

Ike again cites power of tv debates

Former President Eisenhower last Thursday again said he could not "think of anything worse" than for the incumbent President to debate with his challenger.

In the third and final episode of the series on *CBS Reports* (10-11 p.m. EST), the former President said in reply to questions by Walter Cronkite that television "has had an almost revolutionary influence" on presidential campaigning. He predicted there would be less traveling by candidates in the future and that tv would carry the burden of the campaigns.

As to the debates, he said the voter liked to make up his own mind after hearing and seeing the candidates.

President Kennedy already has stated he is willing to debate his Republican opponent in 1964. Legislation to exempt presidential and vice-presidential, and possibly other

candidates for federal office, from the equal-time requirement of the communications act is expected to pass at this session of Congress, with White House endorsement.

Gen. Eisenhower said he not only favored but enjoyed his news conferences during his White House incumbency. Contrary to the notion that he didn't relish meeting with newsmen, he said the conferences constituted "some of the more pleasurable half-hours" he spent at the White House.

Mr. Eisenhower said there should be no restraint of the press in peacetime. But, he added, that to print a "scoop" that "might do injury to the nation's welfare" was "reprehensible."

He thought that news competition had placed "too great an influence" on news gathering and could be "inimical" to our best interests.

currently are operating in Thermopolis, Riverton and Lander and have been for several years. KWRB-TV formerly was on the cable system but is not at the present time.

In denying the Carter application, the commission said its action would not preclude Carter refile when a showing can be made that it will not duplicate the KWRB-TV programming and that the local station's signal will

be repeated by the catv system.

Only by Law ■ In his dissent, Commissioner Cross pointed out that the FCC has asked Congress for the power to regulate catv systems to some degree and that the problem should be handled in that fashion—through legislation. "The relief [for KWRB-TV] . . . sets an undesirable precedent that is against the best over-all interests of the broadcasting industry," he said.

COMMENTS START ON DEINTERMIXTURE

Vhf better, say opponents; proponents charge delay

A sampling of the comments that may be expected in bulk when the deintermixture comments are due today (Monday) were received by the FCC last week.

Foes of the plan to delete vhf channels in eight cities to make them all-uhf emphasized that uhf coverage is technically not as extensive as vhf and questioned whether the commission would contemplate decreasing service. Deintermixture advocates claimed the process is the only way to assure competitive conditions in certain markets and claimed that their opponents were using unfair influence in mustering congressional and "citizen" campaigns to block deintermixture; they said this amounts to *ex parte* influence.

WIS-TV Columbia, S. C., ch. 10 said that Columbia as capital city and centrally located focal point "requires and merits the wide coverage available only from vhf." The station said there is no potential "uhf island" in central South Carolina. It added that uhf

propagation characteristics are not favorable to the WIS-TV area.

The station claimed that deintermixture of Columbia would shrink its importance as a tv market to the point where it would be smaller than the smallest existing three-station markets; that the failure of deintermixture in Columbia, rather than fostering and developing uhf would give uhf "another 'black eye.'"

Statutory Mandate ■ As to the FCC's established goal for deintermixture—providing "balanced competition"—WIS-TV argued that the FCC's statutory mandate to provide a television service for all the people, to provide a choice of services and equitable distribution of facilities takes precedent over competitive considerations.

WIS-TV enumerated the markets in which comparatively successful uhf service has been established. WIS-TV said Columbia is not comparable to these areas because: (1) it has heavy penetration of outside vhf signals (2)

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