Minow observes 'a vast wasteland'
WARNS BROADCASTERS 'MUST DELIVER A DECENT RETURN TO THE PUBLIC'

FCC Chairman Newton N. Minow told 2,000 persons attending the 39th Annual Convention of the National Association of Broadcasters that he had detected an advance nervous apprehension about what he might say in this, his maiden speech since taking office March 2. Then, after limiting his remarks to television, he proceeded with a severe criticism of programming, labeling it a "vast wasteland." He declared that he was "unequivocally opposed to government censorship" but demanded that broadcasting be improved. Following is a condensed version of the text of the FCC chairman's speech.

I T MAY COME as a surprise to some of you, but I want you to know that you have my admiration and respect. Yours is a most honorable profession. Anyone who is in the broadcasting business has a tough row to hoe. You earn your bread by using public property. When you work in broadcasting you volunteer for public service, public pressure, and public regulation. You must compete with other attractions and other investments, and the only way you can do it is to prove to us every three years that you should have been in business in the first place.

I can think of easier ways to make a living. But I cannot think of more satisfying ways.

I admire your courage—but that doesn't mean I would make life any easier for you. Your license lets you use the public's airwaves as trustees for 180,000,000 Americans. The public is your beneficiary. If you want to stay on as trustees, you must deliver a decent return to the public—not only to your stockholders.

Industry's State of Health
As to your health: let's talk only of television today. 1960 gross broadcast revenues of the television industry were over $1,268,000,000; profit before taxes was $243,-
900,000 an average return on revenue of 19.2%. Compared with 1959, gross broadcast revenues were $1,163,-900,000, and profit before taxes was $222,300,000, an average return on revenue of 19.1%. So, the percentage increase of total revenues from 1959 to 1960 was 9%, and the percentage increase of profit was 9.7%. This, despite a recession. For your investors, the price has indeed been right.

I have confidence in your health. But not in your product. It is with this and much more in mind that I come before you today.

I am in Washington to help broadcasting, not to harm it; to strengthen it, not weaken it; to reward it, not punish it; to encourage it, not threaten it; to stimulate it, not censor it.

Above all, I am here to uphold and protect the public interest.

What do we mean by "the public interest"? Some say the public interest is merely what interests the public. I disagree.

So does your distinguished president, Governor Collins. In a recent speech he said, "Broadcasting to serve the public interest, must have a soul and a conscience, a burning desire to excel, as well as to sell; the urge to build the character, citizenship and intellectual stature of people, as well as to expand the gross national product.

... By no means do I imply that broadcasters disregard the public interest. ... But a much better job can be done, and should be done." I could not agree more.

Your industry possesses the most powerful voice in America. It has an inescapable duty to make that voice ring with intelligence and with leadership. Ours has been called the jet age, the atomic age, the space age. It is also, I submit, the television age. My subject today is the television industry and the public interest.

Like everybody, I wear more than one hat. I am chairman of the FCC. I am also a television viewer and the husband and father of other television viewers. I

programming that he has proposed.

"Many of our client shows on the air have demonstrated BBDO's attitude. These include Armstrong Circle Theatre, The DuPont Show of the Month, The General Electric Theater, The United States Steel Hour and such local programs as Biography of a Rookie, The Story of St. Patrick and Now, Nigeria.

Good for Public • "We believe that wise sponsorship and good television are compatible and that what is good for the public is also good for advertising."

Richard A. R. Pinkham, director and senior vice president in charge of broadcasting operation, Ted Bates—"Mr. Minow made a darn good speech." It was a "constructive one" that avoided the common pitfalls and he applauded the "cause of action" outlined by Mr. Minow. Mr. Pinkham was particularly interested in the FCC chairman's plan for community hearing on tv license renewals. "I'm all for it," he declared. "I think the public should always be heard and if we can hear from them in a way other than through ratings or letters, so much the better." He went on to say that Mr. Minow might be surprised by the reactions of the public. "He may find that the public likes the current state of programming," Mr. Pinkham said. "The important thing is that it will give the public a chance to be heard."

Harry G. Ommerle, senior vice president of Sullivan, Stauffer, Colwell & Bayles—"terrific, forthright, informed, authoritative, constructive." It was a great statement of aims in this agency-

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