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## NETWORKS

### HARRISON, LABUNSKI NEW ABN VPS

ELECTION of Thomas C. Harrison as vice president in charge of sales for American Broadcasting Co. Radio Network Inc. and of Stephen B. Labunski as a vice president assigned at the outset to programming are being announced today (Monday) by President Robert E. Eastman.

Mr. Harrison was head of the St. Louis office of John Blair & Co., station representatives, before resigning to take the new post, effective immediately. He succeeds George Comtois, who was reported to have resigned.

Mr. Labunski has been vice president and general manager of WDGY Minneapolis, one of the Todd Storz group. Mr. Eastman said, "His principal efforts at the outset, as is the case with all of us, will be directed primarily toward the end of developing our program product." Thus in principal effect if not in title he will be taking over the duties which would have been handled by William S. Morgan Jr. of KLIF Dallas if Mr. Morgan's appointment as programming vice president had not undergone a "change of plans."

The Harrison and Labunski appointments were two of several new developments in the radio revitalization program undertaken by Mr. Eastman since he assumed the presidency of the American Broadcasting-Paramount Theatres radio subsidiary on May 1—also, like Mr. Harrison, from the Blair organization. Others:

- Mr. Eastman revealed that American is developing a plan which will give its affiliates one-minute breaks for local sale on the quarter-hour, with the network personality handling the program involved also being made available to transcribe the local commercials for the stations—at no charge to the stations. American affiliates now get 30-second breaks on all commercial shows, and on sustainers may increase this to 70 seconds by breaking away from the 40-second promotional hitchhikes which the network airs between sustainers. The 60-second quarter-hourly breaks are expected to become effective next fall.

- He confirmed that "with considerable regret" there had been a "change of plans" and that Mr. Morgan, announced a few weeks ago as American's new programming vice president, would not assume that post and, instead, had returned to the McLendon Investment Corp. [CLOSED CIRCUIT, June 10].

Mr. Morgan, vice president and general manager of the McLendon Corp.'s KLIF Dallas before the announcement that he would move to American, reportedly has returned to the McLendon group as assistant to President Gordon R. McLendon. American authorities said the change resulted from "certain unforeseen developments" that made the original plan "impractical from the point of view of both parties, and it was deemed best to recognize this at the outset. . . . Our very best wishes are with [Mr. Morgan]."

- Mr. Eastman indicated that in its de-

sire to disassociate itself from television, American not only would not hire personalities who are regularly identified with tv [B•T, June 3], but that he hoped eventually to have American's personnel housed in separate quarters from those now shared with ABC-TV.

Announcing the election of Mr. Harrison to the sales vice presidency, Mr. Eastman noted that American is planning "many new live personality programs" that "will be of tremendous advertising value. Both in programming and in selling, American Broadcasting will adapt itself to the important work being done by our affiliates.

"Our selling will be done on a creative basis, recognizing the feeling and needs of the local station. American Broadcasting will avoid expediency in order to develop long-range strength. Tom Harrison's experience in local and national sales and programming makes him ideally qualified to carry out our goals.

"As head of the St. Louis office of John Blair & Co., Tom Harrison has worked with both radio and television. During his two and one-half years in this capacity, the



MR. HARRISON

MR. LABUNSKI

office has more than doubled its billings. With men of his calibre American Broadcasting can achieve its aim of being No. 1 radio network."

Mr. Harrison was named head of Blair's St. Louis office in January 1955, after serving as national sales manager of WSM Nashville from April 1952. After wartime service from which he was released in October 1945 as a major, he was in the sales department of Ralston-Purina Co., then served as assistant football coach at Vanderbilt U. starting in 1947 and at UCLA starting in 1949 before moving to Brown Radio Productions, Nashville, in February 1951 as sales manager for transcribed shows.

Mr. Labunski has been general manager of WDGY since January 1956 and a vice president since January of this year. Under his direction the station has won a reputation for spectacular promotion ventures as well as for programming. Before moving to WDGY he was an account executive with WHB Kansas City, also a Storz station, from July 1954 to January 1956, and before that was with KCMi Kansas City and commercial manager of KUDL, also Kansas City. During World War II he served after V-E Day as a Russian translator with the Allied Control Council in Berlin.