

COOK TAKES OVER KMBC-AM-TV, KFRM

Following FCC approval to sale of stations by industry pioneer Arthur B. Church, the former WHB owner announces executive and policy changes. Don Davis and John Schilling, former WHB officials, become vice presidents of KMBC; Higgins is sales head.

EXECUTIVE changes and policy were announced last week for KMBC-AM-TV Kansas City following FCC approval to the purchase of the properties by Cook Paint & Varnish Co. for \$1.75 million from pioneer broadcaster Arthur B. Church [B•T, April 26]. Cook merges its share time WHB-TV with KMBC-TV into a fulltime operation on ch. 9 as KMBC-TV.

In turn, FCC approved Cook's sale of WHB radio for \$400,000 to Todd Storz and family (see separate story).

The KMBC sale to Cook also includes sister station KFRM Concordia, Kan.

In a joint statement, Don Davis and John T. Schilling, WHB executives, said "no immediate changes in the program structure and public interest programs of the Midland Broadcasting Co. stations [KMBC] are contemplated, accord-



MR. DAVIS

MR. SCHILLING

ing to program plans filed with the FCC. Therefore, there will be no immediate changes in the KMBC-KFRM and KMBC-TV staffs beyond those which must be expected at time of a complete change in ownership.

"The name WHB Broadcasting Co. will be changed to KMBC Broadcasting Co., which will continue the operations of Midland.

"Mr. Davis will be first vice president of the KMBC corporation, will serve as chairman of the programming board and will have direct responsibility for sales, advertising and promotion.

"Mr. Schilling, who built the original WHB in 1922, will be vice president and general manager."

The joint statement said George Higgins of KMBC joins the Cook organization as sales manager for radio and tv.

The KMBC stations will be represented for national sales by Free & Peters.

Dick Smith, who originally was with KMBC and joined WHB in 1932, returns to KMBC as director of radio. Mori Creiner Jr.,

with WHB from 1948-50 when he joined Rogers & Smith Adv., and who rejoined the Cook

organization last summer as director of television, will serve in the latter capacity on KMBC-TV.

Ken Greenwood, assistant director of television at WHB-TV, whose call will be deleted, continues in that capacity with fulltime KMBC-TV.

Henry Goldenberg, who with Mr. Schilling built the original WHB in 1922, will be chief engineer in charge of both radio and television for Cook. "Some necessary adjustments in the technical staff will be made as ch. 9 becomes a one-station operation," the statement explained.

Transmitter Work Underway

Progress on the new KMBC-TV transmitter for full 316 kw ERP, with its 1,079-ft. tower at 23d and Topping Sts., is now underway and completion is expected late this summer, the announcement said. New 50-kw RCA transmitter, equipped for color, is due July 15.

Cook Paint & Varnish Co. entered the broadcasting field in 1930 when it bought WHB (then a daytime station) from Sweeney Automotive & Electrical Co. WHB joined the Mutual network in 1936 and became a full-time station in 1948. Its tv activities joined those of KMBC-TV last August, when both stations began share-time operations on ch. 9.

Cook "looks forward to even greater public service to radio listeners and television viewers as a single ownership tv station takes over the operation of ch. 9," the announcement said, "and the program services and facilities of KMBC and KFRM are expanded."

The operations of the KMBC Broadcasting Co. will be under the general supervision of certain of the officers of Cook Paint & Varnish Co., the parent company. John Cash, vice president, will continue his advisory work with the radio and television stations. Lathrop G. Backstrom is president of the newly-named KMBC Broadcasting Co., and Robert B. Caldwell is chairman of the board of directors.

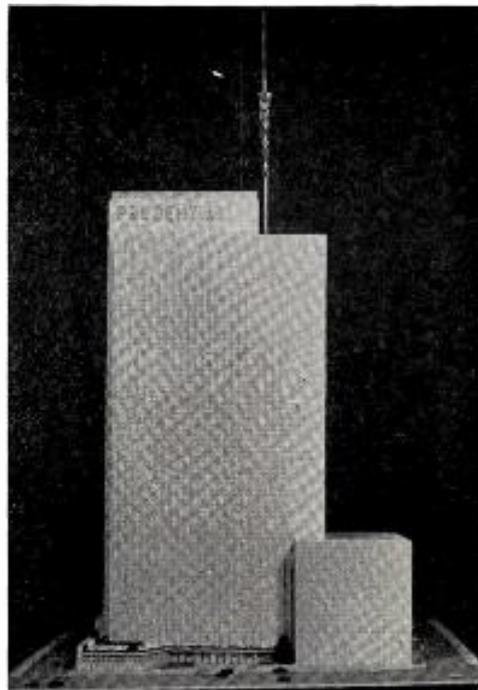
Present WHB-TV studios and offices in the Power & Light Bldg. will be moved immediately to the KMBC Bldg. at 11th and Central Sts. in Kansas City, where the main tv studio accommodates sixteen permanent sets, a rear-view projector and facilities for audience participation shows.

Camera equipment now will include the extensive combined facilities of both WHB-TV and KMBC-TV, it was pointed out. The building houses a 2,600-seat theatre used for radio and tv program originations.

See Greater Service

"Over the years," Mr. Davis said, "Cook's has built WHB radio, and later WHB-TV, into stations rendering a fine service to the community. Now, with the acquisition of the KMBC properties, and full-time on ch. 9, and with our CBS affiliation in both radio and television, all of us have a greater opportunity as well as a greater responsibility to operate radio and television stations that will be outstanding, not only in the heart of America, but in the nation.

"This we are determined to do, with the wholehearted cooperation of everyone connected with this new and progressive organization now taking stewardship of the Midland properties."



MODEL of the Prudential Bldg. in Chicago shows the new WGN-TV antenna, to be completed in the summer of 1955 [B•T, June 7]. Antenna will tower 925 feet above street level—315 feet higher than present one atop Tribune Tower—and enable the Chicago Tribune station, with transmitter there, to increase power from 120 kw to maximum 316 kw in early 1956. Prudential Insurance Bldg., at Randolph & Michigan Blvd., is now under construction and will be ready for occupancy in December 1955. The station has acquired lease for 3,000 square feet of floor space and is planning color tv operation there.

WHB Personnel Changes Announced by Storz

PERSONNEL changes for WHB Kansas City were announced last week by Todd Storz, vice president and general manager of Mid-Continent Broadcasting Co., following FCC approval to purchase of the Kansas City outlet for \$400,000 from Cook Paint & Varnish Co. Cook takes over operation of KMBC-AM-TV Kansas City (see separate story).

Mid-Continent also operates KOWH Omaha and WTIX New Orleans.

New manager of WHB is George W. (Bud) Armstrong, formerly WTIX manager, Mr. Storz said. Mr. Armstrong is replaced at WTIX by Fred Berthelsen, heretofore WTIX sales manager.

Virgil Sharpe, a 20-year veteran in Omaha radio and for two years sales-program director



MR. STORZ

MR. ARMSTRONG