

Outlet Communications Inc. has entered program production business through financing and syndication of first-run, half-hour game show, **Crosswits**. Outlet, in joint venture with Crossedwits Productions, is underwriting 195 new episodes (39 weeks worth) of fringe and access targeted game show. Outlet will run game show on its VHF affiliated stations—WJAR-TV Providence, R.I.; KOVR-TV Sacramento, Calif.; WCMH-TV Columbus; WCPX-TV Orlando, Fla., and KSAT-TV San Antonio, Tex.—but allowed option for it to be cleared on other stations in markets where it owns UHF independents—Atlanta and Indianapolis. Outlet will underwrite estimated \$4-million production (average \$100,000 per week) and after costs are recovered, get 50% of profits. Distributor will be Los Angeles-based ABR Entertainment Co., newly-formed syndicator composed of former Metromedia Producers Corp. and Warner Bros. Television executives and headed by producer Burt Rosen. **Crosswits**, created by Jerry Payne, was successful game show syndicated by Metromedia between 1974 and 1980. Each episode will carry five minutes of local spot availabilities and one minute of national barter. Orbis Communications will sell barter spots.

Blair Entertainment announced last week launch of **Strike It Rich**, syndicated game show strip for September 1986 that will be hosted by Joe Garagiola. Over \$1 million in cash and prizes will be awarded on show in first year. Show is intended for use primarily by affiliates in prime access and early fringe. Blair Entertainment President Richard C. Coveny said Blair was presently looking for partners to share in show's cost, and mentioned Storer and Hubbard as candidates. He added that Blair will maintain creative control of show. He said Blair's cost for pilot was \$400,000, and that cost of series would be \$100,000 per week. Sales of show will be cash deals. Plans call for production of 195 episodes, to give stations 39 weeks of first-run and 13 weeks of repeats. Kline & Friends is producer, in association with Blair Entertainment.

Barris Industries, which has returned to game show business this season with **The New Newlywed Game**, has cleared **The All New Dating Game** for fall 1986 launch on five network-owned stations. Stations that have already signed to pick up strip game show for access include ABC's KGO-TV San Francisco and CBS's WCAU-TV Philadelphia, while WABC-TV New York, KABC-TV Los Angeles and NBC-owned WMAQ-TV Chicago have cleared it for fringe time period, according to Barris Industries President Bud Granoff. **Dating Game** is being cleared on cash-plus-barter basis with Barris withholding two 30-second spots per show.

Lorimar is distributing **Falcon Crest** on advertiser-supported basis for fall of 1986 availability, making it **first major off-network strip ever released into syndication on straight barter basis**. Pat Kenney, vice president and general sales manager for Lorimar Television Distribution, said Lorimar is positioning **Falcon Crest** as early fringe bridge for affiliates between afternoon soaps and early local news, time periods which it said worked best for **Dallas**. Lorimar is guaranteeing 127 episodes for double play during 52-week license period. Stations will get seven minutes per hour for local sales and five minutes will be withheld for national barter. After first year, stations will get additional four runs for cash. Lorimar executives will make presentations to station groups and reps this week, but first reaction among several programmers—worried that "barter syndrome" will overrun off-network series as it has first-run syndicated shows—was decidedly cool. Kenney, however, predicted

Murdoch action postponed. Rupert Murdoch will have to wait a couple of weeks longer for FCC action on his proposed \$1.5-billion acquisition of six Metromedia television stations. His transfer applications were scheduled for the FCC's meeting last Thursday (Oct. 31), but FCC Chairman Mark Fowler removed them from the meeting agenda, according to aides, to give Murdoch an opportunity to respond to last-minute pleadings by a group of petitioners led by the Telecommunications Research and Action Center. The commissioners aren't scheduled to meet again until Nov. 14. Barring unforeseen difficulties, FCC sources said the proposed acquisition would be addressed then.

that barter would offer alternative to stations as field begins to be crowded with other off-network hour serial dramas sold for cash in syndication. In markets where two or more stations are vying for **Falcon Crest**, Kenney said Lorimar will go with station that promises greatest promotional support.

Reports surfaced last week concerning talks that **Turner Broadcasting System** has had with various parties about possible ventures to help finance TBS's proposed acquisition of MGM/UA. Most were sparked by fact that financial advisors for TBS have contacted all major media companies (as well as some companies outside industry) soliciting interest in stake in CNN/CNN Headline News. Some reports had it that TBS and **Viacom International** were discussing possible co-production venture in event TBS acquires MGM/UA, where Viacom would contribute cash in exchange for half interest in CNN. Neither party would comment on talks, although **Time Inc.** did confirm last week it met with TBS officials and discussed possible purchase of interest in CNN. TBS was also reported to have met with **Gannett Co.** officials to discuss latter's interest in buying into CNN. Just how much of CNN/Headline News Ted Turner is willing to part with is unclear. Company sources suggest he would reluctantly give up control of news service, if it means enabling MGM/UA deal to go forward. Securing future supply of programming for superstation WTBS-TV Atlanta, TBS's primary profit center, source indicated, appears to be more important to Turner than retaining control of prestigious news organization.

Senator David Boren (D-Okla.) introduced legislation last week that would limit contributions candidates may accept from political action committees. Measure, co-sponsored by Senate Communications Subcommittee Chairman Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), also would require broadcasters to provide candidate with "equal time" if candidate is subject of negative commercial funded by PAC's. It also "requires a disclaimer for PAC's that make . . . [an] advertisement, not authorized by a candidate in a federal election, to disclose that such advertisement is 'authorized and paid for by' the committee, and that 'its presentation is not subject to any campaign law contribution limits.'"

Reagan administration has gone to unusual length to stress its view that decisions taken at first session of **Space WARC** do not accord preference to Intelsat or other multiadministration satellite systems in allocation matters, or impose special restrictions on U.S. systems FCC has authorized to compete with Intelsat. National Telecommunications and Information Administration, in rare participation in licensing case at commission, expressed its views on those matters last week in late-filed pleadings opposing International Relay Inc.'s petitions for reconsideration of commission's conditional authorization of five applicants for private international systems (BROADCASTING, Oct. 14). Systems themselves, and State Department, in speech by Ambassador Diana Lady Dougan (see page 70), made same points. NTIA, stressing importance of maintaining accurate record, said IRI erred in stating that principles adopted at first session of Space WARC give preference to multiadministration systems. NTIA not only disputed IRI's interpretation of language adopted at conference but said U.S. has made clear, formally and informally, it would not support "any principle that established priorities" among satellite systems. IRI, in reply last week to oppositions filed by separate systems, said it had not claimed preference had been given Intelsat or other inter-governmental systems. It said it had only pointed out that their "special, i.e., unique or different, characteristics and requirements" will necessarily "be taken into account in future [International Telecommunication Union] deliberations."

Tribune Broadcasting stations and Taft-owned KTXA-TV Dallas have decided to pare down Inday from two-hours to one, in daytime schedules in time for November sweeps. In most recent NTI averages for program's four half-hours, **Inday News** averaged .8, **It's A Great Life**, .9, **What's Hot, What's Not**, .8, and **All About Us**, .9. Inday appears on 89 stations covering 76% of country. Melvyn Smith, director of program services with Tribune, said abbreviating program will give stations "more promotable" vehicle. One-hour broadcasts of LBS-distributed venture, produced along with