they had a chance to study the FTC proposal. But ABC Washington Vice President Eugene Cowen implied that the proposal, if enacted, could lead to a curtailment of children's programing. Without commenting directly on the children's TV advertising proposal, he said that as a general rule, commercial programing has to have commercial support to be viable.

Peggy Charren, president of ACT, called the staff report a "significant victory" for the public and said she was "delighted" at the recommendations—although, she said, ACT would have preferred "a ban on all advertising directed toward children."

The ACT petition to the FCC, when taken with the FTC action, Mrs. Charren said, should bring about "significant changes in children's advertising on television." The FCC petition asked the commission to reduce immediately advertising levels on weekday children's programs from 12 to nine and a half minutes; to further reduce the number of commercial minutes per hour on children's programs to six per hour, and eventually to eliminate advertising on children's programs.

Mrs. Charren said that children's shows do "not have to have commercials" and added that it was helpful to her cause that the broadcasting industry is as profitable as it is. Children's television, she said, is a "public service" that broadcasters are compelled to provide with or without advertising. If the broadcasters think differently, she said, "see what happens when they apply for license renewals."

Allbritton deal twists slowly in the wind

FCC puts off meeting to reconsider; CCC and WSCI extend a deadline; 'Star' owner says commission forced him to sell the newspaper

The FCC last week placed one more straw on the camel's back of the station-transfer deal revolving around Joe L. Allbritton's WJLA-TV Washington, but that overburdened animal remained standing—at least until this week.

Last Wednesday, the commission voted to postpone a Feb. 24 meeting at which it was to reconsider its approval of the swap of WJLA-TV to Combined Communications Corp. for its KOCO-TV Oklahoma City and $55 million in CCC preferred stock. Feb. 24 was also the contractual deadline for the deal to have the green light from the government, but the parties to the sale agreed to put off that cut-off until Tuesday (Feb. 28), when the commission is expected to meet to reconsider. The parties also agreed late last week to extend the final, Feb. 28, contract deadline to March 3.

According to FCC sources, the commission vote to grant an extension of time, taken by circulation, received the full support of only four of the commissioners—Chairman Charles Ferris, Tyrone Brown, Joseph Fogarty and Robert E. Lee.

The request for more time was made by lawyers representing several Washington-area groups opposing the sale. They had asked for the extension in order to prepare responses to an affidavit filed by Mr. Allbritton that tells his side of the controversy surrounding the sale of the *Washington Star*.

Two weeks ago, the commission voted to reconsider its approval of the station transfer. That action was a response to the announcement two weeks earlier that Mr. Allbritton had agreed to sell the faltering newspaper to Time Inc. for $20 million (BROADCASTING, Feb. 6, 13, 20).

In his affidavit, a response to commission questions about the newspaper sale, Mr. Allbritton revealed that he had been disturbed by the FCC's order approving the sale which, he said he felt, "impaired" his financial plans for the paper. He said he "could no longer be assured" that the commission would allow him to retain $55 million worth of Combined Communications preferred stock "for the 20-year redemption term." Furthermore, Mr. Allbritton said, the FCC order "placed me on notice that divestiture may be required in the future" and "jeopardized the chance of my receiving a tax certificate."

Mr. Allbritton also said that the commission's order contained "strong indications" that it approved the sale initially "because the revenues created by the ex-

In Brief

Board of **IMS International,** New York, **voted down** agreement in principle whereby **CBS** would have acquired IMS for approximately $80 million cash (BROADCASTING, Feb. 20). Majority felt offer too low. CBS officials They said were "surprised and disappointed," and that IMS President David Dubow assured them in advance he had board's support for deal. They waid they were considering whether to take further action, with alternatives ranging from "getting off to getting back on full steam." Not being considered, they said: Raising $20-per-share offer to IMS shareholders.

□

McGeorge Bundy, Ford Foundation president, last week endorsed idea of **tax on commercial broadcasting** to help support noncommercial radio and TV. At Carnegie Commission meeting in New York on funding, he said levy could be **"political trade-off."** At same meeting, Exxon's Steve Stamas said his firm currently is largest corporate supporter of public medium, gave $4.5 million in 1977, $13 million since 1971. Mobil's Herbert Schmertz put his company's annual grants in $3 million range.

□

Estimate of viewers who watched some part of CBS-TV's Super **Bowl XII** Broadcast Jan. 15 is **now 102 million,** compared to CBS's original projection of 85 million. New figure comes from CBS, based on higher than expected viewers per household revealed in A. C. Nielsen's just-released pocketpiece for two weeks including Jan. 15. Low projection apparently resulted from inexperience in pegging viewing habits for first nighttime Super Bowl. New estimate makes broadcast **most-watched TV program in history,** outdistancing last episode of ABC-TV's *Roots* by some 17 million viewers.

□

UHF television households increased by 2.4 million in 12 months, reaching **67.9 million or 93%** of all U.S. TV households, according to Arbitron Television Census for fall 1977. Color TV homes increased by four million to reach 58.3 million, or almost 80%. Arbitron said 49 markets have over 95% UHF penetration, 36 have over 85% color penetration.

□

Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis has **set aside FCC's rules governing cable systems's access channels.** Unanimous decision by three judges in Midwest Video case (BROADCASTING, May 9, 1977) said rules adopted in 1976 that allow FCC to pre-empt cities in regulating access channels and impose requirements were beyond commission's jurisdiction.

□

White House last week proposed number of **amendments to public broadcasting legislation** now before Congress. Principal change involved reinstitution of 50% floor for community service grants, administered by Corporation for Public Broadcasting but paid directly to stations. **Robert Sachs** of Office of Telecommunications Policy said change was made after meetings with stations, where "unanimous judgment" was that both radio and television outlets "need that guarantee."

□

Robert Wold Co. and **RCA** are vying for rights to provide **satellite program-transmission service to Alaska,** and Wold hopes to swing deal with proposal to use CBS-developed STRAP (simultaneous transmission and recovery of alternating pictures) digital technology to double transmission capacity. RCA's Americom subsidiary would provide interstate service plus some intrastate-transmission, sending programing out to remote locations as it has been doing under government-funded project. Contract with state is for three years, covers up to 336 hours of programing per week.

□

Representative Robert Kastenmeier's (D-Wis.) Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties and the Administration of Justice has **scheduled hearings** on legislation to create **performer royalties** in Los Angeles March 28 and 29. Bill, by Representative George Danielson (D-Calif.), would require broadcasters and other users of recorded music to pay royalties to record performers and manufacturers. That will be only hearing for industry witnesses. Hearing has also been scheduled March 21 in Washington to hear Barbara Ringer, register of copyrights, whose recommendation for or against legislation is expected this week.