

sets. These outlets come into being usually when the FCC agrees, as it did in the Rochester and Johnstown cases, to open new channels on the VHF band by permitting substandard spacing. While educational broadcasters are pleased with the long-range prospects of ample space on the UHF band, they feel that FCC policies require them to enlist their limited resources in the FCC's program of breaking the UHF circle.

The goal of expanded UHF broadcasting is being pursued by the FCC in a number of ways, including a proposed program of "de-intermixture," which is intended to bring all-UHF broadcasting to communities where UHF is now broadcast, usually at a great disadvantage, in competition with VHF. In addition, the FCC has asked Congress to require manufacturers to equip new sets for UHF, a proposal that has received little congressional support, while the "de-intermixture" proposal has stirred protests from various congressmen and from at least one complete state delegation.

Congressmen from rural districts find VHF, with its generally longer range, useful for reaching their rural constituents and are concerned about how long it would be before UHF facilities would be available for this purpose. Some of the protesters are not well informed about the problem and have not looked into the availability of answers, but, finding the present arrangement satisfactory, are reluctant to change. In addition, the existing VHF stations in areas where the band is filled are not receptive to moving to a band that would have room for competition.

Underlying the court challenge to FCC's inhospitality to educational TV's growth on the VHF band is the fact that educational TV is successful on most of its active outlets (the bulk of these are VHF) and that its prospects for increased financial support are now greatly heightened by widespread revulsion toward what comes over the commercial channels.

Operating as a "fourth network," some 50 educational TV stations, supported largely by private grants, contributions, and state aid, are affiliated through the National Educational Television and Radio Center. By swapping films, tapes and pooling resources, they have maintained a high level of public service and have frequently presented distinguished fare. This "fourth net-

work," if it could expand to additional channels that reach the public, could fulfill Walter Lippmann's suggestion that the answer to the ills of TV "is to devise a way by which one network can be run as a public service with its criterion not what will be most popular but what is good."

A bill to provide each state with Federal assistance for the construction and improvement of educational TV facilities has been approved by the Senate each year for the past three years. While it has been cleared by committee it has never come to a vote in the House but its prospects for next year are considered bright. This, too, has provided pressure for removing FCC obstacles to VHF channels for educational TV.

The maintenance of the obstacles cannot to any substantial extent be blamed on the commercial TV industry, for, if nothing else, when the question arises of who is to get a new community outlet, commercial or noncommercial interests, the existing commercial stations are not displeased to see it go to an organization that will not compete for advertising. One of the major networks, for example, came out strongly at House hearings for federal aid to educational TV.

The principal source of the obstacles blocking educational TV's expansion on the VHF band is in the extreme conservatism of the present majority of FCC commissioners, who are firmly tied to inflexible notions on the issue of public versus private operations on the airways. With the absence of substantial congressional interest in the future of educational television, the FCC's present majority casts doubt on the accuracy of Chairman Newton Minow's forecast that "... if there is not a nationwide educational television system in this country, it will not be the fault of the FCC."

The plaintiffs in the two court actions, pleased by Minow's support but doubtful of his prophecy, are seeking a way around the FCC.—D.S.G.

### Salt-free Water

The President will shortly sign a bill providing long-term authorization for a saline water conversion program. Both House and Senate have passed bills authorizing \$10 million a year for this

project, about 6 times as much annually as is now being spent. Even at \$10 million a year, the program is relatively small as major federal research and development programs go, but it has attracted a good deal of attention. An economical method of converting sea water to fresh water would be immensely useful for this country, which faces a water shortage in the decades ahead, and would revolutionize the economies of a good many countries which have always faced chronic water shortages. The most efficient plants now available can process salt water at a cost of about \$1 per thousand gallons, but this is still 3 times too much for drinking water, and nearly 10 times too much for irrigation water. Kennedy has drawn attention to the project in several speeches, and he sent a message to Congress requesting the expanded program.

### Foreign Aid Appropriations

The House Appropriations Committee demonstrated last week that Administration leaders had been unduly optimistic when they assumed that the newly passed foreign aid bill would impose upon the committee a moral obligation to reduce its traditional antagonism to foreign aid spending.

Even before the bill had passed both houses, an appropriations subcommittee headed by Rep. Otto E. Passman, of Louisiana, had made substantial cuts in the accompanying money bill. In backing up Passman, who is openly hostile to foreign aid, the full committee illustrated once again why the Administration wanted long-term foreign aid and the financing of this aid through Treasury borrowing. The basis of the Administration's argument for this method was fear that the Appropriations Committee would behave in just the fashion that it did.

The reductions voted by the committee, which sent despair and astonishment through the Administration, consisted of \$896 million from the \$4.2 billion foreign aid bill, plus refusal to permit the Administration to use \$96 million carried over from the last fiscal year.

In the annual melodrama of foreign aid appropriations, the script calls for a great deal of this to be restored on the floor of the House, but just how much will be restored is, of course, never certain; nor is this system conducive to the long-range planning which

the Administration regards as essential for successful development programs in underdeveloped nations.

The assumption of a moral obligation upon the committee was voiced by Sen. Fulbright, among others. Having led the President's unsuccessful fight for long-term Treasury financing of foreign aid, which would have eliminated the need to run the Appropriations Committee gauntlet, Fulbright said the compromise of a 5-year authorization and annual appropriations was acceptable. The White House termed it "wholly satisfactory," and suggested that the 5-year authorization carried with it assurances that the money would be available.

House Appropriations, however, has made it clear that it remains the judge of its moral obligations.

### School's Out

Once again last week, the Administration's public school program was reported to have been killed. Such reports have been appearing regularly all summer long, but the latest was quite accurate: the school bill is now really dead. The blow came when an attempt was made to bring up an emasculated version of the President's recommendation, using the peculiar "Calendar Wednesday" procedure to bypass the Rules Committee. The effort to consider the bill under the Calendar Wednesday procedure failed, indeed failed miserably to muster the necessary majority. The vote was 242 to 169 against consideration, despite the modest nature of the bill, which asked only for a classroom construction program not much different from that contained in a bill passed by the House last year; it included no money for teachers' salaries.

The vote came early in the afternoon on the day of Kennedy's press conference last week. At the conference Kennedy, in effect, conceded defeat by answering a question about the vote by promising that the Administration would try again next year. There was still some hope that a version of the Administration's program for higher education would get through the House, but whether it does or not can only decide how complete the Administration's defeat on education will be. Nothing that is at all likely to emerge now can add up to more than a shadow of the fairly ambitious program Kennedy had recommended.

## Announcements

A "bureau of standards" for **heart disease control tests** has been introduced at the U.S. Public Health Service's Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Ga., which will provide a central depot of preserved samples of human serum previously analyzed for their cholesterol content. These will be supplied to laboratories across the country, to be used as a standard against which the laboratory can check its own procedure. Heretofore, because of differences in cholesterol-measurement standards, analyses of the same blood sample by different laboratories (and sometimes even by the same lab) often produced varied results. Pooling of data from different studies was also made difficult by this variance. Anticoagulants and clot-dissolving agents are due for standardization efforts in the near future.

The United States has invited **weather scientists** from more than 100 countries, including Russia, to attend the International Meteorological Satellite Workshop to be held in Washington, D.C., from 13 to 22 November. The U.S. Weather Bureau and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration have sent invitations to all countries belonging to the World Meteorological Organization.

Information about **rare forms of mental retardation** is available through the Rare Case Registry maintained by the Southern Regional Education Board. The service, available to research personnel employed in academic or clinical facilities anywhere in the 15 Southern states, will supply researchers with a list of institutions which have cases of the type requested, and with the names of officials to be contacted. Requests, to be submitted by letter, should include place of employment and a specific description of the kind and number of cases needed. (Rare Case Registry, Southern Regional Education Board, 130 6th St., NW, Atlanta 13, Ga.)

A **Soviet study of rare-earth spectroscopy** has been translated and released by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. The two-volume monograph, published in 1953, is described by Russian scientists as the first systematized analysis of the experimental and theoretical

data in this field. (Office of Technical Services, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington 25, D.C. Order No. 61-31483. \$7)

### Courses

A university **credit course on new trends in biology** will be featured on CBS's "College of the Air" TV series, beginning 25 September. The 32-week course, developed by CBS and the Learning Resources Institute of New York, in consultation with the American Institute of Biological Sciences, will be directed by Ray Koppelman of the University of Chicago. There will be five 25-minute lecture-demonstrations per week, the time of presentation to be determined by the individual station. More than 100 colleges and universities will give credit to those who fulfill the course requirements. [Thomas P. Robinson, Learning Resources Institute, 680 5th Ave., New York 19 (program administration); Ray Koppelman, Department of Biology, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill. (course content)]

A 2-year graduate program in **radio-logic physics** is being offered at the Stanford University School of Medicine. The program, open to students with a B.A. or a B.S. degree in physics, leads to an M.A. degree in the medical sciences, with specialization in medical or health radiological physics. A limited number of fellowships will be available to qualified students. A 1-year traineeship in medical radiological physics is also available. (Chairman, Department of Radiology, Stanford Medical Center, Palo Alto, Calif.)

### Meeting Notes

Meteorologists in over 100 nations have been invited to attend the **International Meteorological Satellite Workshop** to be held in Washington, D.C., from 13 to 22 November. The workshop is being arranged by the U.S. Weather Bureau and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, with the cooperation of scientific and international groups. Participants will prepare weather analyses from satellite photographs to gain practical experience in the use of satellite data distributed by the U.S. through international meteorological channels.