



"I wear only silver jewelry... it goes better with my braces."

## TV CANDIDS by Terrence O'Flaherty

Death, as it must to all shows, will come to "PM West" in February '62.

At that time the "PM West" portion will disappear as a regular feature and "PM East" will be enlarged to a 90-minute show. In explaining the change, Richard Pack, programming head of the Westinghouse Broadcasting Co., said:

"Regardless of the quality of the second show, we have found, after six months, that the idea of two completely different programs late at night just doesn't work out satisfactorily. The switch after midnight to another coast, to a different personality, a different mood and a different format penalized both programs.

"No one has ever before attempted to produce and syndicate a daily show on tape and the problems we have encountered in dubbing and distribution from two centers are unsurmountable... 'PM East' will travel occasionally to Los Angeles and San Francisco in the future and O'Flaherty will continue to be featured as host on those shows."

"PM West" started from scratch with staggering odds against it—not the least of which was a green host. At first the technical facilities were not of network quality and neither were the crews that operated them—nor the emcee who hogged center stage, heaven knows. (Come to think of it, let's leave heaven out of it.) I think these things have changed now and I want to take my hat off to the show's imaginative and thoroughly professional group of young people backstage who brought it about.

I respect the reasons that motivated WBC to consolidate the show in one city with one staff, but as a credit to our own creative staff and crew I want to go on record as saying that "PM West" has been as good, and often better, a production, program for program, guest for guest, set for set, dollar for dollar, and folk singer for folk singer than "PM East"—and I have watched them all.

The experience has enhanced my understanding of the medium. I'll never again see an emcee's beady eyes peering back and forth at a teleprompter, or see him wincing slightly at a backstage noise, or facing hysteria as a guest continues to talk when the time has run out—I'll never see any of these things again without bleeding a little myself.

By February "PM West" will have done 170 shows—and if you put them all together they would not only spell "MOTHER!" but also "HELP! I'M BEING HELD CAPTIVE IN A CHINESE TELEVISION FACTORY!"

After February I'll never have to face another folk singer or progressive jazz combo again as long as I live, so help me God, and I can renew my friendship with John Crosby and continue my feud with Art Linkletter.

The Westinghouse Broadcasting Co. is made up of some of the most decent, courageous—and also naive—men in the broadcasting business.

In creating "PM East-West" they dared—or had the naivete—to do what CBS and ABC were afraid to try—that is, to put on a late-night program of substance. WBC believes that there is an audience somewhere among America's 180 million souls which seeks something more substantial than vintage movies and Jack Paar. I hope they are right.

"PM" is a brave undertaking. I'm sorry the bravery must now come exclusively from New York. But I'm happy that it is going to come from somewhere.

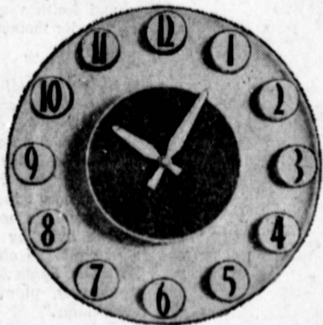
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