

similar tax credits. Details of the proposal weren't offered either by the commerce department or by CBS but the planned expansion is said to be smaller than ABC's. The commerce department said several broadcasters have made contact regarding the program but have yet to apply.

Under New York state's job incentive program, firms locating or expanding in the state are eligible for franchise tax credits and may be eligible for real property tax exemptions. Expansion must mean the addition of at least five jobs, and a training program must be instituted.

Commissioner Dyson later explained that any broadcast operation, from the smallest radio station to a network, could take advantage of the tax credits. However, should a broadcaster want credit to move from the city to the suburbs, for example, it would not be granted because, he said, that would conflict with other state goals.

According to Commissioner Dyson, WKBW-TV Buffalo was convinced to keep its operation downtown with the help of a \$1.7 million construction incentive over 10 years. The WKBW-TV certification was said to have been formalized last month.

A superstation in PTV's future?

Quello idea is a live one in public broadcasting circles, imits PBS chief Grossman

FCC Commissioner James H. Quello has suggested that one of the "star" television stations in the public broadcasting system could become a satellite-delivered superstation, delivering its programming to cable television systems throughout the country.

And reached in New Orleans last week, Public Broadcasting Service President Lawrence K. Grossman called the commissioner's proposal a "very interesting idea" and one that is "certainly an issue that's been discussed" among the non-commercial system's officials.

In a meeting last month with reporters in New York, Mr. Quello said that a non-commercial superstation would be "a sell-

ing point" for getting underwriting funds from big-money contributors such as Exxon or Mobil. He also suggested that a satellite station would be a way of getting quality programming to a wider audience.

According to Mr. Grossman, PBS programming is now available to about 86% of the nation's television homes. But, he said, states such as Wyoming and Montana "are not covered now" and much of that 86% receives a less than superior signal because of technical delivery problems, such as UHF.

A superstation or direct feeds from the PBS satellite network to cable systems could be means of "completing our coverage," Mr. Grossman said. At present, however, he said, PBS has only the rights to "broadcast coverage" and not to feed cable systems. He said that satellite feeds of the PBS schedule to cable systems "bears some examination." He also said that the PBS feeds and a superstation were "not necessarily mutually exclusive" proposals.

Mr. Quello said that he had had a good reaction to his suggestion from Hartford Gunn, vice chairman of PBS, who last year prepared a study on the future of public broadcasting that dealt, in part, with the idea of satellite distribution to cable systems.

The FCC commissioner also made another suggestion to the reporters—a public broadcasting advisory committee that would meet with the commission monthly or bimonthly to discuss matters of mutual concern. He suggested that the advisory committee have a rotating membership made up of representatives of PBS, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and educators. Mr. Quello said he would pass that idea along to FCC Chairman Charles Ferris.

Program Briefs

Athlete supporter. NBC-TV plans six-and-a-half-hour special to raise funds for U.S. Olympic team, to air from Las Vegas Saturday, April 21 (8-11 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.-3 a.m. NYT). Telethon was promised in network's agreement with U.S. Olympic Committee to televise Olympic trials;

NBC also has rights to 1980 summer games in Moscow.

Promised the kids. NBC-TV plans "companywide commitment to upgrade and increase its children's programming service," according to Robert Mulholland, president of network. In speech at dedication of new facilities of affiliate KMTV(TV) Omaha, Mr. Mulholland said effort would involve "every sector of NBC... from news to entertainment to sports." He said campaign coincides with United Nations' designation of 1979 as "The International Year of the Child."

Month from now. Action for Children's Television has set Feb. 15 deadline for acceptance of submissions to be considered for its 1978 "Achievement in Children's Television Awards." Programs must be directed to children's audience and be part of ongoing series in 1978. Single children's specials are not eligible. Information: ACT, 46 Austin Street, Newtonville, Mass. 02160; (617) 527-7870.

Rights team. Hughes Television Network yesterday (Jan. 14) was scheduled to begin conference for major league baseball local rights holders. By last week, Hughes was claiming acceptances from 24 of 26 rights holders for four-day meeting covering satellite transmission in particular. Hughes handled facilities and transmission of away games for 23 clubs last season.

Sounds like. Columbia Pictures Television has signed WPIX(TV) New York for 13-week strip, *Celebrity Charades*, also in marketplace elsewhere for early spring play. David B. Fein and Allan B. Schwartz Productions are producing in association with CPT.

If it's Tuesday. NBC-TV rescheduled miniseries, *Backstairs at the White House*, to air on four consecutive Mondays—Jan. 29-Feb. 19 (9-11 p.m. NYT each night). Line-up reflects new policy of network to concentrate miniseries and movies on Monday night and miniseries, or "novels for television," on Wednesday, instead of stringing them over two or three nights. Idea is to avoid pre-empting regular series.

Movie deal gives MGM its best quarter ever

Sale of U.S. rights to CBS of 'Gone With the Wind' for \$35 million helps push revenue up 92% to \$143.4 million

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. has scored its highest net income and operating revenues of any quarter, based on its record-setting licensing of "Gone with the Wind" to CBS.

For its first quarter of 1979 (ended Nov. 30, 1978), MGM reported operating revenues up 92% over the comparable period a year earlier, from \$74.5 million to \$143.4 million; net income up 217%, from \$8.2 million to \$26 million; earnings per share up 221%, from \$0.53 to \$1.70.

Of that, MGM's \$35-million license to CBS contributed \$14.8 million in net income (or \$.97 per share) and \$29.5 million

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