

# closed circuit

**FCC EXPEDITER** • Internal dispute is engrossing FCC over proposed appointment of new key man in "executive director" slot. Proposed by Chairman McConnaughey, he would sit below FCC and above bureau heads, and would have function of expediting activities. At least three FCC members question appointment on ground FCC would be abdicating statutory authority which reposes in FCC itself and cannot be delegated. Protagonists contend status really is that of "expediter" to relieve chairman of detail and prevent staff backlogs. Proposal has been hanging fire since before Thanksgiving and is still on agenda.

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**APROPOS** executive director proposal, two names have been heard: (1) Warren E. Baker, who would be elevated from general counselship; (2) Stanley J. Tracy, of Ogden, Utah, 55-year-old former FBI assistant director, who retired from service in May 1954.

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**MOTORS MOVING** • As example of steadily mounting advertising spending by automakers, Lincoln-Mercury Division (Mercury cars) of Ford Motor Co., Detroit, through its agency, Kenyon & Eckhardt, New York, is considering radio spot announcement campaign to start early in January in about 100 major markets. Spots, on short term basis, possibly may be extended. Plans have not yet been approved but decision is expected early this week.

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**RAM-RODDING** proposal for horizontal increases in power for am stations (four-fold boost in each category has been suggested) is Todd Storz, major market independent station owner (KOWH Omaha, WHB Kansas City, WTIW New Orleans, and application pending for WDGY Minneapolis), who has undertaken basic research in field. Project was given preliminary consideration by NARTB Am Committee at meeting last Tuesday with approval of resolution to circularize NARTB Radio Board on pro's and con's and with consideration of project at upcoming Arizona board meeting (story page 56).

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**MEXICAN POWER** • XERF Villa Acuna, Mexico, across Rio Grande from Del Rio, Tex., operating on 1570 kc, reportedly plans to increase power to 250,000 w by next June. Channel is Mexican-Canadian shared and it's reported export division of U. S. manufacturer has sold transmitter, to cost in neighborhood of \$200,000-\$250,000. U. S. am power is limited to 50,000 w and move to increase output four-fold has been underway for some time.

**RANSOM P. DUNNEL**, director of radio-tv, *D'Arcy Adv.*, Chicago, before that with Ward Wheelock (now defunct) and for nine years co-manager of radio-tv department, Cunningham & Walsh, New York, expected to join Norman, Craig & Kummel, New York, as executive assistant to Walter Craig, vice president in charge of radio and television. Mr. Dunnel's appointment is in line with agency growth because of new tv billings.

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**WIIA' HOPPEN?** FCC is embroiled in hot and unprecedented situation wherein its membership is split three ways, with litigation indicated unless it reconsiders. Case involves KFRE vs. KARM Fresno, Calif., competing for ch. 12. Three commissioners (Webster, Doerfer, Mack) last Wednesday voted for KFRE; two (Chairman McConnaughey, Lee) were for KARM. Remaining two (Hyde, Bartley) argued for deintermixture rule-making, since Fresno presently has no vhf's, but were voted down. On nose count, latter two then voted against each applicant in support of deintermixture contention. Question: Do Hyde and Bartley votes mean 4-3 action against KFRE; or 5-3 vote against KARM, or should decision be 3-2 for KFRE with Hyde-Bartley position "not participating"?

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**LOOK** for announcement on grant of ch. 3 Madison, Wis., to Radio Wisconsin (WISC and Evening Telegram Co.) over Badger Broadcasting Co. (WIBA). Commissioner Hyde and Bartley stuck to guns on proposal that deintermixture issue be determined as part of rule-making since there are no other vhf's in market (see above). Indicated vote: 5-2.

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**SPORTS AND JUSTICE** • Inferences by college athletic authorities that NCAA football tv plan has approval of Dept. of Justice can't be verified at department, where usual policy is to let courts make final antitrust decisions. Department obviously is watching football and baseball telecast operations, and is perusing red-hot resentment of Comr. Ford Frick over unwillingness of antitrust staff to give advance approval of major league broadcast policies. NARTB's Sports Committee, which meets tomorrow (Tuesday) in New York, has followed policy of close observation without getting into antitrust situations or gutter fights.

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**CHANCES** are there'll be "Radio Week" in 1956, apart from what in past few years has been combined "Radio-Television Week." Dissatisfied with what they consider brush-off to radio in many local Radio-Tv Week celebrations this year, Radio Advertising Bureau's guiding lights have approved RAB management recom-

mendation that steps be taken to see radio gets equal treatment. RAB won't be alone. NARTB Am Committee last week took similar action (see story page 56).

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**TWO-WAY STREET** • Universal-International is selling dozen unproduced story properties to top tv drama shows for one-shot use. U-I not only gets some revenue from idle scripts, but gains preview test plus publicity buildup for story and U-I stars when used. Shows include Robert Montgomery Presents, Kraft Tv Theatre, Justice, U. S. Steel Hour.

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**POPULAR** guessing-game for some time has been: How does Big 10 split its tv proceeds under NCAA football control plan? And how much is involved? Answers: Conference divvies receipts among all schools. Last week it divided more than \$600,000 into 10 shares—or \$60,000 each. Half of \$600,000 came from four appearances on national television (NBC-TV), and balance from five games on regional tv (under contract with CBS-TV).

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**ABOUT TIME** • After 14 years, FCC soon hopes to decide finally case of KOB Albuquerque vs. ABC's key station, WABC New York. Under 1941 reallocation, 1180 kc was deleted, with KOB temporarily given 1030 kc (WBZ Boston, I-B clear) while search for permanent assignment was being made. This met with objections from KOB and further shift to 770 kc (WABC, I-A clear) was ordered. But it enjoined move and KOB has been operating on 770 since under special service authorizations. Two-man committee of Commissioners (Webster and Bartley) has been named to bring in recommendation to settle hoary problem once and for all.

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**MAJOR** radio-tv sponsors, networks and stations seen as source for show units to entertain overseas servicemen, Defense Dept. officials indicate. Hollywood Coordinating Committee dies after Christmas when movie majors are expected to cut support because radio-tv is getting most publicity. Promotion potential for "commercial" publicity is unlimited with talent expenses tax-deductible and government providing transportation, food and housing for units.

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**CLAY'S QUESTION** • It's likely that question of limiting competition in broadcasting, exploded by NARTB Radio Board Chairman Henry B. Clay (KWKH Shreveport) at Des Moines regional meeting Nov. 7, will receive formal consideration at upcoming NARTB board meeting in Chandler, Ariz., Feb. 1-3. Proposal that issue be placed on board agenda was made at NARTB's Am Radio Committee in Washington last Tuesday (story page 56).