

# Tele-Visions

BY THORTON KANE

Pay television is getting closer. Last week, the Federal Communications Commission granted International Telemeter Co., a toll TV outfit, approval to build an experimental television station in Los Angeles. The public, however, will see no immediate benefit from the experiment because it will be held for technical purposes only.

Telemeter is now operating a fairly successful pay-TV system in a suburb of Toronto, Canada. The company plans to build a low-power transmitter for over-the-air scrambled signals to special decoding receivers in Los Angeles.

KTLA (Channel 5), which is noted for its leadership in the experimental field, has been assigned to handle the test. The experiment will be conducted during the early morning hours, prior to the regular telecasting. Since Telemeter and KTLA are both subsidiaries of Paramount Pictures, the arrangement should prove harmonious and, incidentally, worth watching.

Tentative plans call for the experiment to begin early next year. After the test gets under way, plans call for a survey of the feasibility of over-the-air and cable telecasting of the system.

Of course, it's much too early to tell what effect these proposed plans will have on Southland viewers. Whether the public will have a chance to view a toll-TV system is another question that is unanswerable at this time.

However, the proposed experiment is a step in the right direction for the industry and for individual viewers if for no other reason that it will provide greater competition and hence better programs, which is really all home viewers care about.

It is about time the FCC stopped dragging its feet over the whole idea of pay television. After all, the decision of whether or not we should have it is up to the public. Thus far, most of the objections to any form of toll-television have come from the networks and independent motion picture exhibitors. They feel, with some justification, that they will be hurt by it.

The final vote in the matter belongs to the public. Perhaps the experiment will lead to a wide-scale test. It will be interesting to see what develops.

**WELL WHATDAYA KNOW** . . . January may see the TV return of Jackie Gleason, as moderator of a new comedy-panel show . . . NBC is contemplating more axing—with "Klondike" the most likely victim . . . Kathy "Real McCoys" Nolan's real-life father, Stephen Ellsworth, will star as the father in "Dean Savage—Playboy." So far, no actor has been named for the lead in the new series . . . Howcum KJH-TV cancelled airing of the movie "Bundle of Joy," which starred Debbie and Eddie?? . . . William Talman will again be seen as the D.A. in "Perry Mason." Come home, all is forgiven! . . . Tom Duggan will head a new KCOP hour-long panel series, "The Devil's Advocate," debuting Sunday. Panel will discuss subjects of national and international scope . . . ANOTHER Western, "Gunslinger," will replace CBS-TV's "Witness" in February . . . They're trying to get Polly Bergen to star in the pilot "Occupation: Female," but Polly balks at coming back to Hollywood . . . Is Keith Larsen "out" as star of "Aquanauts"? I say YES . . . Nick Adams is still slaving away at his "The White House" spec, and he's getting top personnel to help him . . . Harry Belafonte will be on the Como Show, Feb. 1 . . . Richard Rogers will host G.E. Theatre's "The Gershwin Years" airing Jan. 15 on CBS-TV. Also in the show is luscious Julie London . . . Guess Peter Lorre has given in to TV. He'll next do "The Human Touch" seg of "Checkmate" . . . NBC-TV's "Here's Hollywood" will tape a 15-minute interview with Dana Wynter next week . . . Although the ratings aren't tops, Henry Kaiser is strongly behind his "Hong Kong" series . . . Bell Telephone Hour's January 6th show will feature singer Shirley Jones.



WIFELESS HAPPINESS—Fred MacMurray stars as head of an all-bachelor family Thursday nights on Channel 7 at 9 p.m. William Frawley, not pictured, co-stars with Fred in "My Three Sons."



STAGECOACH WEST—Luke Perry (Wayne Rogers) arranges a last rendezvous between Susan Crawford (Ellen Clark) and her bank-robber husband in "Three Wise Men" Tuesday at 9 p.m. on Channel 7.

## Documentaries to Repeat

Two of the outstanding documentary productions of NBC's "Project 20" will be repeated by popular demand on the NBC-TV Network. "The Twisted Cross" a study of the rise and fall of Adolf Hitler, is scheduled Tuesday, Jan. 3. "Life in the 30s," dealing with American and world affairs during the crucial pre-war decade, will be presented Tuesday, Jan. 24.

"The Twisted Cross" was first seen on March 14, 1956 and was hailed with enthusiasm by the press and public. It has been shown four times to ever-increasing interest. The other dates were June 12, 1956; June 16, 1957 and Jan. 31, 1960. According to producer Donald Hyatt, the program is particularly timely again with the coming trial of Adolf Eichmann in the news.

"Life in the 30s" also has been seen several times, the dates being Oct. 16, 1959; May 13, 1960 and Aug. 29, 1960. The recent political campaign focused attention on the New Deal, and President-elect Kennedy's inauguration in January again will raise memories of the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. "Project 20" has two new programs scheduled for December on the NBC-TV Net-



WILLIAM REYNOLDS co-stars in adventure series "The Islanders," seen Sundays at 9:30 p.m., Channel 2.



PRETTY Pamela Searle is one of the beauties who add new dimensions to "The Brothers Brannagan," seen every Monday at 7:30 p.m. on KTTV, Channel 11. Program features sophisticated private-eye action.

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