

For sale

Word is circulating that Gannett has already decided which properties it will divest in aftermath of \$717-million Evening News Association (ENA) purchase. If speculation is true, auction is in store for both WALA-TV Mobile, Ala., and KOLD-TV Tucson, Ariz., because Gannett already owns newspapers in those markets. Furthermore Gannett has reportedly decided to keep its Oklahoma City ABC affiliate, KOCO-TV, and sell ENA's co-located NBC affiliate, KTVY(TV). No one has ever questioned that Gannett intends to sell its Detroit radio stations, WCZY-AM-FM and ENA's co-located properties WWJ(AM)-WJOL(FM), so that it can keep *The Detroit News*, which would become largest newspaper property in Gannett's chain, excluding *USA Today*.

Possible choices of Gannett could not be confirmed with either company or with Shearson Lehman Brothers, Gannett's investment banker on ENA purchase. One knowledgeable source estimated value of WALA-TV at \$30 million to \$35 million; KOLD-TV at \$35 million to \$40 million, and KTVY(TV) at \$65 million. Detroit AM's-FM's were estimated by one station broker at about \$15 million each.

Back to drawing board

Controversial plan for "super" radio trade association—to pull together functions now performed by number of different groups—is undergoing intensive review by National Radio Broadcasters Association, whose executive committee authored idea (BROADCASTING, Aug. 5). NRBA board of directors is scheduled to review proposal at meeting Tuesday (Sept. 10) in Dallas, prior to second annual Radio Management and Programing Convention, and indications are executive committee will withdraw original resolution and substitute another stating same objective but in way committee hopes will produce less resistance than original proposal aroused. NRBA leadership appears still singed by firestorms touched off by original super radio idea, hopes to avoid fanning flames.

Sky hash

CBS-TV has chosen scrambling system for satellite feeds to network affiliates. Selection won't be officially announced until later this month, but word is encryption technology will be of normal NTSC form, and not based on either analog component signal like Scientific-

Atlanta's B-MAC, or B-NTSC with digital audio such as developed by M/A-Com. Roll-out of CBS scrambling system, designed exclusively for internal distribution, will likely mesh with installation of station satellite dishes, now on-line at 92 affiliates and scheduled for remainder by late 1986 or early 1987.

Going public

Association of Independent Television Stations is working on plans to air television spots on must-carry issue. First spots would urge public to call local cable operators to demand they continue carriage of local stations. INTV is talking to large group operators of independents and network affiliates. National Association of Broadcasters is considering joining INTV in campaign.

Mr. Chairmen

FCC Chairman Mark Fowler will be wearing hats of three chairmen as of Sept. 12. That's day Loren Smith, who has been appointed judge to U.S. Claims Court, steps down as chairman of Administrative Conference of U.S., independent agency that recommends improvements in federal administrative and legal procedures. Fowler, who is currently vice chairman of conference, will serve as acting chairman, pending confirmation of Marshall J. Breger, now special assistant for public liaison to President Reagan, who has been nominated as permanent chairman. Fowler also is slated to become chairman of Council of Independent Regulatory Agencies, informal group consisting of chairmen of 14 major independent regulatory agencies, another organization Smith had chaired.

Good and bad

After several years of audience declines for televised games of National Football League, network and league officials alike are hoping ratings of this year's preseason games are indication of trend's reversal. Nine preseason games aired by three networks (three each) averaged 9.5 rating, up 28% from last year's preseason. Current NFL rights contract has two more seasons to run. Sources say league intends to wait until last possible moment—after 1986 season—before sitting down to negotiate next pact.

While networks are hoping for best, NBC for one, sources say, doesn't expect to get off to fast start. It was scheduled to

air first doubleheader of season yesterday (Sept 8). Because of blackout, sellout and related rules, regional games in 1 p.m.-to-4 p.m. slot were to be blacked out of 11 markets covering at least 25% of country and including top-three markets, New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Game two was slotted against men's finals of U.S. Open tennis match covered by CBS, always tough competition.

RFE/RL candidate

Search committee seeking candidate for post as president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty is scheduled to meet on Sept. 9. One leading prospect reportedly on committee's list is former U.S. ambassador to Moscow, Malcolm Toon. Present occupant of RFE/RL post is former Senator James Buckley (R-N.Y.) He is due to be named chairman of parent Board for International Broadcasting, replacing Frank Shakespeare, now ambassador to Portugal.

Tit for tat

Group W Radio is expected to announce this week sale of talk-formatted WIND(AM) Chicago to Spanish-language broadcaster, Tichenor Media System, for nearly \$7 million. Station has been on and off block for past two years. New transaction will not be first between parties. Last year, Group W purchased KQXT(FM) San Antonio, Tex., from Tichenor for \$6 million (BROADCASTING, July 23, 1984).

Hunt for players

Chris Vizas of Orion Satellite Corp. showed up in Geneva at Space WARC last week wearing badge identifying him as observer. But WARC was not his principal reason for visit to Europe, although he was particularly interested in work of conference on proposal to afford Intelsat and other multinational organizations preferential treatment. (That issue is yet to be resolved.) His object, he said, was to line up foreign correspondents for Orion as preliminary to coordinating international service with Intelsat.

Helping stations

ABC-TV plans to establish sales advisory service for network's television affiliates. Service will be structured along same lines as existing news advisory service, comprising news executives at various levels of network who periodically visit affiliates, at stations' request, acting in effect as consultants.