

RADIO

70 New TV Channels Soon

Deep freeze for television station construction permits may thaw within the next 60 days. Possibly 2,000 stations may be built, putting TV within eye-shot of new areas.

► THE DEEP freeze in which construction permits for television stations have been stored since 1948 may be opened within the next 60 days for a good thawing out. Video fans may soon have more than 12 channels on new TV sets, and communities not served by TV may soon see tall transmission towers rising in the distance.

McIvor Parker of the Federal Communications Commission's television-facilities division said he expected the FCC to open new ultra-high frequencies for television channels "probably within 30 to 60 days, barring unforeseen developments."

To the television industry, that means construction of a possible 2,000 brand new stations scattered throughout the United States. To the layman, it means video will blanket areas not at present within TV eye-shot, and more channels in areas which are.

When the new ultra-high frequency range (from 470 megacycles to 890) is opened, it will make 70 new UHF channels available in addition to the present 12 very-high frequency channels. Present TV receivers can be equipped with a device to receive the UHF channels, Mr. Parker said. He estimated the "converter" would cost between \$25 and \$100.

Each channel can be used by more than one station if stations using the same channel are about 180 miles apart. Mr. Parker predicted possible TV coverage for every community as an outgrowth.

About 500 applications for television station construction permits already are in the FCC freezer, Mr. Parker said. The Commission expects about 500 more applications as soon as the UHF channels are cleared.

Construction permits for television stations have not been granted since September of 1948 because of technical difficulties encountered in the new medium. One of the troubles arose when television stations began interfering with each other due to atmospheric effects on television waves.

Converters Are Ready

► SPOKESMEN REPRESENTING a large radio-television manufacturing company have said that their company is ready to meet equipment demands when the Federal Communications Commission opens 70 ultra-high-frequency channels for television broadcasting.

Allen Mills of the Radio Corporation of America's home-instruments department said his company was producing three types

of converters (to be used on older models of TV sets). The converters are in addition to a combination ultra-high-frequency and very-high-frequency tuner which is interchangeable with regular VHF tuners supplied on RCA television sets since last September, he said.

Two of the three converters are so constructed that most persons can attach the device to their own sets. One type of converter, however, probably would have to be installed by a serviceman, he said.

C. M. Sinnett, also of RCA, reported that video set owners probably would not have to make any change in their antenna systems if they were situated in a reasonably strong UHF signal area, or if the antenna did not need orienting to a new UHF television station.

"The best thing to do is hook up your set with the converter and try it," he said. He thought some adjustments would have to be made in the majority of cases, however.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1952



BAFFLE RINGS — *When installed on airplane engine mounts, the stainless steel baffle rings, looking like collars, form a fire seal between the combustible forward section and the fuel and oil lines that lead to the rear of the engine.*

● RADIO

Saturday, Mar. 1, 1952, 3:15-3:30 p.m. EST

"Adventures in Science," with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over Columbia Broadcasting System.

Dr. and Mrs. Matthew W. Stirling, discuss "Explorations of Ancient Civilizations." Dr. Stirling is director of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

ORNITHOLOGY

Masked Bobwhite May Be Saved from Extermination

► THE MASKED BOBWHITE, a kind of quail once found chiefly in southern Arizona and in Sonora, Mexico, may have been saved from extinction.

The persistent search of J. Stokley Ligon, Carlsbad, N. Mex., Louis Lawson and George Peterson of the Arizona Federal Aid Service for the last few specimens of this vanishing bird in Mexico has resulted in prospects of saving the Masked Bobwhite from extermination.

An upsurge in the last 15 years in the cattle business was the reason for the near-extinction of this quail. Where previously the land favored by the bird, a deep-grass-weed habitat, had been practically untouched, livestock use soon destroyed the land cover, beating it down into a state of desolation unsuitable for the quails.

A long and thorough search in Mexico recently resulted in the bagging of 25 live specimens, and these have now been brought to the U. S. The main hope for survival of the Masked Bobwhite lies in its restoration on former range in southern Arizona, by propagation and carefully managed stocking in that area or in other suitable habitats, Mr. Ligon states.

In 1937, some of these birds were imported from Mexico, but lack of advance preparation and follow-up care, Mr. Ligon reports, caused the seeming failure of this experiment.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1952

PHYSICS

Atomic Energy By-Products On Trial as Drug Sterilizers

► ATOMIC ENERGY by-products are now being tried out as sterilizers of the modern "miracle drugs," such as penicillin, streptomycin and others. If this proves practical, it will simplify the sterilization of the drug.

The idea is "wonderful" and Food and Drug Administration officials hope it works, Dr. Henry Welch, head of the FDA's antibiotics division, said at a Stanford Research Institute sponsored conference on the subject.

He warned, however, that manufacturers must not leave anything in the antibiotics that would be harmful to users.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1952