

change would be used" to support the ailing paper. "While this was my intention, I could not predict the financial future of the *Star* with sufficient confidence to allow me to make representations to the FCC to that effect," Mr. Allbritton reported.

About the sale of the paper, Mr. Allbritton told the commission that he reached his decision to sell when "it seemed that I could not rely fully" on the consummation of the agreement to exchange the television stations. "When I assessed the full impact of the FCC's decision approving that exchange," he said, "I determined that I could not rely on the revenues from the WJLA-KOCO exchange to support the *Star*, even if the exchange were consummated." It was only after the commission's Jan. 12 meeting approving the station transfer that "I entered into detailed negotiations" with Time, Mr. Allbritton swore.

According to the affidavit, Mr. Allbritton and James R. Shepley, president of Time, had several meetings throughout 1977 about the financial condition of the paper. Prior to last September, however, Mr. Allbritton said he did not consider Time's interest in the paper "sufficiently strong to warrant serious discussion."

But, Mr. Allbritton insisted, it was only after the Jan. 12 meeting "that I decided to sell" the paper. On Feb. 1, after turning down an offer from CCC President Karl Eller for the paper (in the event that the station deal did not go through), Mr. Allbritton said he telephoned Mr. Shepley

from his Houston home at 6:45 a.m. local time to say that he had decided to sell the paper to Time "for cash only, in the amount of \$20 million—which was less than the figure I had proposed earlier." That afternoon, Mr. Allbritton said Mr. Shepley informed him that Time's executive committee had accepted the offer. The public announcement of the sale was made by the two companies on Feb. 3.

Mr. Allbritton also revealed that on two recent occasions he "pressed" Mr. Eller for a termination of their agreement. "He declined," Mr. Allbritton said.

The Feb. 24 date, which the commission's action of last week negated, called for "final written consent" to the transfer. Another, Feb. 28, is the date by which the parties agreed to close the transaction.

According to Mr. Eller, the parties agreed to extend the Feb. 24 cut-off until tomorrow (Tuesday, Feb. 28), when the commission is expected to consider the question of the sale. Mr. Eller has said repeatedly that Combined Communications wants to close the deal as written.

The commission's decision of last week gave the citizen groups until noon today (Feb. 27) to respond to Mr. Allbritton's affidavit. That Feb. 28 meeting may now be all important—to the commission, to Combined Communications and to Mr. Allbritton. Mr. Eller said his company would "wait and see" what action the commission takes on Tuesday. That, he suggested, is pretty much all that anyone can do.

The 'rewrite': animal, vegetable or mineral?

Broadcast advisory committee has friendly meeting with Van Deerlin, thinks it scored some points, but comes away with no better idea than before of what's going to happen to the Communications Act

The 15 broadcasters assembled to advise on the House Communications Subcommittee rewrite of the Communications Act, while sticking to their position opposing the project, got back on the good side of subcommittee Chairman Lionel Van Deerlin (D-Calif.) last week. Their two-and-a-half-hour session Wednesday broke no new ground, however, and they emerged with no clearer idea than they had before of what the subcommittee might produce.

The group had seemed at the point of dissolving after delivering a flatly worded rejection of the rewrite idea in December, which had provoked the ire of Mr. Van Deerlin (BROADCASTING, Dec. 19, 1977). But all 15 were back in Washington last week for renewed talks with the chairman, who was smiling as he took his seat at the conference table. But if by their gesture they succeeded in exchanging black hats for white, they did so without changing

Board of Television Bureau of Advertising formally accepted recommendation of its steering committee that TVB's **goal for total television revenues in 1980** be raised to **\$10.5 billion** ("Closed Circuit," Oct. 17, 1977). Action "comes as a direct result of the new dollar and percentage commitments that advertisers are making in television," according to Marvin L. Shapiro of Westinghouse Broadcasting, TVB chairman. Goal for 1980 was set in 1974 at \$8-billion, raised last spring to \$9-billion-plus. If new goal is reached it'll represent doubling of annual revenues in five years.

□

NBC News and **AP** have joined forces to conduct **national public opinion polls**. Both national telephone surveys and election day street polls will be made. CBS News has similar arrangement with *New York Times*.

□

Americom Satellite Network, subsidiary of publicly held Digital Communications Inc., has announced **four-transponder deal with Western Union**, said to call for "most massive use of satellite distribution by a single channel lessor." ASN, based in Marina Del Rey, Calif., said May 1 start is planned for transmission of movie and sports channel and KTTV(TV) Los Angeles, WGN-TV Chicago and WOR-TV New York to cable systems. Said to follow will be data services and 35 stereo channels. ASN claimed to have technology to convert four transponders to eight video channels.

□

Broadcast rewrite advisory committee's meeting last week (page 29) wasn't only powwow on rewrite on Capitol Hill last week. National Association of Broadcasters joint board Chairman **Donald Thurston** of WJNB-AM-FM North Adams, Mass., had session Tuesday with House Communications Subcommittee counsel, Harry M. (Chip) Shooshan, with **same outcome as advisory committee's meeting**. Mr. Thurston said he wanted to make sure NAB's relations with subcommittee are in "sound shape," and is satisfied they are. He made no pledges to support rewrite before seeing first draft and reports he was not informed of any specific provisions that will be in it.

□

BBDO, in report covering television viewing from 1972 to 1977 (based

on Nielsen data), concludes that while homes-using-television **levels are declining in daytime, they are increasing in prime time**. Report said there are two clear-cut viewing declines—females in daytime and older women in daytime and prime time.

□

With continued rumors that **Barbara Walters** will be leaving anchor role on *ABC Evening News* (one report said within couple of weeks), ABC issued statement saying "We have **no plans to remove her** from the *Evening News* or to **diminish her role**." ABC spokesman added that "speculation that she is leaving the anchor's seat is erroneous." Meanwhile no word came from co-anchor Harry Reasoner, who is said to be close to getting out of his ABC contract, or Robert MacNeil, executive editor of Public Broadcasting Service's *MacNeil/Lehrer Report*, who has been talking with ABC (BROADCASTING, Feb. 20).

□

APRadio is talking with members about plan to **convert from landline to satellite** transmission, with small dishes provided at member stations. While offering no target date, APRadio said if members give go-ahead, it will approach FCC as soon as possible. APRadio currently has some satellite service to several West Coast points through large multiplex earth stations.

□

David Allen has resigned as senior vice president of Katz Television, New York, because of "**disagreement in policy matters**" with some members of board of employe-owned company. Frank McCann and David Abbey, presidents respectively of Katz TV Continental and Katz American Television, who had reported to Mr. Allen, now will report to Oliver Blackwell, executive vice president of Katz Agency Inc.

□

Harvey L. Schein, chairman and chief executive officer, Sony of America, and former CBS/Broadcast Group president, named executive vice president, Warner Communications Inc. He is succeeded by **Kazuo Iwama**, president of Sony Corp. of Japan. Sony-Japan also announced that U.S. subsidiary would be reorganized into three independent marketing companies: Consumer Products, Sony Industries and Video Products. **Ken Tsunoda** will head Video Products (VTR's, cameras, monitors, receivers and video tape).