

asking the networks to direct commercial messages at the people who buy products. "Don't cajole children into nutritional bankruptcy," she said. Mrs. First also questioned the possibility of determining just what children's programming is, stating that youngsters spend an average of 25 hours a week in front of the TV screen—more than half of that time watching adult shows.

Watching all categories of public broadcasting these days is Gene Katt, deputy director of programming of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. With the "feeling that we've been resting on our laurels" and that its children's shows "have been getting a little stale," Mr. Katt said, CPB will, in a month or two, determine a list of new priorities after nearly a year of re-evaluating its programming for youngsters.

## 'Saturday Night Live' irks San Franciscans

**NBC-TV and its affiliate subsequently express public regrets over comedy insert that dealt with Moscone-Milk mourners**

KRON-TV San Francisco and NBC-TV have publicly apologized for a *Saturday Night Live* "Weekend Update" segment that satirized those mourning the deaths of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk.

Following the assassinations of Messrs. Moscone and Milk, the mock-news portion of *Saturday Night Live* (Dec. 2) featured footage of Chinese soldiers identified as either "dominant" or "submissive" homosexuals in mourning for Mr. Milk.

Supervisor Milk, an avowed homosexual, had been a representative for the gay community in the area.

Almost immediately after the broadcast, NBC-affiliate KRON-TV said, some 50 pickets showed up to demonstrate their distaste for the program. At least 100 calls were said to have come in, along with many letters.

Last Tuesday and Wednesday, KRON-TV aired its own reaction, with the station president and general manager, Paul Wischmeyer, calling the parody "particularly tasteless and offensive." Mr. Wischmeyer said that "We are appalled" that the network "would exhibit such callous disregard for the unprecedented tragedy."

He said that "the spontaneous, live nature" of *Saturday Night Live* made it "virtually impossible" to preview the program, but added that the segment "definitely would have been eliminated" if KRON-TV had known it was coming.

Mr. Wischmeyer apologized and said that NBC-TV also apologized—at the station's "insistence."

In fact, NBC-TV, issued two statements. The first said simply that "Weekend Updates" were done "in the character of the program" and "not intended to be offen-

sive or insensitive."

The second NBC-TV statement was stronger. "We regret that anyone found the 'Weekend Update' offensive or insensitive. That certainly was not the intention of the piece. We apologize to any viewers who were offended."

## Pay headed for Phoenix

**Oak Industries announces plan to put STV outlet on air there by July, eyes other markets**

Oak Industries Inc. announced that it will begin its second over-the-air subscription television service next July in Phoenix. The new station, KNXV-TV, will be owned and operated by New Television Corp., Oak's minority partner in the STV venture.

The station will carry regular television programming during the daytime and the subscription programming during prime-time hours.

John P. Gwin, president of Oak Communications Inc., a subsidiary of Oak Industries, said: "This project launches the first stage of a major national expansion program for Oak's subscription television operations." Oak now has an STV station in Corona, Calif., serving the Los Angeles area and, according to Mr. Gwin, has plans to be operating in Philadelphia and Miami by 1980. He said the company is also looking at the Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth and Minneapolis-St. Paul markets. Oak will be filing applications with the FCC "for many other cities," Mr. Gwin said.

Oak's initial STV station—KBSC-TV Corona—has been operating since April 1977. According to the company, the station now has 90,000 subscribers and is adding new ones at the rate of 10,000 per month. The station made a profit after 17 months of operation, Oak said.

## Program Briefs

**From whence it came.** With formation of Filmways Enterprises with Jamie Kellner, ex-Viacom, brought in as president ("In Brief," Oct. 30), Rhodes Productions will return to independent production and syndication. Jack Rhodes, Filmways distributor for three and a half years, takes with him series he developed, among them *Sec-*

**Critics may rail, but viewers watch.** That was the message that Roger Rice, president of the Television Bureau of Advertising, offered last week after checking some of the *New York Times* reviews at the start of several recent TV seasons. Among the put-downs, he said, were "electronic baloney," "trash," "mediocre," "embarrassingly dull," "a calamity" and—this year—sure-fire trash.

But, Mr. Rice said, "back in 1967, the year programming was 'electronic baloney,' the average television home watched TV for five hours and 42 minutes a day. This year, 1978, the average television home is watching television for six hours and 11 minutes a day.

"That's a viewing increase of 29 minutes a day. If you multiply those 29 minutes by 365 days, the increase in viewing is equal to an extra 30 days of viewing at the now 1978 high level. The viewing increase alone is enough to add a 13th month to the television year."

To put all those big numbers into perspective, Mr. Rice added: "Dr. John Gagnon reports that the most active people spend only 50 hours a year in direct sexual involvement, while the average American spends more than 2,000 hours a year viewing television."

*ond City Television* and *Disco Break*, leaving Filmways rest.

**Topical TV.** CBS Entertainment got off to quick start in following up on recent cult murder/suicides in Guyana. Division optioned TV rights to book "Guyana Massacre: The Eyewitness Account," by *Washington Post* reporter Charles Krause. Spokeswoman for CBS said script has not yet been written, but production has been assigned to Frank Königsberg. Actual airing of project, if there is one, is "a long way down the line," she said. "It's just another development deal."

**"Thriller" demand.** ITC Entertainment, New York, is placing 43 made-for-TV feature films into syndication under umbrella title of *The Thrillers*. Already committed to purchase package are stations in 21 markets, including WPIX(TV) New York; KCOP-TV Los Angeles; WTAJ-TV Philadelphia; WDVM-TV Washington and WSB-TV Atlanta.

**'Roots' planted.** ABC Entertainment announced February sweep scheduling of *Roots: The Next Generations*. Fourteen-hour sequel is to air Sunday through Friday, Feb. 18-23, 1979, with concluding episode on Sunday, Feb. 25, 1979 (9-11 p.m. NYT all seven nights).

## The same old song?

"This is Today," the *Today* show theme that NBC has been using since late 1972, was withdrawn from the air last Tuesday, following a court decision a day earlier (Dec. 4) that the music was too close, for copyright comfort, to Stephen Schwartz's hit tune, "Day by Day," from the musical "Godspell."

NBC is planning to appeal the ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Gerald Goettel in New York. Herald Music Co., Mr. Schwartz's music publisher, had brought the suit against NBC, composer Ray Ellis and publisher Living Music Inc., charging plagiarism. Judge Goettel referred the ruling on damages to other legal avenues.

Following the ruling, NBC held fast to its position and issued this statement: "NBC maintains the *Today* show theme is an original musical composition and we plan to pursue all appropriate legal remedies concerning this decision."

NBC now is using various other tunes in place of the contested theme.