

TAFT STATIONS SWITCH TO ABC-TV

'Meteoric rise' in programming given as reason for move

Switch of the Taft Broadcasting Co. stations from affiliation with CBS-TV to ABC-TV was made last week. Effective April 30, WKRC-TV becomes ABC-TV's primary tv affiliate in Cincinnati, while Taft is giving notice of termination of a 12-year affiliation with CBS-TV in Cincinnati. Taft also will assign primary affiliations agreements with ABC-TV for two of its other stations: WBRC-TV Birmingham, Ala., and WKYT (TV) Lexington, Ky.

WTVN (TV) Columbus, from its inception has been affiliated with ABC-TV, which was pointed to by Hulbert Taft Jr., president of Taft Broadcasting Co., as a favorable experience and partly responsible—along with ABC's "meteoric rise" in programming—for the changeover.

Mr. Taft said his company was "convinced its progressive improvement" of service in all three areas now would be "accelerated."

CBS-TV will affiliate with WCPO-TV Cincinnati. The station formerly carried ABC-TV programs.

Mort Watters, vice president and

general manager of the WCPO stations, in announcing the termination of the contract said "WCPO-TV has been operating on a month-to-month basis with the network since Oct. 1. The disaffiliation comes as a result of WCPO-TV's unwillingness to accept the latest contract proposal of ABC-TV which was made by the network on Feb. 15."

\$4 million offer to buy WNTA-TV called too low

An offer to buy WNTA-TV New York for \$4 million and use it for a non-commercial educational television station was rejected by the station's management, it was reported last week. The offer was termed "inadequate" by station officials.

Howard Stark, a New York station broker, acknowledged that he had forwarded the proposal to WNTA-TV's management on behalf of a group of leading citizens in New York. He said he has been authorized to "offer more money at the proper time."

National Telefilm Assoc., owner of the station, announced several weeks

ago that it was placing both WNTA-TV and WNTA up for sale in order to raise funds to retire short-term debts (BROADCASTING, Feb. 20). Reports circulated last week that NTA has placed a price of \$7 million on WNTA-TV.

Ely A. Landau, who resigned from NTA as board chairman in order to bid for the station, was reported to be "confident" that he could form a syndicate to top the educational group's offer.

The group of citizens that hopes to buy the tv station is headed by Howard C. Sheperd, board chairman of the Greater New York Fund and retired chairman of the First National City Bank, New York. The National Educational Television & Radio Center has been assisting the citizens' group in planning for an educational tv outlet in New York.

AN ART, NOT A CRAFT

That's how NAB's Collins describes broadcasting

Broadcasting must be developed as a profession to reach "a pinnacle of responsibility we can all be proud of," NAB's Assn. of State Presidents was told Feb. 23 by NAB President LeRoy Collins at the concluding luncheon of the group's sixth annual Washington conference.

In a talk to state association officers representing 45 states, Gov. Collins described broadcasting "as an art, not a craft." He said that to deserve a professional status, the broadcaster "must give a full measure of his talent. He must recognize that his greater and greater power in a free society carries with it a greater and greater responsibility to serve."

Once again Gov. Collins made a reference to the role of networks in industry affairs. He told the state presidents broadcasting "doesn't belong to the networks, advertisers or rating firms but is theirs to build into a noble structure." In his Feb. 10 talk to the NAB board he had said NAB should be the industry voice rather than networks.

The nation's struggle for freedom can be successful, he said, "only with the aid of electronic communication. In foreign lands people who cannot read must be helped to understand freedom through words they can hear and pictures they can see. At home, through broadcasting, our democratic institutions can be strengthened to become vigorous, moving, achieving forces—or, by lethargic indifference or misuse, they can crumble away."

Looking at the practical side, Gov. Collins added, "The spirit I want to see can mean more profits to you . . . and can build broadcasting to a pin-



Concluding the Taft-ABC-TV arrangements last week:

Seated are Julius Barnathan, vice president in charge of affiliated stations, ABC-TV (left), and Hulbert Taft Jr., president of Taft Broadcasting Co. Standing (left to right): Robert L. Coe, vice president in charge of station relations, ABC-TV; Robert Schlinkert,

vice president, Birmingham Div., Taft Broadcasting Co. and general manager of WBRC-TV; Fred von Stade, general manager, WKYT (TV) Lexington, Ky.; Lawrence H. Rogers, II, vice president, Taft Broadcasting Co.; Sam T. Johnston, general manager, WKRC-TV Cincinnati, and David G. Taft, executive vice president of Taft.