

N.B.C. SET TO BEGIN COLOR TV SEPT. 28

**But Action Depends on F. C. C.
Approval—Major Programs
Slated to Be Shown**

The National Broadcasting Company announced yesterday that it would begin to experiment with on-the-air "color premières" of its major television programs on Sept. 28, provided the Federal Communications Commission had approved the new compatible color system by that date.

The commission already has proposed to adopt the system, which would permit television owners to receive color pictures in black-and-white without alteration of existing sets, but has not yet rendered final approval. Both the National Television System Committee, an all-industry group, and the Radio Corporation of America, N. B. C.'s parent company, filed formal application with the F. C. C. seeking approval.

Sylvester L. Weaver, vice chairman of the N. B. C. board, said the "color premières" would be held at the rate of one or two a week, featuring, among others, the programs of Bob Hope, Dinah Shore, Kate Smith, Eddie Fisher, Robert Montgomery, the "Comedy Hour" and "TV Playhouse." An opera—not yet selected—will be televised in color in October, Mr. Weaver said.

The executive added that if the F. C. C. approval was not forthcoming by Sept. 28, the programs would still be given a dress rehearsal in color, but would be put on the air in black-and-white.

With its present sets, of course, the public will not be able to witness these programs in color. Even if the F. C. C. grants final approval some time this fall to the color system, color receivers are not expected to be on the market before some time next year, and only in small quantities at the beginning.

Theatre to Be Equipped

Mr. Weaver said, however, that N. B. C. planned to equip the 300-seat Bijou Theatre, 209 West Forty-fifth Street, with movie-size-screen color facilities. The theatre will be used for public demonstrations of color until mass production of receivers is achieved.

For the last few months, N. B. C. has televised several of its sustaining programs in color without prior announcement, but yesterday, after an earlier announcement, it presented a special telecast in color of "Kukla, Fran and Ollie." They were accompanied by the N. B. C. Symphony Orchestra in an original operetta, "St. George and the Dragon."

As viewed in the Center Theatre in Rockefeller Center, where N. B. C. had installed color receivers for a press demonstration, the color quality in general appeared to be accurate. Most observers commented favorably on what they had seen. One, however, thought that the red coloring was too heavy in the flesh tones of the "live" performers on the puppet show.

All color programs now originate in the Colonial Theatre, 1887 Broadway, which is equipped with four color cameras, special lighting equipment and testing facilities. It has been a training ground for color production crews during the last year, with Richard Day, a former movie art director, heading the operations.

The Columbia Broadcasting System previously announced that it would begin transmitting color programs to its affiliated stations about Sept. 15. The chain has the only color system yet approved by the F. C. C., but it announced several months ago that it would retire that system in favor of the new compatible method.