

War Dooms Color Video

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30.—In a blow seen as completing the doom of commercial color TV for the duration of the national emergency, the National Production Authority (NPA) yesterday (29) ordered virtually total allocation on all forms of cobalt. Altho anticipated, the sweeping impact of the order is certain to have a psychological effect on all industry, and it will have a crippling effect specifically on civilian output of radio-TV sets and phono sets.

Cobalt is used extensively in speakers and magnetic coils. Radio-TV makers have been girding for the blow. The order, tougher than anything issued so far by NPA, is the first complete alloc-

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Color Television Krayed by Strategic Metal Allocation

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tion for any specific product. However, restricted amounts will be available for radio-TV. Allocation crackdowns for several other materials are on the way.

The NPA's allocation of cobalt is aimed to channel the supply directly to top military use, with the balance going to vital civilian use. Roger Allen, cobalt expert at NPA, described radio and TV manufacturing among "essential civilian usages," but he stressed that top priority in civilian usage would go to such products as fertilizer "or anything else requiring use of cobalt for maintaining national civilian strength and economy." The nation has been importing 8,000,000 pounds of cobalt annually for all purposes.

Under the order, starting February 1, every purchase of more than 25 pounds of the strategic material will require NPA approval. No person may use more than 50 pounds in any three-month period in making pigments, with the exception of the following: In filling

defense rated orders or NPA directives; in driers for inks, paints and varnishes; blue glass where necessary for optical or safety purposes; laboratory equipment; artists' materials and decalcomanias for decorating tableware. All types of orders will be limited to 30-day periods. Inventory reports on the material must be supplied to NPA regularly.

NPA spokesman Allen declined to comment on just where radio-TV set manufacturing stands in the "essential civilian use" category. As for color-TV, he refused to "get into that one." However, asked whether he thought the allocation order is a final blow to the fate of commercial color for the duration, he said, "Good business judgment will probably put the cobalt where it will do the most good."