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## News takes charge in TV's week

Watergate and war provided rush of news breaks that kept network newsmen on jump last week with news bulletins inserted in regular programing and special programs replacing regular. In week that started Friday (Oct. 19), NBC-TV provided 4 hours 37 minutes of bulletins, inserts, interviews and special programs outside regular newscasts; CBS-TV provided 4 hours 11 minutes, ABC-TV 2 hours 37 minutes. It started with word of President Nixon's offer of compromise on disputed tapes, continued to, through, and beyond his news conference last Friday (Oct. 26). In between: Special prosecutor Archibald Cox's news conference Oct. 20, in which he made clear compromise was not satisfactory, and then, in rapid order, his firing, resignation of Attorney General Elliot Richardson, firing of Deputy Attorney General William Ruckelshaus, rising chorus of calls for President Nixon's impeachment and finally President's decision to release controversial tapes and then on-again-off-again plans for, first, nationwide TV address last Wednesday night and then TV news conference Thursday, also postponed. But that was only part of week's news, as partial cease-fire was achieved in Mideast, then abrogated, reinstated and left in balance.

Week's events prompted Public Broadcasting Service to pre-empt some 2½ hours of regular programing to make way for special reports from National Public Affairs Center for Television. NPACT got opportunity to test news pilot entitled *Washington*, whose format was utilized in half-hour specials Monday through Friday.

## FCC wants to know about leapfrogging

Two Albany, N. Y., area cable systems are expected to be granted waiver this week of FCC's antileapfrogging rules to permit them to import two New York independents. At same time, commission will probably indicate interest in holding rule-making on subject of leapfrogging.

Commission order, tentatively adopted last week, reportedly stresses community of interest between Albany and New York City in waiving rule that would have required systems to import signals of independents in Boston and Hartford, Conn. However, commission wants to clarify issues raised in rulemaking, rather than resolve them case by case.

Commission in January had denied request of systems, owned by Capitol District Better T. V. Inc., for permission to import WOR-TV and WPIX (TV) on ground Boston and Hartford independents were closer and that sufficient case for waiver had not been made. Order produced outpouring

**First blood.** First official FCC comment on Office of Telecommunications Policy's study purporting to show that 66 VHF channels could be dropped into 43 of top 100 markets (story page 17) could come from VHF champion Commissioner Robert E. Lee, who is expected to comment in speech Nov. 12 to National Association of Educational Broadcasters in New Orleans. Broadcast Bureau staffers greeted study with skepticism, but are withholding criticism pending computer-aided analysis of report. If errors turn up — as they think will — Mr. Lee will certainly use them against OTP.

of critical mail from Albany and New York state officials, and petition from New York state's Commission on Cable Television urging commission to permit systems to carry New York City signals.

*Mayo Thompson, new man on block at FTC, has lost no time in jumping on agency's proof-in-advertising bandwagon. He states disclosure and 'restitution' are two areas worth exploring. Page 43.*

*All-news format at KMEX-TV Los Angeles was nice idea while it lasted, but it didn't last long. Station drops program after three months of economic bad news. Page 45.*

*A classical perspective and corporate expertise work hand in hand for Tom Miller, head of CBS's TV stations division. A Broadcasting profile tells how. Page 65.*

## In Brief

**Staying put.** Six Chicago television stations have notified Sears, Roebuck & Co. that they will not move antennas to top of new Sears Tower building. Sears had offered to partially finance migration with \$5 million but stations — WBBM-TV, WGN-TV, WMAQ-TV, WCIA-TV, WFLD-TV and WSNS (TV) — said costs to them and other problems make effort unworthy. They'd each have to come up with \$700,000, Sears spokesman said. Most stations now transmit from John Hancock building, about 700 feet lower than Sears structure, world's tallest. WLS-TV and noncommercial WTTW-TV, already signed with Sears, will be transmitting by December and January, respectively. Others, still curious about Sears venture, have until Jan. 2 to change minds.

**Tight space at the inns.** Equipment manufacturers' hassle with NAB over space at next spring's convention in Houston was resolved last week in Atlanta. Hardware representatives traded their own bed space for hospitality rooms in three downtown hotels in Houston, plus another three close by. NAB officials had not allocated space at hotels nearest exhibition center for suites for manufacturers in original plans ("Closed Circuit," Oct. 15) and some hardware people were threatening to boycott. Even without manufacturers' squeeze, almost half of delegates will be staying in rooms outside downtown hotels, says NAB.

**First round to FCC.** Dr. Carl McIntire has lost first round in effort to free himself of government order barring him from operating pirate radio ship off Atlantic coast. U.S. District Court Judge Mitchell Cohen, in Camden, N.J., on Thursday denied Dr. McIntire's request for motion to dismiss temporary restraining order he had issued at government's request after Dr. McIntire began broadcasting over his Radio Free America (*Broadcasting*, Sept. 10). With restraining order remaining in effect, it will now be up to Dr. McIntire's lawyer to respond to government's complaint. Still to be scheduled is hearing on government's request for permanent injunction.

**Steady beat for NBC Radio.** Hourly news around clock will be provided by NBC Radio to its affiliates, starting Jan. 1. Network officials told stations at their annual convention early this month that around-clock news would be made available — if they wanted it. Response, NBC sources say, has been overwhelmingly favorable. Network now provides news on hour 20 times daily and is cutting length from 5½ to five minutes, effective today (Oct. 29), in what was described as further-response to affiliates' wishes (*Broadcasting*, Oct. 8). In case of major news breaks, NBC will have