

provided the bread. Now the bread and circus are in danger of becoming subtly—or not so subtly—intertwined. News executives—as they play a larger and larger role—tend to become less news executives and more business executives.”

Leonard attributed the blurring of lines between news and entertainment to broadcasting's recent realization that news programs can and do make considerable money for networks and local stations. But, he warned, “the new commercial success of some television news programs may be our undoing.”

■ Section 315 of the Communications Act, the provision that requires broadcast journalists to provide, among other things, equal time to candidates for national office “is an abominable public disservice imposed on us by the very people who are supposed to be the major keepers of democracy,” said NBC Vice Chairman Richard S. Salant in a speech prepared for delivery last Saturday night, when he was to accept RTNDA's Paul White Award, the association's highest honor.

In a speech considerably less philosophical than technical, Salant took last week's opportunity to address some of the basic problems broadcast journalism is likely to face in covering the upcoming 1980 presidential election. Broadcast journalism is unduly hampered by Section 315, Salant said, and the result is the “public disservice” whereby broadcast journalism cannot present the full and complete stories of candidates. The speech included a long list of situations in which the networks were unable to present the full election picture because of requirements imposed by Section 315 and the

fairness doctrine.

“This is nonsense—and demeaning nonsense,” Salant said.

“It's a long, discouraging uphill fight,” he continued. “In my moments of deep pessimism, I think that repeal of 315 and the fairness doctrine belongs in that distant and invisible future where the one-hour network news—which would also help us do a better job of election coverage—seems to have come to rest.

“We need the help of our managers and our owners—who sometimes seem to be concerned about the important issues of spectrum fees and cable and superstations to the exclusion of the also important issues of our freedom as journalists.”

Salant also touched on two other areas of importance to broadcast journalists—court decisions that he said are hampering the ability of broadcast journalists to report the news accurately and fairly and the growing importance of new communications technologies to radio and television journalism. Of the former, Salant said, “every Tom, Dick and Harry—provided Tom, Dick or Harry are lawyers or sheriffs—seems to have the right to rummage in our newsrooms, unannounced, in our homes, in our files, our wastebaskets, our minds. Jails are shut tight to reporters—but wide open to us as convicts for having done our jobs.”

■ In other convention news:

Total registration at the 34th annual international conference of the association exceeded 1,200, RTNDA officials said, by far the largest in the association's history.

Early last Friday, the group elected Jack Hogan, news director WZZM-TV Grand Rapids, Mich., its vice president for the

coming year. Under RTNDA rules, the vice president automatically becomes president of the association next year. At the next RTNDA convention, the first week of December 1980 at the Diplomat hotel, Hollywood-by-the-Sea, Fla., Hogan will replace Curtis Beckmann, news director of WCCO(AM) Minneapolis, who assumed the RTNDA presidency last week.

The ashes of the rewrite are growing cold

Congress has other things on its mind, and they may push even common carrier off the agenda

Congress returned to Washington last week amid speculation that its planned Oct. 20 adjournment date would be pushed back a month, and possibly two to accommodate the massive work load facing the legislators. And with the House preparing for a long look at energy and the Senate facing SALT debates, communications issues are not a high priority.

The plan of most members of the House Communications Subcommittee, it seemed, was to meet informally with colleagues—probably this week—and examine key issues that need to be addressed.

Representative Lionel Van Deerlin's hopes for a common carrier bill are still stalled, as chief counsel Chip Shooshan has not yet finished drafting the legis-

price reportedly in \$1-million-plus range. Thomas E. McKinney, president of MBN, said Friday (Sept. 7) that now 100% black-owned network would change its name to Sheridan Broadcasting Network within 60 days. He said that network will continue to maintain headquarters in Washington and will lease newsroom and studio facilities from MBS and noted: “We will also be on Westar I satellite when Mutual receives its FCC approval.” MBN, currently with 91 affiliates, was founded in 1972 by MBS. In April 1976, Pittsburgh-based Sheridan bought its 49% interest for reported \$850,000.

□

“My feeling is **the President didn't say a damn thing**,” said NBC anchor **John Chancellor** to luncheon audience at RTNDA in Las Vegas Friday. Remark followed interruption of Chancellor speech for loudspeaker pickup of live broadcast coverage of Carter statement on Soviet troops in Cuba. Presidential remarks had been greeted by loud laughter from RTNDA delegates and Chancellor assessment was met with more laughter and applause.

□

Report prepared for Federal Trade Commission shows \$200,000 **corrective advertising campaign by STP**—carried out under requirements of FTC consent order—increased awareness of problem with STP ads among people exposed to corrective campaign. In addition, campaign—and publicity from it—resulted in significant proportion of people surveyed saying they were less likely to buy product in future. But study also says campaign had “no significant impact on beliefs in oil-additive claims in general” and “very little impact on attitudes held about the STP Corp.”

□

ASN Inc. has offered promotion piece published on behalf of Metromedia Inc.'s KTTV(TV) Los Angeles to **rebut argument KTTV was “unwilling superstation”** (BROADCASTING, July 23). Metromedia made

argument in urging FCC to review staff action granting ASN application for authority to transmit via satellite KTTV's programming to cable television systems around country. Among other things, KTTV had said ASN was being authorized to do what KTTV could not do legally—authorize redistribution of its programming without permission of persons who owned programs.

□

NBC, which waived its **retirement policy** for employees aged 65 to hold onto Vice Chairman David Adams and later to replace him with former CBS News President Richard Salant, now is **making exception for Herminio Traviesas**, vice president, broadcast standards policy. Traviesas, who had been anticipating retirement shortly (“Closed Circuit,” Aug. 6) and move to Florida, said he received call from NBC President Fred Silverman, asking him to stay. Florida move's still on but now Traviesas also anticipates spending three out of four weeks in New York. He'll keep title and responsibilities; however, number two in department, Ralph Daniels, vice president, broadcast standards, will take over Traviesas' seat on National Association of Broadcasters TV code board.

□

Edward K. Zimmerman, former White House aide, has been named **deputy assistant secretary of commerce** for communications and information and deputy administrator of National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Zimmerman joined White House staff in 1977 as special assistant to director of Office of Administration, office he helped to create. Before joining White House, Zimmerman spent some 20 years in information management and communications.

□

Barry Zorthian, who took early retirement from Time Inc. last June after 10 years (five as head of Time-Life Broadcast, balance as Washington vice president), named president of Washington-Baltimore Regional Association formed by area businessmen to promote economic development of two cities as single market.