

Public, TV Industry Stirred By F. C. C. Ruling on Color

By JACK GOULD

The Federal Communications Commission's approval of the Columbia Broadcasting System's method of transmitting color television set off yesterday one of the sharpest controversies in broadcasting in recent years. The commission on Wednesday authorized C. B. S. to start commercial transmissions in color on Nov. 20, but the network indicated it might not start regular programming until mid-December.

These were the day's principal developments:

1. Many of the major manufacturers of receivers declared they would not make receiving equipment for C. B. S. color, and, in any case, would continue production of sets for black-and-white telecasts. They held that the C. B. S. method was impractical and ultimately would prove obsolete.
2. The Radio-Television Manufacturers Association decided to call a meeting at 10 A. M. Monday at the Roosevelt Hotel, at which plans may be laid to further a color system that would not disturb reception on the existing 8,000,000 home receivers.
3. The public appeared confused and in some instances angered by the F. C. C. ruling. A survey of midtown retail stores showed that many prospective customers were undecided as to whether to buy a set. THE NEW YORK TIMES received more than twenty telephone calls from persons protesting possible obsolescence of sets each had purchased recently at a cost of several hundred dollars.
4. The Columbia Broadcasting Sys-

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TV COLOR DECISION STIRS CONTROVERSY

NEW DEVICE FOR COLOR IN TELEVISION RECEPTION

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tem said that it had received calls numbering in the "hundreds." Most of the inquiries, a spokesman said, dealt with the question of when color would be available.

5. A number of relatively small manufacturing concerns announced plans to start production of converters that would enable existing sets to receive C. B. S. color. Other concerns said they were prepared to adapt present sets so that C. B. S. color shows could be seen in black and white.
6. An organization of retail dealers announced it would meet on Wednesday to consider legal proceedings against the F. C. C.
7. Across the country wherever there are television stations dealers expressed concern that the F. C. C. action would seriously affect the sale of receivers. An official of one of the largest manufacturers said his dealers were "alarmed." He had heard from representatives in such cities as Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Boston, Baltimore and Washington.

New Tax Adds to Confusion

Adding to the concern of the dealers was the approaching deadline of Nov. 1, when a new Federal tax of 10 per cent will be levied on television receivers. Many customers had placed orders to avoid the tax and some dealers feared these buyers might not want to accept delivery until the confusion over C. B. S. color abates.

The manufacturers based their objections to the C. B. S. system primarily on the contention that it was technically incompatible with today's black-and-white video and required a filter disk, rotated by a small motor, to introduce the primary colors of red, blue and green. This converter, as the disk mechanism is called, must be placed in front of the set, over the picture tube.

The incompatibility is caused by the difference in scanning standards used by C. B. S. color as compared with the black-and-white. To receive a C. B. S. color program in black and white an adapter must be used. To get a program in color on a set now in operation, both the adapter and the converter are required.

The set manufacturers have endorsed an all-electronic system that is compatible in that it does not require any external adapter to receive a color transmission in black and white. A converter would be necessary, however, to get a program in color.

The F. C. C. rejected the all-electronic systems of both the Radio Corporation of America and Color Television, Inc., on the ground that their pictures were inferior to those of C. B. S. and were not sufficiently advanced for commercial use.

Ross D. Siragusa, president of Admiral Corporation, predicted that the C. B. S. system would "bumble along for a few months" and then prove "completely obsolete."

W. J. Halligan, president of Hallicrafters, said he was willing to make receivers adaptable to C. B. S. color but that they would be costly and few in number. He said the public's disappointment would be "staggering" when it realized "the abnormality of this long-awaited but so misbegotten child."

E. F. McDonald, president of Zenith, declared he had no intention of halting or slowing the manufacture of black-and-white sets. Paul Galvin, president of Motorola, said that he thought court action might restrain the F. C. C. John Craig, speaking for Crosley, contended that color in the home still was three to five years away.

Joshua Sieger, vice president of Freed-Eisemann, maintained that the C. B. S. system had been tried and discarded "many years ago." F. A. D. Andrea, president of Andrea Radio, expressed hope that Congress would intervene to upset the F. C. C.'s action. He said C. B. S. color was a "Rube Goldberg system."

Plans Converter Manufacture

Meanwhile, S. W. Gross, president of the Tele-Tone Radio Corporation of New York, announced immediate preparation for production of C. B. S. color converters. He said the cost would be "surprisingly low."

Myron J. Greenwald, vice president of the Celomat Corporation, said his company would make converters selling for \$14.95 for a six-inch color picture and for about \$60 for a 12½-inch image.

Hyman Goldberg, engineer for the Kinescope Reactivating Company, Brooklyn, said his concern was prepared to adapt sets for retail at about \$25 each. A simple switch, he said, was all that the viewer would be required to operate.

The threat of legal action against the F. C. C. by television stores came from Gerard I. Nierenberg, counsel to the Retail Radio-Television and Appliance Dealers. He said the purpose of such action would be to "protect" the public from the effects of the F. C. C. decision on Wednesday. The dealers will meet at 2 P. M. Wednesday at the Astor Hotel.

While most dealers were assuring prospective customers that black-and-white sets would be useful for a number of years, the developer of the C. B. C. color system, Dr. Peter C. Goldmark, was somewhat cryptic on the specific point of whether it would be wise to buy now.

"If I were enthusiastic about color, I'd wait," he said. "If I were lukewarm, I'd buy."

C. B. S., which reported that two companies—a hair dye manufacturer and a food concern—had shown interest in sponsoring color programs, released additional details on its adapter and converter.

The adapter, which must be connected to the receiver's scanning circuits can be placed in any convenient spot. It comes in a small box.

The converter for a twelve-and-



At the Columbia Broadcasting System's offices Margaret Arlen pushes a C. B. S. converter into place in front of the screen to receive picture in color.

The New York Times

one-half-inch tube is about twenty-two inches high. The rotating disk and small motor are in an enclosed case. The converter operates on a slide and must be moved in front of the picture tube when a color program is on.

A Columbia official acknowledged that its appearance was more "functional" than decorative.