

by Don Durgin, president of NBC-TV, a major presentation will be given the morning of May 13 on the network's current activities and plans for the 1969-70 season.

The May 12 formal business will be a panel session featuring NBC news correspondents from news centers in the U.S. and abroad. Among the social events on the agenda are receptions and dinners at two production studio centers—at 20th Century-Fox May 12 and at Universal studios May 13. Convention activities will be held at the Century Plaza hotel.

The convention starts with a reception and buffet at the hotel Sunday evening. Mr. Scott and Mr. Goodman are luncheon speakers May 12 and 13 respectively and Mr. Durgin's talk will precede his formal presentation on May 13.

The attendance figure was projected by Donald J. Mercer, vice president, station relations, NBC, who will be joined at the convention by the following station relations officials: Raymond T. O'Connell, director, and station relations regional managers Joseph Berhalter, Thomas Berresford, A. A. (Tony) Cervini, William Kelley, Malcolm (Bud) Laing, Pierson Mapes, Paul Rittenhouse and Thomas White.

Times-World sells WDBJ-TV for \$8 million

The Times-World Corp., Roanoke, Va., which intends to sell its newspapers to Landmark Communications, last week found a buyer for its WDBJ-TV. The station will be sold to the *South Bend (Ind.) Tribune* (WSBT-AM-FM-TV South Bend) for approximately \$8 million, subject to the usual FCC approval.

Still in negotiations are the sale of WDBJ-AM-FM, both of which will be sold separately. After Times-World and Landmark agreed on the purchase of the Roanoke operation, which includes the *Roanoke Times* and *World-News* (BROADCASTING, Nov. 18, 1968), it was decided to spin off the broadcast properties. The spin off is due principally to the overlap between WDBJ-TV and Landmark's WFMY-TV Greensboro, N.C.

The Times-World Corp., headed by M. W. Armistead III, also owns a Roanoke shopping center and a semi-weekly newspaper in Galax, Va. Franklin D. Shurz is president of the buying group, which owns the *South Bend Tribune* and WSBT-AM-FM-TV. Other *South Bend Tribune* newspapers include the *Hagerstown (Md.) Herald-Mail*, California's *Indio Daily News*, *Brawley News*, and *El Centro Imperial Valley Press*, as well as Indiana's *Bloomington Herald-Telephone* and *Bedford Times-Mail*.

Landmark owns WTAR-AM-FM-TV Norfolk, Va., in addition to its Greens-

boro TV outlet, and Telecable Corp., owner of CATV systems in Alabama, North Carolina and West Virginia. Landmark newspapers are *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, and *Ledger-Star* and *Greensboro Daily News* and *Record*.

Pastore submits antistrike bill

Action on measures to protect licensees may be in offing

Senator John O. Pastore (D-R. I.) stuck a substantial prop last week under a "sword of Damocles" threatening broadcasters at renewal time. The Senate Communications Subcommittee chairman, who holds the key to Senate consideration of anti-strike-application legislation sought by broadcasters, introduced a slightly modified version of a bill that would bar competing applications for renewal of licenses unless the FCC first found the incumbent had not been serving the public interest.

The Pastore bill (S.2004) would confine the commission's determination of whether an existing broadcaster had been operating in the public interest to an examination of the "record and representations of the licensee." If the FCC found it should deny a renewal, the bill makes clear, then other applications could be filed and considered.

The Pastore move, which came without advance notice, fed speculation that the measure, approved by the National Association of Broadcasters and supported by individual and group stations, would see its first steps toward enactment taken in the Senate, rather than in the House, where—as of last Thursday (May 1)—a number of similar bills had been introduced.

Although a number of House Commerce Committee members have sponsored or cosponsored renewal bills, such support has yet to come from members in the committee leadership. Also, it is noted, the House committee faces a jammed agenda, caused in part by three solid weeks of hearings on cigarette labeling and advertising (see page 28).

The Senate committee is busy, too, but spokesmen wouldn't rule out some sort of action on the Pastore bill within the near future. It was understood, however, that plans for further consideration had not yet been formulated. They may or may not take the form of hearings. The Senate subcommittee has already aired the issues during appearances of the FCC and broadcasting leaders (BROADCASTING, March 10, 24).

At those hearings, and later at the annual convention of the NAB (BROAD-

CASTING, March 31), Senator Pastore made it clear that he regarded the encouragement of competing applications to be unfair and bad policy. At the hearings, the FCC commissioners, with two notable exceptions, took turns agreeing. Later it was indicated that the commission could, by re-establishing a policy torn asunder by the WHDH-TV Boston decision, repair the damage without resort to a legislative solution, which was then in the formative stage.

Decisions, at the NAB and elsewhere, to continue to push for antistrike legislation—while other approaches were also explored, such as policy or personnel changes at the commission—led to the introduction of the first bills three weeks ago in the House. Meanwhile, Senator Pastore kept his own counsel on the legislative approach, until last week when he submitted S. 2004.

As is Senate custom, other senators, although expressing interest privately in the legislation—sparked by vigorous contacts from home-state broadcasters—refrained from expressing that support publicly. Now, it is said, indications of that support from other senators can be expected to be communicated to Senator Pastore.

In introducing the bill, Senator Pastore said he was particularly concerned about the financial burden on stations exposed to competing applications, which almost automatically trigger costly comparative hearings.

He called the threat of competing applications a "sword of Damocles" hanging over the heads of legitimate licensees.

Echoing sentiments expressed in his March 24 speech at the NAB convention in Washington, the senator underlined the fact that "broadcasters must maintain the best and most modern equipment and gather together highly qualified professional personnel in order to best serve the public interest." This outlay, he declared, must be backed by "reasonable assurance that, if [the broadcaster] does his job—and does it well—then his license will be renewed and that his investment will not go down the drain." Senator Pastore emphasized that the burden of proof would remain with the broadcaster under the proposed measures, and that "this legislation does not give the broadcaster a license in perpetuity."

The Pastore bill extends the scope of the three-week-old campaign that had, by May 1, seen bills introduced or cosponsored by 39 congressmen in the House (BROADCASTING, April 28, 21).

The sponsors and cosponsors of these bills, 27 Republicans and 14 Democrats, represent 22 states. Last week's bills were introduced by Commerce Committee member Tim Lee Carter (R-Ky.), H. R. 10583; Edwin W. Edwards (D-La.), H. R. 10587; William Nichols