

Hollywood Sees Color TV

First Coast-to-Coast Compatible Color TV Demonstration Is Climaxed by Gen. Sarnoff's Announcement of TV Tape Recording

Climaxing the first coast-to-coast demonstration of the RCA compatible color television system, which took place in Hollywood on Nov. 3, Brig. Gen. David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Boards of the Radio Corporation of America and the National Broadcasting Company, announced that RCA has achieved magnetic tape recording of color television programs as well as in black-and-white.

The demonstration of a color show featured live talent performing in the NBC color television studios at the Colonial Theatre in New York City. The color program traveled over a 4,000-mile radio relay circuit of the Bell System and was viewed on RCA color receivers located in NBC studios in Burbank, Calif. The program also demonstrated the first transcontinental transmission of color film for television.

The RCA compatible color television system operates on the signal specifications which have been recommended by RCA and others in the industry for approval by the Federal Communications Commission as the government standards for commercial color television.

In announcing the achievement of video tape recording in color as well as in black-and-white, General Sarnoff said that electronic motion pictures and home video recordings are future possibilities that will stem from this development. He described it as holding great promise for the motion picture industry, as well as for the television industry, and declared: "Here is an electronic development endowed with a far wider horizon than its immediate purpose in TV broadcasting. It is a method that records and reproduces pictures in motion in black-and-white and in color, with no intermediate steps such as film processing. It does away with all chemical processing. The pictures can be viewed the instant they are taken, which adds new flexibility in the making of motion pictures. There will be no need to wait for the next day or days to see the 'rushes'."

General Sarnoff announced that on Dec. 1st, RCA would demonstrate at

its Princeton, N. J., Laboratories the present status of tape-recording of television pictures both in black-and-white and in color.

'wiped off' and re-used again and again. Moreover, the original tape can be multiplied to many tapes for convenient and widespread distribution to



Seen with one of the experimental color receivers at the historic demonstration are, left to right: Dr. Charles B. Jolliffe, vice president and technical director, RCA; Brig Gen. David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Boards of RCA and NBC; O. B. Hanson, NBC vice president and chief engineer; Frank Folsom, president of RCA, and Emanuel Sacks, NBC and RCA staff vice president.

He said the RCA development of tape recording was part of a request he made at RCA Laboratories in September, 1951, at a party commemorating his 45th year of service in radio. The request, he related, was that the scientists and research men would give him three presents to mark his 50th anniversary in 1956: (1) a television picture tape recorder; (2) an inexpensive electronic air-conditioner without moving parts; and (3) a true amplifier of light. He did not catch the RCA scientists and research men by surprise, he remarked, for they had already been exploring in those fields.

"Our men already have achieved recording of color as well as black-and-white television programs on magnetic tape," said General Sarnoff. "When I watched a demonstration a week or two ago in our Laboratories, I was amazed at the results. The process is electronic for the camera, for the making of the tape record, and for playing the tape. And there is the added advantage that the tape may be

television stations throughout the country and eventually throughout the world.

"I believe that further technical progress, which is certain to continue, will make the magnetic tape-recording process inexpensive and economical. This new development obviously holds great promise for the motion picture industry as well as for the television industry.

"Magnetic tape recording of video signals should make possible simple means by which a TV set owner can make recordings of television pictures in the home. And they can then be 'performed' over and over through the television receiver just as a phonograph record is played at will. It may also be possible to make video tape home movies with no need to send the tape away for processing.

"We consider it vital for the future of the television art to move rapidly toward perfection of video tape-recording in order to provide the television industry with a practical, low-cost so-

lution of program recording, immediate playback and rapid distribution," continued General Sarnoff. "Further, an unlimited number of copies of such tapes can be made quickly, and copies can also be preserved for historic reference or other uses. In fact, magnetic tape recording has many advantages over photographic film processes and kinescope recording which I am sure are obvious to you in this film capital.

"In my lifetime I have witnessed many advances in radio, television and electronics," said General Sarnoff, "but few have stirred my imagination more in recent years than color television and video tape-recording.

"Electronic motion pictures—in black-and-white and in color—for television, for the theatre and for the home will stem from this remarkable development. Today we are only on the threshold. But the electronic door has been opened wide and gives us a fascinating vista of the future."

General Sarnoff was introduced by Sylvester L. Weaver, Jr., who has since been elected NBC President. Reviewing NBC's timetable for the advancement of color television, Mr. Weaver reported that the network is planning to convert its studios in Burbank, Calif., and Brooklyn, N. Y., to color. In addition to the Colonial Theatre, NBC has in New York another color studio, a color film studio and a remote color unit for outside pickups, he added, and has on order with the RCA Victor Division 20 color cameras, 20 camera chains, remote gear and associated equipment.

Subject to FCC approval of standards, Mr. Weaver said, NBC is planning for the remainder of the year to colorcast "Mr. Peepers," Bob Hope, Donald O'Connor, Dave Garraway, "Your Show of Shows," the "Kraft Television Theatre," "This Is Your

Life," "Amahl and The Night Visitors" and, on New Year's Day, the Tournament of Roses Parade, eventually giving each major show on its schedule a "color premiere" under NBC's introductory year plan.

Color television, Mr. Weaver asserted, will increase the number of hours American families spend with their television sets, increase the scope of programs and improve their quality. Color programs, he continued, will mean better programs for present set owners while they continue to see the better service in black-and-white.

"Color will bring a new stimulation to the creative groups because they can present entertainment as they see it naturally with their own eyes," Mr. Weaver said. "In the coverage of the world of reality—which is the great faculty of television—color will be an added dimension and give the people a completely accurate picture of the event as and when it happens."

In marketing, Mr. Weaver predicted, color television will change present advertising patterns by advancing shared-sponsorships; giving small as well as large advertisers a chance to participate; gathering a larger share of the nation's \$7,000,000,000 annual advertising expenditure; and serving as an upward thrust to improve the standard of living.

The equipment used for transmitting the color film was a 16 mm fast pull-down projector with a flying spot scanner, an RCA development. This system, now in commercial production, was one of three methods of telecasting film which were demonstrated for the first time on Oct. 29, to broadcast engineering consultants at a color television seminar sponsored by the RCA Victor Division in Camden, N. J.

The color receivers used in the Hollywood demonstration were in-



Sylvester L. Weaver, Jr., now president of NBC, left, and General Sarnoff are pictured a few minutes before the first trans-continental color telecast.

stalled by the local staff of the RCA Service Company, the same personnel who install and service the standard black-and-white receiving sets now in the area.

Host for the showing was John West, Vice President in charge of NBC's Pacific Division.

Accompanying General Sarnoff for the West Coast showings, besides Mr. Weaver, were: Frank Folsom, President of RCA; Robert W. Sarnoff, now Executive Vice President; Emanuel Sacks, Staff Vice President; Dr. Charles B. Jolliffe, Vice President and Technical Director of RCA; and O. B. Hanson, Vice President and Chief Engineer of NBC.

Immediately following the showing members of the nation's press began calling in their stories on special phones set up for their use. While their techniques varied, their stories were essentially the same. . . . "It was the greatest thing they'd ever seen." When a beautiful flower bedecked hat changed from the conventional black-and-white picture into radiant hues, reds and yellows, a gasp went up from the assembled throng and one syndicated news reporter later said, "It knocked me right on the seat of my pants."

Writing in the Los Angeles *Mirror*, Hal Humphrey, described by his newspaper as the "usually reserved television and radio editor," said: "It's so beautiful, it knocks you right out of your seat. . . . There's no doubt about it, this is it. . . . I couldn't keep my eyes from the colorcast. . . . The public is going to love it. . . . A new and bigger boom in the television industry is just around the corner."

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Among those attending a special luncheon immediately following the color telecast were, left to right: Robert W. Sarnoff, now NBC executive vice president; Jack Webb, star of NBC's top-rated radio and TV show, "Dragnet"; General Sarnoff, and John K. West, vice president in charge of NBC's Pacific Division



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