There cannot be any doubt about it—April 30, 1939, will go down into history as one of the most important dates in industry.

In fact, a hundred years from now, April 30th, 1939 probably will be one of just two dates generally remembered in connection with radio history—the other being December 12, 1901, the day on which Marconi succeeded in spanning the Atlantic Ocean with radio waves.

The latter achievement was the foundation upon which has been built the great industry called radio—entertainment, manufacturing, communications, with all their ramifications. Now it is about to add another ramification—television—to its already prodigious progress.

It is fitting that an industry which lives and thrives on the mysteries and marvels of a still-to-be-defined phenomenon of nature—electricity—should treat the industrial world of today to a manmade phenomenon—namely a definitely predicted birthday that will mark the commercial birth of a new and allied industry, sound the starting gun of a new competitive race over a new and still uncharted course.

That it will be an exciting race, a galloping contest, is a foregone conclusion. But neither its length nor latitude can be definitely foretold, nor can anyone today estimate the exact extent of the technical, financial and commercial handles that have to be shared before the new industry achieves a satisfactory degree of soundness and stability.

Any attempt to forecast or predict the ultimate future of television would be ill-advised and futile at this stage of the art, but we, who are "in," on
the birth, surely may be pardoned if we follow the ancient custom of engag-
ing in a bit of timely speculation, based on present knowledge, on to-
how the new baby is going to look, how it is going to thrive, what it is
going to be like when it grows up.

It is in such spirit that RADIO and TELEVISION RETAILING presents
this special insert on the subject of television.

The editors realize fully that the birth of commercial television on
April 30th is bringing immediate commercial advantages and profit to few
of the many retailers, that its territorial penetration will grow slowly,
that vast areas and millions of people may not for many years be within
practical receiving range of television broadcasts.

But—the very existence of these highly important, definitely known
limitations of the television act as of 1939 imposes the duty upon us to
provide radio merchants everywhere, with an accurate, unbiased, factual
report of what is happening now, what may be expected to happen,
how certain elements may combine to shape the future of radio and
television.

The material contained in this insert was designed to provide dealers
everywhere with what they should, and in fact must know about tele-
vision, regardless of whether they continue to sell radios and combina-
tions exclusively because they are in the vast non-television territory of
the United States or are located within those limited areas where tele-
vision broadcasts are about to be inaugurated and so may expect to
sell television receivers as well.

If the reading of this insert helps dealers in television broadcast areas
to start the selling and servicing of video receivers on a sound, sane,
practical basis and at the same time aids all dealers in both television
and non-television territory to sell more and better RADIO receiv-
ing sets, its purposes will have been achieved.

O. FRED ROST

The most important single factor that all the retailers of radio sets
in all of the United States should immediately realize is that the arrival of com-
mercial television brings real cause for re-
building.

No longer is television one of those intimate creatures of science that was
known to reside in the laboratories, that would at frequent intervals invite news-
paper reporters to break out into columns
of conjecture, that all too often caused
promoters to make their fancies at its pos-
sitive for speculative profit and, what

is more important, that has periodically
constituted a restraining influence among
the radio-minded public and seriously re-
tarded the sales of radio sets because of
its very uncertainty.

On April 30th television will drop that
mantle of mystery, and with it the
lack of interest or ability to exert those
strange influences on the average of public knowledge
made possible.

From now on television will be in
the open, where the public can see it work, see what it will and will not do, can
appreciate its capacity, its status of
perfection and its virtues. From now on,
television will have to take its place
with radio, phonographs, movies, as
media of entertainment, and Mr. and
Mrs. Consumer are going to be the final
judges of its actual worth.

Thus the question of what the arrival
of television means to the radio dealer at
this writing must still remain a matter of conjecture because first the public
must have a chance to react—then the
radio industry, and particularly the radio
dealer, will be able to record such con-
sumer reactions.

Certainly it is that the current interest in television cannot be underestimated
and it will be further stimulated natu-
ally by the exhibits at the two world's fairs.

Obviously, sales of complete television
receivers will be confined to territory
that is within range of video broadcasts.

Dealers who operate in such areas must expect to make some defensive and im-
portant investments if they wish to com-
pete in this field. Demonstrating rooms
must be installed and properly furnished,
special aerials erected, steps taken to re-
Radio & Television Retailing, April 1939