

Top of the Week

Serious. Justice Department again demonstrates its antipathy toward multimedia crossownership. Citing alleged concentration of media control, it asks FCC to remove licenses of Pulitzer, Newhouse broadcast interests in St. Louis, Cowles stations in Des Moines. Action comes on heels of department's informal objection to Milwaukee Journal renewals. And stressing its unhappiness over commission's tardiness in resolving lengthy crossownership rulemaking, Justice indicates other actions of this kind may be on way. **Page 16.** Government wasn't only entity active in this month's round of renewal challenges. Black groups claim there's something remiss in operations of three St. Louis stations; finger again points at Newhouse and Pulitzer, as well as Storz. **Page 17.**

Treading in the Tropics. There'll be more than gamboling on the sun-drenched beach at St. Maarten next week when NAB's joint board convenes in Netherlands Antilles setting. Agenda calls for expedited activity on renewal, pay cable fronts, several internal considerations. **Page 17.**

No vacancy. Despite the urgings of those who would like to see greater element of competition injected into TV networking, a Rand Corp. economist finds that fourth network couldn't make grade — simply because there aren't enough outlets to go around. Study by Dr. Rolla E. Park also explores various alternatives for increased program diversity, with few positive conclusions. **Page 19.**

Neglected. Recognition all but eluded broadcast media in latest White House compilation of undesirable individuals. Only King Broadcasting's Stimson Bullitt is nominated for special treatment by IRS — invitation that tax agency subsequently declined. **Page 22.**

Bowing out. Melancholy nature of cable's current standing on Wall Street does in another major merger. Viacom, CPI elect not to tie the knot, disavow Justice interference. Coming mere week after Cox-LVO collapse, action kindles new anxieties in industry. **Page 22.**

Reserved. NARB will respond with research to Senator McIntyre's call for energy-ad standards. But those studies, it emphasizes, will stop short of censorship. **Page 25.**

AFTRASAG? Screen actors and TV-radio artists wear a common hat when collective bargaining time comes around. Accordingly, SAG and AFTRA commence probe of merger possibility. **Page 30.**

Making a point. CBS and co-plaintiffs say it's the principle, and not the money, that inspired their copyright suit against Teleprompter. They agree to forego retribution if victorious. **Page 30.**

Looking back. 'Tis the season for networks' retrospective looks at past year, and guess what contemporary political scandal got the lion's share of footage? **Page 31.**

Their turn. Analysis on noncommercial WNET-TV New York concludes that if Supreme Court lets Miami Herald decision stand, thus creating "fairness doctrine" of sorts for print media, next step could be Federal Newspaper Commission. **Page 32.**

Sold. Nothing happens until you sell something, insists Eastman Radio's Bill Burton. In this week's Profile, Mr. Burton happens. **Page 49.**

FCC, spurred by Justice Dept. filings, to move again on one-to-market rulemaking

FCC Chairman Dean Burch says commission will begin focusing on long-stalled one-to-market rulemaking proceeding in about three weeks. Chairman reported that plan on Thursday (Jan. 3), in wake of petitions filed at FCC by Justice Department's antitrust division to deny renewal applications of radio and television stations owned by three newspaper-related companies in St. Louis and Des Moines, Iowa (see page 16).

And chairman acknowledged connection between those pleadings — and earlier complaint Justice filed against Milwaukee Journal Co. stations — and commission intention to come to grips with proposal to force multimedia owners to reduce holdings within individual markets to one or more newspapers, one television station or one AM-FM combination.

"Quite clearly, the commission is going to have to bring home the rulemaking we have on this," he said. Proposal was issued for comment in March 1970. "We're caught in the jaws of a vise," he said. Commission, he said, cannot argue, as it has, that industry ownership should not be restructured on case-by-case basis, that it should be done by rulemaking, and then not be prepared to act. "It's incumbent on us to act on the rulemaking."

Chairman Burch said staff work, including summarizing of comments filed in proceeding, should be completed in three weeks. But that does not mean commission could act then. He said commission might decide to hold oral argument or set up panel discussions on issues involved.

Odds in favor of commission adoption of one-to-market rule never looked good — fact that might account for delay in commission action on it — and now appear even poorer, according to commission officials. Although Chairman Burch has indicated support for proposal to extent that it would split VHF television and newspaper ownership in same market, only other likely supporters have now left commission — Nicholas Johnson and H. Rex Lee.

Mr. Johnson, meanwhile, injected himself into controversy kicked up by Justice Department's filings, issuing statement in which he charged that pleadings were part of Nixon administration's "war on the media." And official of one of companies involved, David Kruidenier, president of Des Moines Register and Tribune Co., and nephew of Gardner Cowles, former chairman, said pleadings might be regarded as "political intimidation." It's noted that in one of now-notorious White House memos released from Watergate committee files — from Jeb Magruder to H.R. Haldeman — it was suggested administration "Utilize the antitrust division to investigate various media relating to antitrust violations. Even the possible threat of antitrust action I think would be effective in changing their views."

Justice Department spokesman denied charge. Jack Hushen, department's public information director, said pleadings were not inspired by White House. He noted that department has been on record as concerned about newspaper-broadcast crossownership since 1968, when Lyndon Johnson was President, and department made recommendation that led to commission's one-to-market rulemaking. He indicated department simply grew tired of waiting for commission to act.

Mr. Kruidenier and Marvin Whatmore, president of Cowles Communications Inc., licensee of KRNT-AM-FM-TV, and one of Justice's targets, said there is no link between companies. Justice based its petition on what it said was Cowles family control of both enterprises. But Mr. Whatmore said that stock Mr. Cowles, former chairman of CCI, has in Register and Tribune Co. — about 5% — is in voting trust. He also noted that "less than 10%" interest that newspaper company has in CCI is also in voting trust.