

At Deadline

In Brief

Fellow travelers. Leonard H. Goldenson, board chairman of ABC Inc., and Elmer W. Lower, president of ABC News, entered People's Republic of China last Friday (July 20) for three-week working tour of five cities. They are studying possibility of news exchanges between U.S. and China and hope to broach subject of eventually establishing full-time ABC News Bureau there. Stops: Peking, Canton, Shanghai, Nanking and Hangzhou.

▪ **Date's firm.** NBC-TV says it will start 1973-74 prime-time season Sept. 10, with specials and feature films substituting in time periods whose series premieres have been delayed by Writers Guild strike. ABC-TV, CBS-TV plan same start date, with same qualification. ▪ **Metoolism at NBC.** NBC News has assigned correspondent Betty Roilins to find trail of payola in recording industry. Her report—to be aired on NBC Nightly News at unspecified time in future—will occupy "several pieces, at least," according to spokesman. CBS News has had its investigative team at work on story since mid-June, on Friday denied report in *New York Times* that it had been unable to talk to personnel in Columbia Records division.

▪ **June was bustin' out all over.** Investments in network television advertising for June reached record for that month, climbing to \$136.1 million, according to Broadcast Advertisers Reports figures released by Television Bureau of Advertising. And color television set sales through June, for first six months of 1973, are up 18.5% over year ago, according to Electronic Industries Association. Sales (to dealers) were 3,952,457 units. Black-and-white sales, on other hand, at 3,090,528 units, were off 14.3% from comparable 1972 period. ▪ **Into driver's seat.** Stephen C. Riddleberger, executive vice president, Bartell Media Corp., named vice president and controller, Hertz Corp. ▪ **Returned to sender.** Worldvision Enterprises, New York, says it is returning distribution rights to offnetwork *The Dating Game* series to Chuck Barris Productions, but will distribute Barris's *The Newlywed Game* when it completes network run. ▪ **Bigger split.** Communications Satellite Corp. announced raise in quarterly dividend from 14 to 17 cents per share, on heels of sharp rise in second quarter and six-month earnings: the latter, \$15,223,000 or \$1.52 per share against \$12,566,000 or \$1.26 year earlier. ▪ **Take your time.** Extended from Aug. 1 until Sept. 4: deadline for filing comments with FCC in matter of ascertainment of community problems.

Big bundle in prospect for NFL rights

All three television networks are reported close to agreement with National Football League on new contracts which, by some estimates, would exceed \$200 million for four years beginning with 1974 season. Only significant change would be shift of Pro Bowl game from weekend telecasting on CBS or NBC to Monday night on ABC. Rights' total for 1973 breaks down to estimated \$47 million, with CBS shelling out \$22.5 million of that total, NBC \$16 million and ABC \$8.5 million.

WREC-TV target of first equal opportunity suit

EEOC says Memphis station discriminates against women, blacks in recruiting, firing; Brakefield calls suit 'outrage'

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has filed its first law suit alleging discrimination in employment on part of broadcast station. Target is New York Times's WREC-TV Memphis, whose president, Charles Brakefield, on Friday (July 20) called suit "outrageous."

EEOC, in suit filed in U.S. District Court in Memphis, says station discriminates against women and blacks in recruiting and hiring policies and by maintaining sex and race-segregated job classifications. Station also was accused of refusing to take affirmative action to eliminate its allegedly discriminatory employment practices and policies.

EEOC asks court to order station to end allegedly discriminatory practices and to carry out affirmative action policy "which will effectuate equal employment opportunities" for blacks and women and "to make whole those persons adversely affected" by policies being attacked in suit.

Mr. Brakefield said only discrimination complaint he is aware of involves white woman who about 18 months ago had inquired about job in newsroom and was told none was available. She filed complaint with EEOC. He said station has reached agreements covering employment practices with both black and women's groups in Memphis, and has filed them with commission. Relations with both groups, he said, have been good. He said blacks account for about 20% of workforce of about 90, and women about 26%. And members of both groups, he said, hold important jobs. "I think the suit is an outrage."

Although WREC-TV was first broadcast station named in EEOC court suit, WRC-TV Washington was twice cited by EEOC as having probably violated civil rights act—once because of alleged discrimination against women (BROADCASTING, Feb. 5); once, because of alleged discrimination against blacks (BROADCASTING, Feb. 19). In both cases, EEOC

said it expected station and complaining groups to attempt to work out their differences but that court suits would be filed if efforts failed.

CPB bill over House hurdle

House last Friday (July 20) overwhelmingly approved legislation authorizing two-year, \$130-million funding for Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Bill (H.R. 8538), introduced by Representative Torbert H. Macdonald (D-Mass.), covers fiscal 1974-75 and also provides for \$115 million in station-facilities grants to be distributed by Department of Health, Education and Welfare over four-year period. Legislation passed by vote of 363 to 14. Last-minute amendments by Representative William L. Clay (D-Mo.), which would have compelled CPB and noncommercial stations to conform more rigidly to nondiscrimination provisions of Civil Rights Act were defeated.

Senate has already passed two-year funding bill for CPB authorizing \$10 million more than called for in House measure (BROADCASTING, May 14). Both bills now go to joint congressional committee for collation exercise. (Early story page 21.)

Time absorbing Sterling

Time Inc. has agreed to acquire all assets and assume liabilities of Sterling Communications Inc., New York, of which Time already is majority owner. Agreement, subject to Sterling shareholder approval, provides that Time Inc. will purchase all of Sterling's assets for net cost of \$6.2 million. Of that figure, Sterling would use \$3.1 million to redeem its publicly held debentures. Sterling then will be dissolved and Sterling shareholders will receive \$2.625 per share.

Sterling comprises Sterling Manhattan Cable Television Inc. (CATV systems in lower Manhattan); Home Box Office, programing company for cable, and cable franchises on Long Island. Sterling recently reported net loss of more than \$10 million in last fiscal year. Agreement in principle to sell Sterling Communications for \$20 million to Warner Communications was terminated last month (BROADCASTING, July 2).