

Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

Not all of ABC's soap opera is on "Peyton Place." Some of the best scenes are played in the executive offices.

Recently I was urged by one vice president to interview another vice president in an effort to glean some information about the network's plans for the fall. I learned little about the programs, but quite a lot about the vice president in charge of them.

The interview was with Ed Scherick, programming czar for ABC and one of the nine most powerful broadcasters who are responsible for what 100 million Americans are allowed to see in their living rooms. I recognized the office because I had interviewed two of his predecessors there within the last three years.

SCHERICK is a neatly tailored man in his 40s with a trim figure, gray hair and considerable vitality. He interrupted the dictation of a letter to his secretary to say how-do-you-do.

"Let's see now where was I? Oh yes—I am looking forward with great pleasure

Cubs Receive Merit Awards At Meeting

Cub Scout Pack 785-C of St. Catherine Labouré Parish met recently in the Evelyn Carr School Auditorium, 3404 W. 168th St. to the theme of "South of the Border."

Awards presented by Cubmaster Richard Divinski at the meeting included:

Wolf badge — Robert Holland and Francis Chaney.

One year pin — Robert Riffe, James Busuttill, and Robert Goycoolea.

Two year pin — John Cogbill.

Three year pin — John Chaney and James Condon.

Denners — Gary Sladek, Jack Burke, and Danny Sullivan.

Assistant Denners — John Corson, Steven Ramsauer and Paul Sidbeck.

Webeles — Scott Carlin, Michael Divinski, Michael Gass, and Daniel Sullivan.

Gold and silver arrow — Francis Chaney.

Arrow of Life — John Chaney.

Cub of Month — Paul Sidbeck, Michael Chabot, John Brosh, John Corso, and Robert Ruffe.

The pack plans to hold a combination space derby and picnic April 25 at McMaster's Park. Chairmen of the upcoming event are Paul Sidbeck and Gerald Sullivan.

CONVENTION CALLER

Jake Parks, who is conducting square dancing classes in Waleria, has accepted an invitation to participate as caller at the 14th National Square Dance Convention to be held in Dallas in June. Parks serves as caller for the local square dance clubs, The Drifters, Dancing Silhouettes, and Callers Club.

to staying at the Beverly Hills Hotel again . . . Yours very truly with one carbon. Now where were we?"

"Will there be any specific trend to the ABC programming next fall?" I asked.

"I don't understand that word 'trend.' We just put on the best produced shows obtainable."

"By trend I mean are there any more of one kind than another. Are you going toward adventure or situation comedy? At one time ABC trended toward violence and westerns," I said.

At this, Scherick reached into his desk drawer and pulled out a gleaming revolver. He pointed it at me and fired. The powder cap made a giant explosion. It was immediately apparent that I was interviewing a man of surprises.

THE PHONE rang. "This is going to take a few minutes. It's the Bahamas," he said. "Hello? . . . Oh . . . Well keep trying. This is important . . . Now, where were we?"

"Trends," I said. "There's no such thing. There was a guy named Wallace that came out with Darwin's theory the same year that Darwin did." Obviously we were getting nowhere.

"What happened to Les Crane?" I asked.

Scherick fired his cap pistol again. Then he said: "Les Crane is an amalgam of qualities that are unique."

"What are some of those qualities?" I asked.

"Les has what I call 'contemporary intelligence'—a great ability to understand everything around him. To no depth, of course, but that's not particularly important today. What I mean is that he's a polite definition of 'hip.' He's, he's . . . Well, he's avant."

"If he's so avant, how come he's not still on the air?" I asked. The phone rang.

"This is that Bahamas call!" he said. "Any trouble getting my reservations on that charter?" he asked the Bahamas. When the charter matter was settled, he fired the pistol again.

"ARE THERE any new shows next season for which you are personally responsible?" I asked.

"I feel close to all of them. I love them all: We are in an incremental period at ABC. We think that 'Gidget' will be a very big new show. Then we're making Amos Burke of 'Burke's Law' into a secret agent next fall. It's a Cleveland Amory concept written by Abe Burroughs. There's 'Big Valley,' a saga western. ABC knows how to make this kind of show. There's a thing called experience. It's an incremental part of our business . . . I'll be right with you Benny," he shouted to someone who entered the office behind me.

He rose to his feet. The 11-minute interview was at an end. I bowed myself out.

Back at the hotel I looked up the word "incremental" in the dictionary.

I thought he had the wrong prefix.



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