



An Ed Sullivan show as colorcast by CBS and (below) in black and white.



REPORT ON COLOR TV

**ARE MANY COLORCASTS PLANNED?
\$500 21-INCH SETS—WHEN?
WILL YOUR SET BE OBSOLETE?**

Barry Wood, NBC's TV color coordinator, was sitting in a studio control booth watching his technicians try out some new special effects in color. Such as toning down all the colors in a model's hair until it looked silvery-gray, and then gradually bringing up the hues to their full brilliance. "This is going to be terrific for shampoo commercials," Barry said.

But one of the studio engineers pointed out: "You know, of course, this won't mean a thing to black-and-white viewers."

"Well, we have to think of the future, don't we?" Barry answered.

And that's just about the status of color TV today. The networks and advertisers are pouring fortunes into added program costs for color shows, knowing full well that comparatively few viewers will benefit. (Most will see color programs in black and white on standard sets.) But why assume the added expense to telecast in color?

It's because networks and sponsors anticipate that the public, once it gets a sight of color TV, will rush to buy color sets. This will mean more color shows and, in turn, more sets purchased. Eventually, it is predicted, most TV programs will be in color.

With most technical and production problems in color telecasting already licked, and with both CBS and NBC scheduling a number of color programs, it's up to you viewers to determine whether color adds enough to your TV entertainment to warrant buying a color receiver. The networks contend there are now 7000-10,000 color sets in the hands of the public,



Betty Hutton in NBC color, black and white.

163 COLOR STATIONS SEEN BY END OF YEAR

although a more realistic estimate might be somewhat lower. Most major manufacturers are now tuning up for full-scale production of 19- or 21-inch color sets, and by the year's end as many as 50,000 may be in operation.

Don't forget, though, that there are now more than 31,000,000 black-and-white TV sets. Networks and sponsors cannot overlook this tremendous audience and all programming for at least a few years yet will be slanted toward these viewers. So don't worry about your set going out of style.

Several thousand small-screen color receivers were turned out earlier this year. Because of their small tubes and high prices, however, the hoped-for stampede to buy didn't materialize. These were 15-inch console models, which delivered only a 12½-inch picture. RCA, now pushing production of its new 21-inch color receiver, recently slashed the price of its 15-inch model from an original \$1000 to \$495.

Your chances of buying a 19- or 21-inch color set for as little as \$500 seem extremely remote, at least for the next few years. Motorola, first to hit the stores with a 19-inch job, is asking \$895 for a table model. CBS-Columbia lists its table set at \$950, with prices ranging up to \$1100 for a console. The new RCA 21-inch receiver, only recently demonstrated, is expected to hit the market at about \$800-\$900.

As for a low-priced color converter for your present black-and-white sets, most manufacturers seem to have abandoned the idea.

Discussing the possibilities of a color receiver to retail at \$500 or less, Gen. David Sarnoff, RCA board chairman, declared recently: "If I were guessing, and that of course is something a man

shouldn't do, I would say that the \$500, 21-inch set is not so far away. I might even speculate that it is conceivable that it is only a year away from the time the first 21-inch color sets reach a reasonable production."

As for color telecasting, the general added: "I think the time will be here, and before very long, when a broadcaster will no more consider broadcasting a program in black and white only, than a motion picture producer would today consider showing a film in motion only, without sound."

An estimated 81 CBS stations will be equipped to transmit color shows by the end of the year. NBC has about 50 stations now beaming color programs and predicts it will have 82 by Jan. 1. Several NBC affiliate stations, including those in Oklahoma City, Milwaukee and Fort Worth, are now able to originate their own color programs, either to be shown locally or fed to the full network.

NBC is producing 33 color spectacles this season, totaling some 49½ hours of color TV. Other NBC shows, including *Ford Theater*, will be transmitted in color. The network now has facilities to originate 12 to 15 hours of live color programming each week.

CBS will have two color extravaganza series this year—*Best of Broadway* and *Shower of Stars*—and started last August on an ambitious schedule of staging all its regular shows in color at least once. This will represent a total of more than 76 color productions.

Another color show in preparation for launching next January is a situation comedy series to be titled *Norby*. This will star David Wayne, who is taking time out from his starring role in Broadway's "Teahouse of the August Moon" to film the show. *Norby* is to be sponsored by Eastman Kodak, which, naturally, is interested in spurring the use of its color film processes in television.—*Bob Stahl*