

TV Controversy Rages

Color television will come to Europe, but not until an agreement on a standard European color system is reached by the nations involved

► THE START of color television by the British Broadcasting Corporation in the fall of 1967 may be delayed for six months or more because of disagreement over a standard European color system.

Europe is split into two camps over the establishment of a common system. France, Russia and the East European countries want the French SECAM system; Britain and the rest of Europe support the German PAL system.

The British Government has given the BBC permission to begin color programs on PAL next year, subject to any decisions made at the conference of the International Radio Consultative Committee, which represents broadcasting organizations from the whole of Europe.

For three weeks delegates at a conference in Oslo, Norway, have tried to reach agreement on a standard system, but neither side has budged an inch.

To avoid burdening Europe with two systems, the Belgian delegation has proposed that a new system to which Britain, Russia, France and Germany have all contributed be adopted for

all Europe, provided trials in the next six months prove it to be workable.

To allow the system to be thoroughly studied by all countries, it is proposed to postpone for six months the start of any European color service due to begin next year.

Although the proposal would appear to provide a solution to the problem, the new system has already been criticized by H. Stanesby, the British Post Office's assistant head of engineering.

When the new system, probably to be called the Oslo, was first discussed, he said that if agreement on a standard system was to be reached, it would have to be on an existing one that has been tried and tested.

He made it clear that Britain, having decided on PAL, was reluctant to again interrupt her television industry's preparations for color television, having already given up the American NTSC system in favor of the German one.

As a new system appears to be the only one on which Europe is likely to agree, however, the proposal for its adoption is favored by the majority of delegates.

MEDICINE

Drug Fees Attacked

► THE COLLEGE of American Pathologists is defending itself in one of the biggest antitrust suits ever filed by the Department of Justice. At the same time, drug prices are coming under attack in a bill to require doctors to write generic drug prescriptions instead of prescribing brand name drugs, which are six times more expensive.

The Justice Department claims that the 4,500 physician members of the

College are trying to get rid of laboratories operated by biologists, chemists or physicists even if their work is of high caliber. The 20,000 medical laboratories in the United States are largely owned by the doctors, who reap profits from the three billion dollars yearly business.

Charges have been brought by the Justice Department that the College has monopolized the lab testing, thus cheating the public with fixed prices and increased insurance rates. Pathologists are accused of refusing to work for commercial laboratories not run entirely for their own profit, and of trying to get all doctors to boycott such laboratories.

Sen. Russell B. Long (D-La.), introduced the bill to require generic prescriptions of drugs dispensed to the elderly under Medicare or any other program supported by Federal funds.

Sen. Long said druggists can buy a quantity of each of 15 commonly prescribed drugs, paying \$57 on a generic name basis, but that the amount would cost \$342 if the drugs were sold by brand name.

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