

CBS ready for strike possibilities, Grant maintains

Though foreign production remains an option, Shephard says CBS "is not interested"

The CBS-TV network is in better shape to cope with a strike by the Hollywood creative community this fall than last, asserted CBS Entertainment President B. Donald (Bud) Grant in an exchange with reporters in Los Angeles. Grant told participants in the consumer press tour during a (June 12) question-and-answer session that CBS has dozens of made-for-TV movies "in the can" and contingencies for "management" to play a hand in directing a number of serials should members of the Directors Guild of America walk out on July 1. He added CBS has also ordered three pilots from England this year, though he discounted the possibility that overseas producers would be a major supplier to the network.



Grant

(In a later session, CBS programming vice

president, Harvey Shephard, said that CBS "is not interested" in going outside the U.S. to produce prime-time series.)

"I feel there are producers and unions (in Hollywood) who think there's a bottomless pit at the networks; that whatever costs they run up, we'll find advertisers to cover it," Grant said. "That isn't the case." He said that given current delays brought on by the writers' strike, the earliest the fall season could begin is Sept. 21.

Audiences will continue to grow for commercial TV, predicts Jankowski

New technologies will cut into networks' share of the audience pie by only 10%-12%, forecasts CBS/Broadcast Group president

CBS/Broadcast Group President Gene Jankowski predicts networks will have bigger prime-time audiences in 1990 than they do now, even if cable systems experience "healthy growth."

He told a New England Broadcasters Association meeting in Boston last week that CBS, ABC and NBC reached 44 million American homes during prime-time in February 1981 and that figure will rise to 48 million in February 1985 and to

51 million in February 1990. With 90 million American homes with television in 1990, he said, "we'll still have more watchers than in 1981," and that the networks' share of viewers will drop, at most, 10% to 12%.

The CBS broadcast head sees advertiser-supported cable systems as viable, but he said the revenue pie is not large enough to feed all entrants into this market. He predicted advertiser-supported billing in 1990 will be \$2 billion with \$200 million supporting each of 10 services. In that same year, he expects the three networks' advertising revenues to total \$15 billion.

Jankowski calls it "a mistake to say that we want the world to be free as long as it doesn't hurt our bottom line." For that reason, he says, "the free market should prevail, and we'll take our chances against AT&T, against anybody."

He said he was encouraged that FCC Chairman Mark Fowler supports repeal of prohibitions against network ownership of cable systems. It's "preposterous for broadcasters to be locked into old regulation and out of new media," he said.

He said "no legitimate enterprise should be favored or forbidden" in the battle for the consumer's communications dollar. He warned that a "harsh but intractable law is that to find the hits, you must fund the failures." CBS has entered the cable marketplace, he noted, and "the marketplace will tell us whether we're right or not" to do so.

Monitor

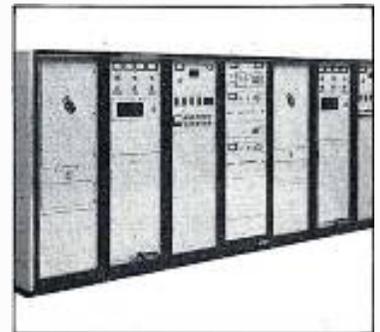
More programming for Bonneville. Bonneville Productions, Salt Lake City subsidiary of Bonneville International Corp. (whose parent company is owned by Mormon Church), is opening Hollywood office to develop "entertainment with positive values" for television, including networks, independent stations and cable. Division is also investigating STV and theatrical films as possible areas of interest. New office, to be headed by Bonneville's executive director for motion pictures and TV, Stan Ferguson, will focus initially on developing scripts for submission to networks and major studios. Eventually, Hollywood unit may expand to include its own production facilities. According to Ferguson, Bonneville is currently developing cable magazine show pilot and two made-for-TV movies.

Oak branches out. In major expansion of its telecommunications service, Oak Industries has announced formation of new wholly owned subsidiary, Oak Media Development Corp., to develop new communications ventures. John P. Gwin, chairman and president of Oak Communications, another subsidiary, will head new company. Firm will concentrate on new operations in production and programming for television, satellite broadcasting for entertainment and business, and cable television ventures. Gwin will retain his positions as chairman of Oak Communications and executive vice president of Oak Industries. Werner R. Koester, executive vice president of Oak Communications, will succeed Gwin as president and chief executive officer of that division.

Live from WTBS. Weekly entertainment hour, *Atlantic City Alive*, premieres on "superstation" WTBS-TV Atlanta Sunday, July 5. Described as "much in the great tradition of *The Ed Sullivan Show*," series will originate live from Atlantic City's Resorts International hotel and casino. Host is game-show veteran Bob Eubanks; there will be headliner (first week: Bobby Rydell; second week: Johnny Ray) and specialty acts. Contract, with Frank Gelb as executive producer and Video Techniques as production house, calls for initial 10-week commitment. Series, according to spokesperson, will be "family entertainment... not showgirls, not casino." *Atlantic City Alive* will air at 8:05-9:05 p.m. That follows upcoming WTBS scheduling tack beginning June 29 when all shows will start five minutes after hour and half-hour. That way, WTBS has said, it will have shows during time other stations are going with commercials. Expectation is that dial-switching during commercials will build WTBS viewership.

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