

first," Taft said, "the program service or receiving equipment."

For its service, Taft has adopted the World System Teletext (WST) standard, developed by British broadcasters and equipment manufacturers. The Taft-Zenith deal should give WST a boost in its uphill fight with the North American Broadcast Teletext Specification (NABTS) to become the de facto national teletext standard. CBS-TV and NBC-TV have adopted NABTS for their nascent national broadcast service.

According to Taft, WST is the only practical standard. "This is the only system with a proven performance record—it's been in use in the United Kingdom for six years—and it is the only system for which the receiving equipment exists." Broadcasters who wait for practical and low-cost NABTS equipment, he said, run the risk of following cable and telephone companies into the electronic publishing business. NABTS decoders currently cost \$3,000, he said. WST is also "more rugged" than NABTS—that is, less susceptible to interference.

Neither Taft nor the several Zenith representatives at the press conference would predict how many decoders would be sold, but it's a safe bet that the number will be minute relative to the 700,000 homes in the Cincinnati market. The biggest problem is that the decoders are only compatible with 1982 and 1983 Zenith television sets, and, according to Robert B. Hansen, senior vice president and group executive, Zenith, there are only between 20,000 and 30,000 of the sets now in Cincinnati homes.

The decoders, built around a \$58 Mullard circuit board, connect to the Zenith sets through a single "Redi-plug" cable and feed RGB signals to the set. The list price of the decoders including installation is \$325, but, according to Taft and Zenith officials, the units should be available for less than \$300.

The introduction of the decoders next month will be backed by a marketing campaign—"A touch of the future today"—and the presence of a large Zenith mobile van that will roll around the city demonstrating

the service to consumers and retailers.

Cable subscribers in the areas that purchase the decoder will get a bonus. Satellite Syndicated Systems is offering a teletext magazine as a pay service to cable subscribers over the vertical blanking interval of superstation WTBS(TV) Atlanta and, according to Terry Connelly, Taft's vice president of television news, the Zenith decoders will be able to receive the service.

As an ABC affiliate, WKRC-TV broadcasts certain network programs with captions for the hearing impaired that require a decoder to be received and displayed (the captioning service, provided by the National Captioning Institute, uses a different system and a separate portion of the vertical blanking interval). So hearing-impaired WKRC-TV view-

ers don't have to buy two boxes to receive Electra and the captions, the station is transcoding the captions to the WST standard so they can be received on the Zenith decoders.

According to Connelly, the cost of becoming a teletext broadcaster is not great. Taft spent \$175,000 for the necessary origination and transmission equipment, he said, but the cost to the average broadcaster with less ambitious plans would be \$50,000 to \$70,000.

Taft is hoping other broadcasters will follow its lead. "Teletext is a natural extension of our activities as broadcasters," said Taft. "It utilizes both the news gathering resources of local stations and an existing asset, the unused portion of the station's television signal. We are convinced the time is right for broadcasters to get involved in teletext." □

Dennis Colino: an American at the controls of Intelsat

Former Comsat executive wins close race for director general's chair; sees need for tighter priorities for organization; finds Orion satellite application particularly troubling

The International Telecommunications Satellite Organization has chosen an American, Richard Colino, as its next director general. The final vote of the board of governors, on Friday, June 17, was "unanimous," but came only after five tallies during which Colino's growing and finally overwhelming strength persuaded four other candidates to withdraw. But Colino feels the election, capping an intensive campaign which took him virtually around the world, has resulted in a rededication on the part of the world organization in itself.

An irony in Colino's election by the 27-member board of governors, meeting at Intelsat headquarters in Washington, is that it comes at a time when the world organization of 109 members is troubled by the application of an American company, Orion Satellite Corp., for FCC authority to establish a private transatlantic communications satellite service. It is a service Colino feels would cause serious economic harm to Intelsat. And he appears determined to turn his energies to ending such a threat. "It's got to be stopped dead in the water," he said of the Orion proposal. "It's cherry-picking and cream-skimming. It's not competition."

Colino's election to succeed Santiago Astrain, of Chile, the only chief executive officer the organization has known since it was established in 1964, was not surprising. As an executive of the Communications Satellite Corp. for 14 years, during which he helped bring Intelsat into existence and later served as chairman of its board of governors, he is well known and highly regarded in the international telecommunications satellite community. What's more, as the U.S.'s candidate, he was assured, in Intelsat's system of weighted voting, of 24% of the total vote going in.

Still, election required a two-thirds majority. And that proved difficult to nail down, as

an Algerian, a Canadian, an Australian and a Thai remained in the contest through balloting that did not end until 8:30 p.m. By that time, Colino, who had achieved 42% of the total, as cast by nine of the 27 governors on the first ballot, had picked up 70% of the total, as cast by close to 20 of the governors. At that point, the other candidates withdrew and expressed their support for Colino, and the board, acting on a motion by the Canadian governor, made the election by acclamation.

To some observers, the pattern of the voting bore out speculation of the past several months that the French were determined to block Colino's election and secure the director general's post for the Canadian, Jean Claude Delorme, president and chief executive officer of Teleglobe. France was the only European country that failed to vote for Colino. And on the fourth ballot, one ballot after Delorme had indicated he was prepared to withdraw, his total jumped to 27%, his high point for the day, after all of the Arab states voted for him. At that point, the Algerian, Abdelkader Bairi, Algeria's director general for telecommunications, who had been in second place in the voting, appeared, in the view of one observer, to have been "a stalking horse." (The other candidates were Randolph Payne, of Australia, and Sribhumi Sukhanetr, of Thailand). Still, Colino's total had inched up to a point just short of the necessary two-thirds.

The election climaxed a campaign that, in its own way, made even an American presidential contest look pale in comparison. Beginning late last year, Colino, who now heads his own Washington-based communications and broadcasting consulting firm, travelled 146,000 miles visiting 46 countries. But he says it wasn't his idea. "Delorme set the pace. He went everywhere. So off I went." (Most of his expenses were paid by Comsat, the U.S. signatory to and shareholder in Intelsat, and the government.) Then he added: "There's one thing those folks [presumably, his opponents] don't realize. I'm as intense as the next fellow."

For all of that, Colino feels that, if the

CBS clarification. CBS News said Friday afternoon that it "has been assured of the necessary financial and personnel resources to continue the caliber of journalism that so well serves its public while advancing its competitive position."

The one-sentence statement capped a week of newspaper stories saying CBS/Broadcast Group management had mandated a \$12-million budget cut for CBS News, on top of a \$7-million cut absorbed earlier this year; that CBS News coverage was already beginning to suffer and that newsmen's morale was low in fear that CBS News's professionalism and reputation were headed down the tube.

What the statement meant, a high CBS News source said, was that "there isn't going to be any \$12-million cut. The word was to watch expenses and save where we can," he said. "This story has been entirely overblown," he added.