that will permit the establishment of commercial standards" and that "it has already been demonstrated that a suitable converter can readily be applied to sets now in use" to make them tune both VHF and UHF channels.

The Zenith head observed:

"I would like to know why Mr. Wilson leads the public to believe that converters will make present receivers work on the new frequencies, if he does not know what the standards are to be. He should know that if the present 6 mc standards are changed no converter will work on the new frequencies and none of the present receivers can be made to function properly on the ultra-highs. The answer to this question to me will be the answer to the soundness of his entire statement."

VIDEO PRODUCERS

Will Meet in New York

INDEPENDENT Television Producers Assn. Inc., New York, will hold its first annual meeting on Thursday, April 21. Members will elect officers for the coming year, and draw up a code of practices.

Mal Boyd, president of Television Producers Assn., Hollywood, will address the meeting, and will announce a full affiliation between the two associations.

Also to be discussed is the ITPA film series, *Showcase*, comprised of the best of each producer's output, which the group hopes to schedule shortly on one of the networks. The series, it was learned, is being considered as a summer replacement for sponsorship by a tobacco account.

Puppet Series

TELEPAK INC. has optioned 26 half-hour films featuring puppets for possible leasing to a national advertiser. Films were produced by a French company and Telepak hopes to sell package at \$4,000 a week. It is understood that N. W. Ayer is interested in the series.

MARATHON AIDS CANCER FIGHT

Berle on 12 NBC TV Stations 16 Hours



Niles Trammell (r), NBC president, and New York's Mayor William O'Dwyer (l) wish Mr. Berle well at start of the TV marathon.

A 16-HOUR marathon performance by Milton Berle over 12 NBC television stations solicited contributions approaching \$1 million for the Damon Runyon Memorial Cancer Fund, it was indicated on the basis of collections last week.

Mr. Berle, star of *Texaco Star Theatre*, (NBC-TV Tuesdays, 8-9 p.m.) began his marathon at noon April 9 and quit at 4 a.m. April 10. NBC figured the time of the marathon was worth \$87,000 at card rates.

The star was assisted by an NBC staff in New York of 23 pages, 34 engineers, five electricians, 14 stage hands, four directors, six programming assistants, three secretaries and one night television program manager. Three hundred volunteer telephone operators were employed,

and 30 showgirls and models assisted Mr. Berle in answering telephone calls.

Overtime salaries for its staff members accounted for an \$8,500 out-of-pocket expense to NBC. This did not include straight salaries.

Stations carrying the telecast were WNBT New York, WBEN-TV Buffalo, WBZ-TV Boston, WRGB Schenectady, WPTZ Philadelphia, WNBW Washington, WBAL-TV Baltimore, KSD-TV St. Louis, WNBK Cleveland, WSPD-TV Toledo, WNBQ Chicago and WNHC-TV New Haven, Conn.

WBAL-TV claimed that on the basis of the number of television sets in use in the various cities it had the highest percentage response during the marathon. The station reported \$57,351 in pledges for the cancer fund drive. WBAL-TV remained on the hour 17 hours—until 5:07 a.m.—to acknowledge donations.

P&G TELEVISION

Signs With GTE for 13 Shows

FIRM contract between Procter & Gamble Productions Inc. and General Television Enterprises Inc., calling for 13 television film programs of 26 minutes each, was signed April 8 [BROADCASTING, April 4].

GTE will lay out sums of \$8,000-\$12,000 in production costs but P & G will pay lesser sums. These to vary, based upon station use and re-use. Adventure stories drawn from fact and fiction will form basis of series titled, *Procter & Gamble Fireside Theatre*.

Gordon Levoy, president of GTE, has announced that production of the series will commence in the near future but, as BROADCASTING went to press, name of the producer had not been disclosed. Each of the 13 half hours will consist of two story units of 13 minutes each.

Contracts were signed by Mr. Levoy, William F. Craig, manager of television for Procter & Gamble, and Lewis H. Titterton, Compton Adv. Inc. vice president in charge of radio and television. Gil Ralston, P & G executive producer, will oversee the series.

TV vs. MOVIES

'Fortune' Reports

THE IMPACT of television on the motion picture industry though "in doubt," is covered in *Fortune* magazine's article "Movies: End of an Era?" which appeared in the April 1 issue.

"About it [television] there are two conflicting views: one that it will be in good part absorbed by the movie theatres; the other that it will bring the movie theatre into the home. Obviously if it does the latter, the public theatre will wane." That theatre-owning companies have bought into television is well known, and they "are confident" that large-screen television will "compete favorably for public attention against home television."

Phonevision, as the article points out, seems to be the only way to solve the financial problem of first run movie telecasts. "How can you amortize even a half-million dollar movie production on a free show?" "Producers," the article continues, "naturally like this idea [Phonevision], for it promises

WBKB TO CBS

Contract Starts Oct. 12

WBKB (TV) Chicago will become the key CBS television outlet in Chicago Oct. 12. Affiliation was announced last Monday simultaneous with an announcement from WGN-TV Chicago, that it had terminated a contract with CBS, effective the same date.

The WBKB-CBS contract was signed by J. L. Von Volkenburg, CBS vice president in charge of television; William A. Schudt Jr., CBS director of station relations; John Balaban, secretary-treasurer of Balaban & Katz, WBKB owner, and John Mitchell, WBKB general manager.

Under terms of the contract between WGN-TV and CBS, six months' notice was required to terminate their agreement. Negotiations toward an adjustment of contract differences between the two organizations began April 5. The original contract between the two corporations was signed last Nov. 8 under which WGN-TV "agreed to outlet CBS television programs until such time as the network obtained its own facilities or the agreement was terminated," according to a statement from Frank P. Schreiber, general manager of WGN Inc.

Prior to its agreement with CBS, WGN-TV had affiliated with DuMont Television Network. That contract remains in force, Mr. Schreiber said. "A conflict of program schedules between DuMont and CBS became a reality with availability of service from the three co-axial cables from the East," said a WGN-TV announcement. "Both the DuMont and CBS networks offered competing programs in the same time periods. It is understood that MBS will announce its television network plans between now and next fall."

After this statement was released, Ted Streibert, chairman of Mutual and president of WOR New York, disclosed the network will begin television operations "sometime in the fall." WOR will inaugurate TV operations in June, he said.

Lewis Allen Weiss, head of the Don Lee network who recently resigned as MBS chairman, previously had revealed his West Coast TV plans, but corroborated Mr. Streibert's statement that network TV will get underway by fall. New York, Boston, Chicago and Washington will be served by co-axial cable and the Don Lee network will use film, it was learned.

larger revenues than the theatre could provide; whatever happens, producers see television as a boom."

Movies, it concludes, are finally meeting competition from a medium which can do the same tricks that it can, "And here is a medium that has appealed first of all to that great juvenile audience, the obsession of the movie business."