

# closed circuit

**GENERAL MILLS' PLANS** • Reports of fantastic spot tv-radio (primarily tv) commitments by General Mills for new fiscal year (June 1) can be laid to rest. Here are facts: Company has been holding usual annual round of agency conferences regarding broadcast recommendations. There may be some spot but no heavy campaigns planned for cereals (Wheaties, Cheerios, Kix) this summer. GM will renew current slate of tv network programs (*Lone Ranger*, *Barker Bill*, *Ding-Dong School*, *Bob Crosby* and *Robert Q. Lewis* shows, *Valiant Lady*) and is buying new Disney *Mickey Mouse Theatre* kid strip. As one top GM executive put it, "Aside from Disney, we're merely keeping what we've had." Agencies involved: Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, Knox Reeves, BBDO, William Esty, Tatham-Laird.

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**SHOULD** television station licenses and network affiliation contracts be extended to five years and run concurrently, under FCC regulations? That proposal was discussed at NARTB Tv Board meeting in Hollywood, Fla., last Wednesday, but did not reach formal vote. Question presumably arose over recent rash of network affiliation changes under present two-year rule.

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**FAST FILMING** • DuMont's new telecasting technique, designed to cut down production and transmission costs through combination of methods tied into new, virtually instantaneous filming process [B•T, Jan. 3] will be unveiled within three weeks by Dr. Allen B. DuMont himself. Lid has been on primarily to protect patent and other rights, it's understood.

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**NARTB board** is doing its negotiating early with President Harold E. Fellows. Although his present contract doesn't expire until June, next year, board designated committee last week to talk terms for new five-year deal, possibly to be made as of June, 1955. In works may be substantial increase in pay over present \$40,000 plus increase in allowances and sliding scale looking toward eventual retirement as president and retention as board chairman, post he holds along with presidency.

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**PAY-SEE PROGRESS** • Differing attitudes toward subscription tv explored again for 'nth time by FCC last week, with varying staff proposals considered and with staff ordered to do further work on subject. Next FCC look-see at controversial pay-tv idea due next week.

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**TWO schools** of thought regarding legalities of subscription tv have evolved at FCC during month-long consideration. Majority believes Commission has power to determine by itself whether pay-tv is broadcasting and if so whether it is in public inter-

est. Minority questions this, would like to have that question explored in public hearing, along with such other items as technicalities, whether single or several such services should be authorized, exclusivity of franchises, and other facets. Commission officially stated its view that it has power to determine whether subscription tv was broadcasting in memorandum last year to House Interstate & Foreign Commerce Committee during consideration of *Hinshaw Bill* which proposes to narrow definition of term broadcasting to exclude subscription tv.

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**MIDFIELD PLAYER** • Selection of E. L. (Dick) Romney, Mountain States Conference commissioner, as chairman of new NCAA Tv Committee may presage compromise football television plan acceptable to Big Ten and other factions in association. He is considered middle-roader on tv problem, with thinking reportedly somewhere between proposal of Eastern Collegiate Athletic Assn. for continued national restrictions with liberalized policy of protection for less attractive games and that of Notre Dame for unlimited football telecasts.

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**TOP GAG** at NARTB board meeting in Hollywood, Fla., last week, stemming from recent top network disaffiliations, ran this way: "You can't tell your affiliation without a scorecard, get today's morning lineup."

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**SABOTAGE REPORT** • Within fortnight FCC will get report by staff on investigation of sabotage at KPIX (TV) San Francisco, discovered after walkout of technical employees that's now settled. Significant aspect of case, according to Commission officials, is pointing up of security vulnerability of nation's principal communication links with public.

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**SAN FRANCISCO's** television stations are faced with prospect of another strike, this time because of basic differences with AFTRA on freelance talent. Stations want to knock out "code concept" which requires them to police for union and are insisting upon usual employe-employer relationship. Present contract expired last Nov. 15, and current signs point to impasse.

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**DIME TIME** • Woolworth Co. (dime stores), New York, through Lynn Baker, New York, understood to be shopping among radio networks for possible sponsorship of one hour weekly.

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**NEW success story** may be written by *Mystik Adhesive Products*, Chicago (*Mystik tape*), in abrupt switch of perhaps 95% of budget from spot tv to spot radio, effective Feb. 14. Firm started in spot tv in September, 1950, with 12 markets, grad-

ually increased to 30-35, bought part of CBS-TV *Garry Moore* show in 1953 (on some 54 stations) and returned to spot tv with 25-35 markets last year. Feeling in firm is that tv was good introductory medium and did fine job, but competitors took edge off demonstrable abilities. Radio had been used only in test markets. Tv budget not ascertainable but overall ad allocation in 1954 was \$450,000. Credit Radio Advertising Bureau with vigorous assist.

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**STALLED** • NARTB's move to standardize tv film purchase contracts is proceeding with caution. Holding up action is difficulty of dealing with film suppliers, who range from one-man units to big corporations and have no association of their own. Tough nut to crack is stabilized formula covering all property rights in films, with claim made some telecasters have bought packages only to discover hidden creditors and misrepresentation of seller's title.

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**TvB** has signed with A. C. Nielsen Co. for special national study to determine actual coverage of automatic washing machine homes by daytime tv spot schedules. Survey, tentatively set for completion May 1, at cost of about \$6,000, will be used in presentations showing why tv ought to get bigger share of national ad budgets of sudless detergent manufacturers who currently are placing more in newspapers than tv.

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**NATIONAL-LOCAL** • Problem of national advertisers pushing for local rates in spot advertising is being investigated by Station Representatives Assn.'s Rates Committee, headed by Bob Eastman, executive vice president of John Blair & Co., station representation firm. Recommended procedures will be developed when study has been completed.

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**NESTLE Co.**, New York, currently sharing first half of Jackie Gleason Show (*Saturdays*, 8-9 p.m. on CBS) with *Schick Inc.* and *W. A. Sheaffer Pen Co.*, will sponsor full half-hour next fall. Show will be produced by Jackie Gleason Enterprises and will precede filmed half-hour *The Honey-mooners*, which Buick will sponsor. Meanwhile, CBS-TV is discussing other programs with *Schick* and *Sheaffer*, but no time periods have been offered since network's Class A evening time is SRO.

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**ROANOKE MERGER** • Papers signed late Friday to end Roanoke ch. 7 battle, with Times-World Corp. (WDBJ) to buy television assets of ch. 7 competitor WROV, including tower, studios and equipment of defunct ch. 27 WROV-TV. Agreement and price to be announced this week after inventory. WROV will drop ch. 7 bid, devote fulltime to radio. Pact does not include recoup of WROV's uhf losses.