

N. Y. META Gets \$100,000 Grant

THE Metropolitan Educational Television Assn., New York, which describes itself as "one of several parties" interested in the acquisition of WATV (TV) Newark, last week came in for a sizable grant from the Fund for Adult Education, which is supported by the Ford Foundation.

Although the monies probably won't go into a special station-purchase "kitty," it was noted that the Fund, after granting META \$100,000, said it would make available another \$50,000 "in the event that it (META) can proceed toward an on-the-air operation."

Dr. Allan Willard Brown, META president, said the grants will be used in purchasing additional new equipment for META's production center, slated to go into operation next month. The Fund's "package" was part of \$200,000 offered META in 1955 but was contingent "on the securing of matching funds." META says these now have been realized. (Other philanthropic organizations donating to META are the Avalon Foundation, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Rockefeller Bros. Fund.)

Asked how its negotiations with WATV (TV) President-General Manager Irving R. Rosenhaus were faring, META's general counsel said: "They have been very encouraging . . . and we are hopeful." He declined to elaborate. Mr. Rosenhaus reportedly is asking \$4 million for the tv station and another \$1.3 million for its sister station, WAAT Newark [CLOSED CIRCUIT, May 27]. Mr. Rosenhaus said he has been approached by "several" bidders other than META, but no agreements have been reached.

In turn, others—not necessarily bidders—are talking to META concerning the use of its present existing facilities. Understood to be "very interested" in META's physical plant on Manhattan's East Side is the Writers' Workshop of the Academy of Tv Arts and Sciences (New York chapter) which seeks the means whereby professional—as well as tyro—writers, denied commercial outlets for "experimental or scripts," may use such facilities as META has to offer. Talks so far have been strictly informal, with principals including MCA-TV Ltd. Producer



GROUNDBREAKING ceremonies were held May 28 to start this design of WANE-AM-TV Fort Wayne's new home toward completion by late summer and occupation late fall, according to current station plans. The one story building will house all facilities. Congressman E. Ross Adair and Mayor R. E. Meyers turned the first spades of dirt during the ceremonies. Company officials included: Walter N. Thayer and C. Wrede Petersmeyer, partners of J. H. Whitney & Co., parent of the Indiana Broadcasting Corp., operator of WANE-AM-TV and WISH-AM-TV Indianapolis.

Mort Abrahams, head of the workshop; Miss Evelyn Burkey, secretary of the Writers Guild of America (East); META's Dr. Brown, and Prof. Erik Barnouw of Columbia U., who heads WGAE's "Committee on Censorship," now compiling reports of instances in which commercial scripts have been "censored or tampered with" by agencies and networks.

Katz Hires Pearson To 'Trouble-Shoot'

THE Katz Agency, station representatives, last week announced the availability to its clients of a new, full-time radio program consultant whose job it will be to "trouble-shoot" before the troubles have become too acute. The consultant: John Pearson, formerly program manager of WHB Kansas City.

This move, reportedly the first of its kind in the annals of station representation, was taken "because of the critical importance of radio programming in its present state of transition," according to President Eugene Katz. He explained that "10 or 15 years ago, a radio station could safely break down its income into one-third national spot, one-third network, and one-third local. Today, the emphasis is very much on local programming, with networks contributing less revenue to the stations than ever before. Thus it is of utmost importance to the sta-

tion manager to see where and how his programming can be bettered."

This idea had been in the making for over nine months, Katz's radio sales manager, Morris Kellner, said. The apparent "difficulty" in making the concept a reality was in finding a man "who combined extensive experience in radio programming and promotion with a successful on-the-air performing background." "Obviously," Mr. Kellner continued, "it would hardly be fair to send in a sidewalk superintendent . . . a man who was familiar with a given problem but not sufficiently experienced in knowing what to do about it." Such requirements constituted a "must" for the man who would talk program consultation on the station executive level while at the same time dealing with actual on-air performers.

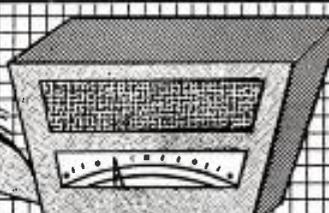
Katz found its man in Mr. Pearson, who in addition to his program managership at Todd Storz' WHB has also had extensive on-air experience at WHB and KOWH Omaha. Mr. Pearson, the Katz Agency said, has "combined showmanship and smart programming policies to come up with his own three-hour-a-day program, now Kansas City's top-rated show."

In effect, this is how Mr. Pearson will operate: A station desiring his services will call the Katz Agency, asking for Mr. Pearson's presence in their market for a sufficient number of days to enable him to listen to, and perhaps tape, competitive station programming as well as that of clients. He then will analyze these tapes, make suggestions as to how the Katz station might improve its position and follow these up with more-or-less steady consultation. Mr. Pearson also would be available for a number of other services, such as setting up station record libraries, auditioning program tapes, examining station logs (with view to recommendations on block programming), exchanging ideas and information garnered by other Katz stations, recommending use of syndicated programs, etc.

"Essentially," Mr. Kellner said, "Mr. Pearson will be a circuit-riding program manager. However, we will not go to any station unless we've first been invited."

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