



TELECASTINGS



Cloudy future

Executives at CBS-TV and Columbia Pictures Television began "reviewing their options" last week in the wake of the Dec. 7 conviction of actor Stacey Keach on drug charges in a London court. Keach is the star of *Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer*, produced by CPT in association with Jay Bernstein Productions for CBS. He was sentenced to serve a nine-month jail term after pleading guilty to cocaine possession. According to a spokeswoman for the production company, four completed episodes of the one-hour detective series are ready to air and eight have yet to be shot for the current season. She said if Keach's appeal of the conviction, scheduled this Tuesday (Dec. 18), is granted, production of the remaining segments could proceed without an on-air hiatus. If the appeal is rejected, the studio and network will be forced to consider other, unspecified courses of action.

Silverman's return

Former NBC President Fred Silverman has entered a two-year exclusive agreement with Walt Disney Pictures, through his InterMedia Entertainment Co., for development and production of theatrical motion pictures. Silverman, in his first involvement

in the feature film business, is expected to produce primarily G- and PG-rated films under the Disney and Touchstone logos, with the first release possible by late 1985. Silverman's association with recently named Disney Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Michael Eisner dates back to the mid-1970's, when the latter served under the then-ABC Entertainment president as vice president for prime time programming.

Silverman's company will continue to develop television projects on a nonexclusive basis and to produce animated programming in an exclusive association with Taft Entertainment.

Earlier this fall, Silverman formed a partnership with former ABC-TV executive Richard O'Leary for purchase and programming of major market UHF stations.

From NTA to Republic

National Telefilm Associates, a major distributor of syndicated television programming, has filed a reorganization plan with the Securities and Exchange Commission and is changing its name to Republic Pictures, it has announced. The proposed plan will be voted on during a special stockholders meeting scheduled later this month. The action, calling for formation of two classes of common stock and conversion of currently

outstanding stock, includes provisions "which will have the effect of discouraging any threatened change of control of NTA," according to a company announcement. The firm currently distributes more than 1,000 feature films, plus such off-network series as *Bonanza*, *High Chaparral* and *Get Smart*.

License fee litigation

The All-Industry Television Station Music License Committee has sent a letter to member stations reporting that it met with ASCAP and offered to maintain the present level of payments (about \$57 million annually for the industry as a whole) for blanket music license fees. But the letter said ASCAP countered with a proposal that the industry immediately resume paying under the "percentage of revenue rate" in effect prior to the committee's lawsuit—which the committee claims would total about \$100 million annually.

The dispute over the level of blanket license fees while the committee is appealing its suit to the U.S. Supreme Court now goes to the Federal Rate Court Registrate, which is scheduled to review the parties' positions in December and then determine an interim fee.

In the meantime, the committee told



ChristmaSing. The 1984 version of NBC's annual television special, *Christmas in Washington*, aired last Sunday (Dec. 16), featuring entertainers Donny and Marie Osmond, the Osmond Brothers, Frederica von Stade, Nell Carter and Hal Linden, along with the United States Naval Academy Glee Club, the U.S. Army Herald Trumpets, the Shiloh Baptist Church choir and President and Mrs. Reagan. The show was taped Dec. 9 at the National Building Museum in Washington, and was sponsored by the Ford Division of the Ford Motor Co., AT&T and USF&G, an insurance company. It also included a special segment taped with Nancy Reagan in the State dining room at the White House.

This year's event benefited Washington's Children's Hospital National Medical Center, which was presented with a \$25,000 check from NBC. Guests, including members of the Cabinet and Congress, were asked to bring gifts for the hospital's children. Perry Lafferty, NBC Entertainment's senior vice president, movies, mini-series and special projects, called the event "an opportunity for the people of this land to come together, via the medium of television, with their leaders in celebration of the holiday season."

Pictured are: (left) President Reagan welcoming NBC chairman of the board and chief executive officer, Grant Tinker, at a reception; (above, front row, l-r) Hal Linden, Nancy Reagan, Danny LaBocetta (designer of the Christmas postage stamp), President Reagan, Marie Osmond and Donny Osmond, during the finale.