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NEW LOOK FOR AMERICAN TV PROGRAMMES

At the base of the twin towers of the new 60-storey Marina City building in Chicago, a futuristic structure is in the process of being completed. This will house the studios of Chicago's latest television station—WFLD. Alongside, a rectangular building will contain the offices of the new station, connected to the studios by a lift and a tunnel. The transmitters will be on the nineteenth floor of the west tower and the aerial on top of the west tower alongside the existing Channel 7 mast.

This completely new-look television complex will have a matching new outlook on programming, and Sterling (Red) Quinlan, President, Field Communication Corporation, and General Manager, WFLD, explains the form this will take.

The Company has played a major part in equipping this new station. WFLD has chosen Marconi equipment after an intensive appraisal of the equipment available on the market. It will be using two of the new 25 kW u.h.f transmitters working in parallel and remotely controlled from the studio building. These transmitters will be similar to those ordered by the BBC for their second channel. They incorporate a unique system of diode modulation which ensures maximum linearity and which makes them particularly suitable for colour transmission. They are fully transistorized in the early stages and employ a special arrangement of klystrons for amplification.¹

WFLD coverage pattern is designed to match the Grade A and almost equals the Grade B contour of Chicago's long-established v.h.f giants.

Also included in the original order are six Mark V 4½-in. image orthicon cameras which made such an impact at last year's NAB Convention in Washington. These fully transistorized cameras are the smallest and lightest of their type in the world and incorporate an integrated zoom lens

which removes previous restrictions on focal length of shots and allows each shot to be framed at the producer's direction.

Ampe.x are providing two VR2000 video tape recorders, with full colour capability as well as two VR1100 for black-and-white use.

The station, which has been called "the station of tomorrow", will be highly automated, 98% solid state and flexible in operation.

NO ONE NEEDS to have a crystal ball to predict that many changes will occur in communications in America over the next ten years. The clues are self-evident, and some of them are quite obvious.

The multi-set homes increase which portends great fragmentation of viewing habits in America.

Colour-set sales, which are exploding faster than anyone expected, mean a faster 'catch-up' in u.h.f viewer capability.

And, of course, the All-channel Law itself, effective since May of 1964, is the greatest portent of change.

Improved u.h.f technology is another obvious clue. Transmitters capable of putting out 1 million W, or more, are finally available. Better all-channel tuners are being put into sets. U.h.f equipment at the station level is improving all down the line.

But the gut-issue is Programming, and it is here that the stern test of change must be met in the United States. Programming must assume new shapes and form. There must be new methods of delivery of programming throughout the United States, and I predict there will be such new forms of delivery within the next decade.



Fig. 1. Chicago night and day. Bridges spanning the Chicago River lift up in succession as a boat passes through. Right at the water's edge rise the spectacular columns of the Marina Towers, some 60 storeys high.



Fig. 2. Marconi Mark V transistorized camera.

Indeed, the fantastic profits of the Old Guard 'Mainstream' broadcasters have been such that new, fresh capital is already standing in the wings seeking ways to utilize the many opportunities that change will bring.

If one were to crystal-ball the next ten years in communications in America, I think it would be safe to say that, within that span:

A fourth type of delivery service will be established. Pay television will emerge.

In key markets, perhaps the top 25 independent u.h.f stations will emerge and will be successful.

In addition, I predict that collegiate and professional sports will occupy prime time in the top 25 markets (or more) of the country. By this, I mean that we will see *all* of the major sports appearing now in the Saturday and Sunday afternoon ghetto time in our living rooms,

in colour, from 7.00 to 11.00 p.m.; sports like collegiate football; professional football (both leagues); hockey; baseball; outstanding special collegiate events; and outstanding international events—live!

In Chicago, u.h.f Channel 32, WFLD, operated by Field Communications Corporation, expects to be in the vanguard of those major market u.h.f stations that will emerge and become successful. Our u.h.f broadcast career began in January of 1966 (with a full package of Marconi equipment), and we hope to set an example for other stations to follow. For instance, WFLD will feature sports in prime time.

We will provide what we call "Reality Communication" to Chicagoans by installing automatic vidicon cameras around Chicago, and with these cameras we intend giving frequent and instantaneous information

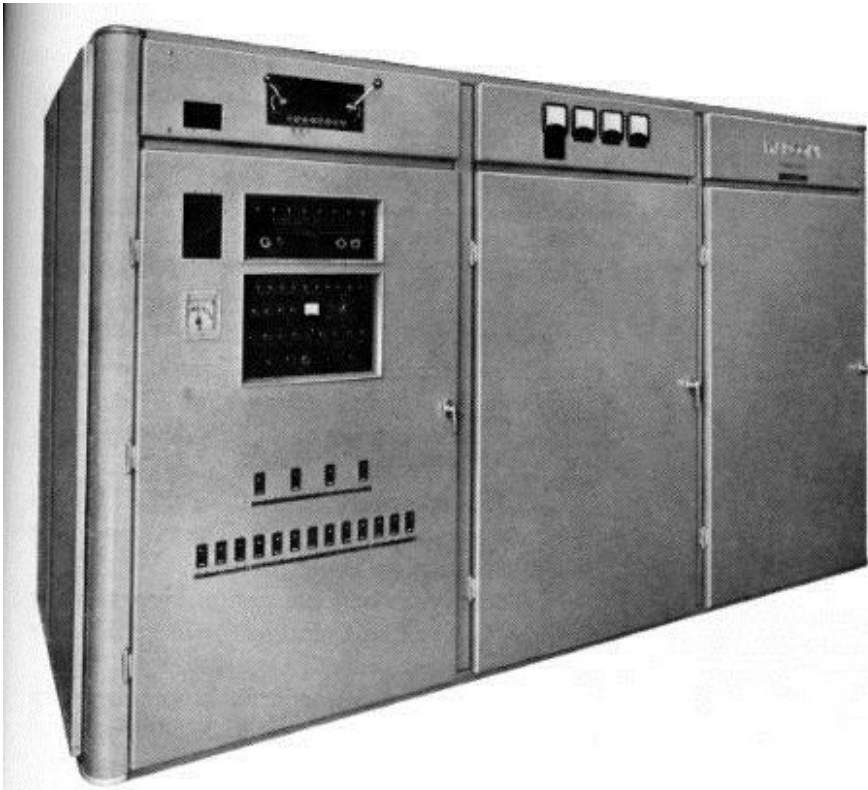


Fig. 3. The B7300 drive unit and B7301 25 kW u.h.f. amplifier. Two of these transmitters are now in service with WFLD Chicago.

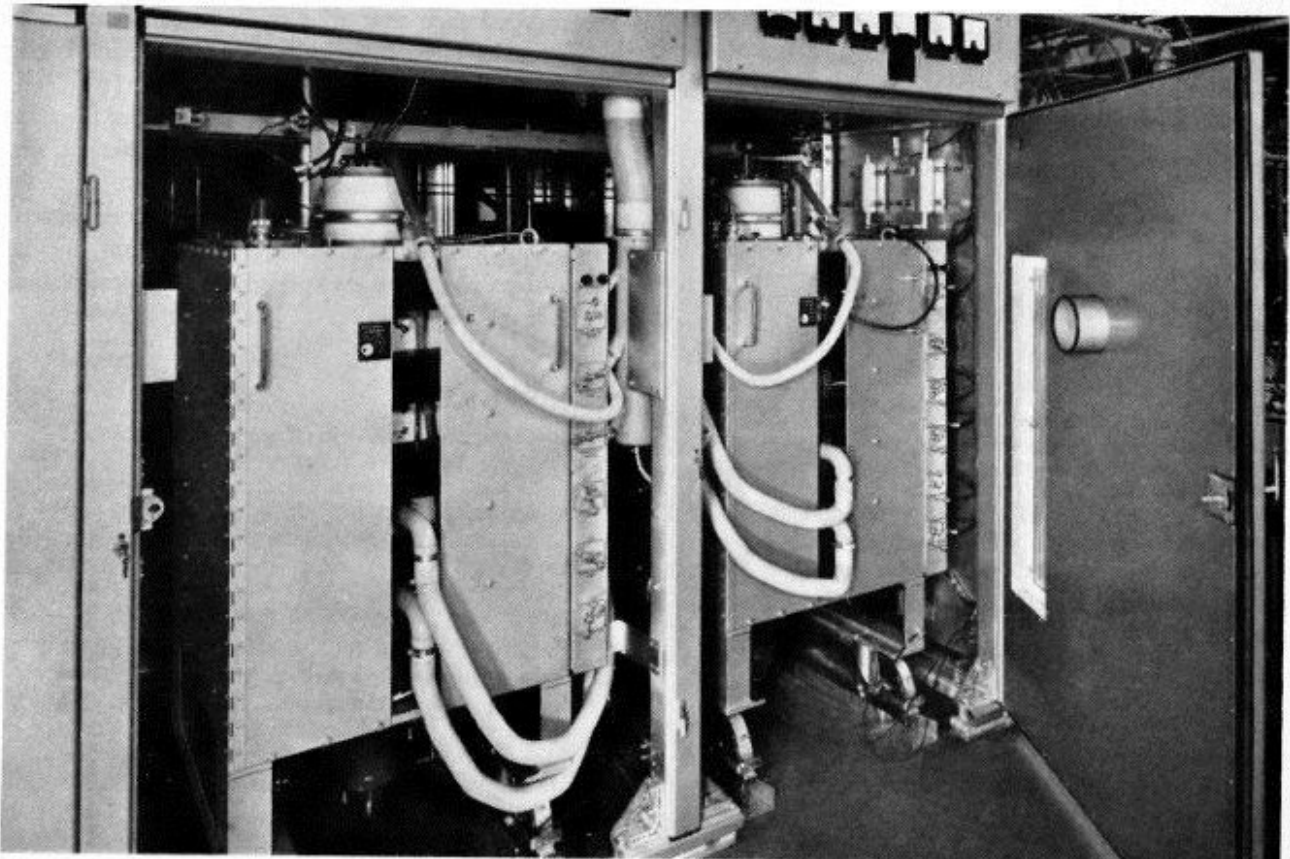


Fig. 4. The klystron used in both the 25 kW video and 5 kW sound amplifiers. The klystrons are of the four-cavity type having a water-cooled electro-magnetic focusing coils.

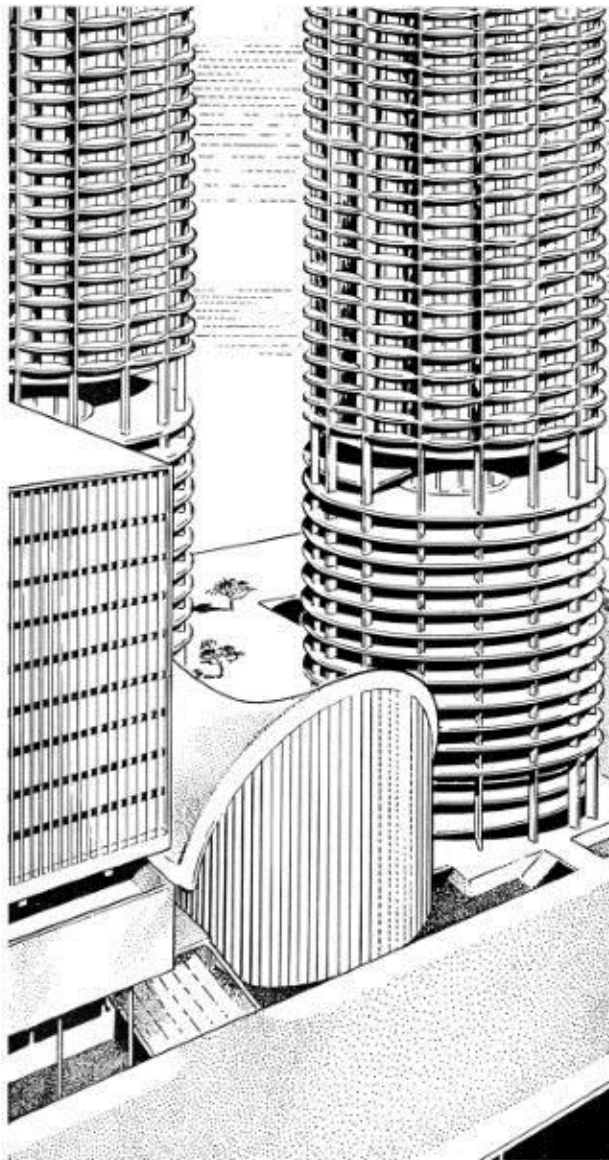


Fig. 5. Much of WFLD Chicago's u.h.f. adventure will originate in this futuristic studio building nestling between the twin towers of Marina City. Administrative offices will be housed in an adjacent office building.

about: (1) arterial expressways; (2) Police Department; (3) Fire Department; (4) Stock Market; (5) airport flying conditions; (6) safety conditions on streets; etc.

We also will keep our audience in touch with the world around us by means of a short-wave station capable of reaching throughout the world.

We will deliver local and international news direct from the News Rooms of our two Chicago papers: the *Chicago Daily News* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

We will present, in prime time, fully developed news stories that lend themselves best to television.

We will deliver ourselves from the artificial barriers of 15-30-60 minute time lengths. The tyranny of the clock will have no place in our planning.

We will deliver the best international programming that we can find so that Chicagoans will get a flavour of television in other countries.

We will not be mass-denominated in our programme approach; that is, we will not try to be all things to all people. We will be unabashedly *adult* in our programme approach. We will attempt to give adult viewers another choice; especially those adult viewers in America who have become disenchanted with the stereotyped fare that fills their screens; and who, as a result, have drastically reduced their viewing habits.

We will, in short, be a *different* station for those adults who are looking for something different. And we will be doing these things because we think the time has come when new things can be done successfully. And because technology is changing, making drastic new programme experiments both practical and necessary.

REFERENCE

- 1 J. SUTTON: U.H.F. Television Transmitters; *Sound and Vision broadcasting*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring 1964.