

about to begin, as a sample of allegedly unfair publicity.

Judge Lohr then issued an order requiring that all pre-trial hearings be closed and prohibiting parties to those hearings from talking to reporters. Judge Lohr's decision was subsequently upheld by the Colorado supreme court and later the U.S. Supreme Court as the order was appealed by Denver TV stations and area newspapers.

Meanwhile, Miss Longet's lawyers prevailed on NBC to issue an on-air statement during the *Saturday Night* telecast of May 29, which said, in part, that the skit "was fictitious, and only humorous in intent . . . We want to correct any misunderstanding that we were suggesting that, in fact, a crime had been committed."

## Critics take after Abbott-sponsored show on ABC TV's

**Documentary on malnutrition was backed by formula-food maker; group denies any impropriety**

Should television stations accept substantial funding from a corporation for a documentary program in which the business firm has a direct financial interest? That question cropped up last week when the five ABC-owned TV stations carried a half-hour documentary, *The Unfinished Child's* that focused on malnutrition in pregnant women and newborn infants as the main cause of mental retardation, brain damage and learning disabilities in children. The program costs were an estimated \$370,000, and \$200,000 of that amount was provided by Abbott Laboratories, Chicago, and its subsidiary, Ross Laboratories, which makes formula foods for infants. There were no commercials in the program, but Abbott and Ross received donors' credits before and after the telecast.

Newspaper reports last week challenged the arrangement and a related facet: Abbott was given the right to show the documentary later to health-related organizations and government agencies. The implication was that Abbott would exploit the film for sales purposes.

Tom Craig, director of medical and scientific relations for Abbott, contended that "there is absolutely no intent to use the film as a sales tool. If that were so, we would have had an industrial film produced. This film is an educational vehicle; we use it in the same way we use other educational material."

ABC issued a statement saying its sole objective in producing *The Unfinished Child* was to "focus public attention on the unnecessary waste in human life." It said ABC "maintained total editorial control over the content of the program" and "neither the fact of sponsorship, nor any potential peripheral use of the film, influenced content in any way."

The program was produced for the ABC-owned stations by Lirio Productions,

**PITS splits.** Paramount Pictures Television, a major production company, and International Creative Management, a major talent agency, have called off their joint distribution venture (BROADCASTING, June 7), just four days after it was announced. The venture, which was to have been called Paramount International Television Sales (PITS), caused "a great deal of confusion within the industry," said Alvin Schulman, the president of Marvin Josephson Associates, which owns ICM. "A lot of people thought we were getting out of the agency business, including some of our own clients." There was widespread speculation—unconfirmed by the principals—that the deal aborted on fears of antitrust complications (talent agencies are precluded from participation in TV production) or union-talent disapproval (a number of Hollywood guilds prohibit agents from being active in production, to prevent their working both sides of the street).

Los Angeles, and was narrated by Patricia Neal. Following the program, each of the stations carried a locally produced half-hour discussion show.

Philip Boyer, vice president of programming for the ABC-owned TV Stations, said critics ignored "the positive aspects" of the program. He said ABC was sure there was nothing inappropriate in the arrangement with Abbott. But he also said ABC would be careful in the future to avoid any similar situation.

## U.S. attorney eyeing WNJR in payola probe

**Four years of records subpoenaed; station denies any wrongdoing**

The books, logs and financial records for the past four years of WNJR(AM) Newark, N.J., have been subpoenaed by the U.S. attorney's office in Newark as part of a payola investigation.

Harvey Lynch, general manager of the black-oriented station, confirmed last week that the subpoena had cited "payola and extortion." He heatedly denied the station had engaged in such practices.

A source in the U.S. attorney's office would neither confirm nor deny the inquiry had started.

Though Mr. Lynch had been quoted in New Jersey newspapers as saying that WNJR is one of a large number of black radio stations that were being victimized by the "very biased attitudes" of the investigators, he was more cautious last week. He said he did not want to comment further, pending action of the authorities.

WNJR has not had a permanent licensee since 1971 when the FCC denied renewal to Continental Broadcasting, a subsidiary

of Rollins Broadcasting. The station had been accused of logging and brokerage violations. An interim management partnership, WNJR Radio Co., ran the station until last November when it was removed. Since that time, a new three-group partnership, 1430 Associates, has assumed the operation. Four independent groups are now in the running for the permanent license.

## Programing Briefs

**'Music' men.** Metromedia Producers Corp. will syndicate new daily 60-minute talk-variety series *The Lorenzo & Henrietta Music Show*. MTM Enterprises, which will produce series in Los Angeles, says taping will begin next month for September debut. All six Metromedia-owned TV stations will carry series.

**One won, one lost.** Two television husbands were among those waiting for California primary results as their wives sought Democratic nominations. Sabrina Schiller won chance to run for California state senate. Mrs. Schiller is credited with inspiring political-campaign storyline on *Maude* series (Maude lost); husband Bob Schiller is producer of *Maude*. Wallace Albertson, wife of *Chico* and *The Man* costar Jack Albertson, was unsuccessful in her campaign for nomination to House seat available through retirement of Democrat Thomas Rees. That district represents western Los Angeles area.

**Laughing all the way.** Paramount Television Sales has now sold its half-hour off-network sitcom, *The Brady Bunch*, in 147 markets. Most recent signers include WMC-TV Memphis, WBMG Birmingham, Ala., and KENS-TV San Antonio, Tex.

**Rehabilitation.** Louise Lasser, star of *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*, has been placed on six-month drug diversion program following appearance in court on charges of cocaine possession. Ms. Lasser had been arrested last month (BROADCASTING, May 10). If first offenders successfully complete diversion program, criminal proceedings are dropped.

**Up and up.** Writers Guild of America West has shown fiscal 1976 gross earnings for TV, radio and motion pictures up more than \$16 million over fiscal 1975, to record \$73,491,621. Legal fees and expenses—including those for family viewing suit—rose more than \$50,000 over fiscal 1975, to \$92,501. Total registration fees for manuscripts also rose, from \$51,483 to \$62,967.

**Buying adventure.** R.D. Citron Associates, Miami, has acquired full ownership of *Great Adventure* series. Series was co-owned by Citron and WTVJ/Wometco Enterprises, also Miami. Company, headed by Richard Citron, producer and originator of *Great Adventure*, will also handle syndication.