

\$300 million sale would set radio-only record: NBC sale of WKYS is new stand-alone FM record

The NAB convention traditionally draws large station sale announcements, and often records are broken, but this year could set a record for the most records broken. Sillerman Magee Communications Management Corp., headed by Legacy Broadcasting principal Bob Sillerman, made the largest radio-only purchase ever last week when it announced it had reached a deal to buy Metropolitan Broadcasting Corp. for over \$300 million. And in the largest FM stand-alone sale ever, Albimar Communications, a minority-controlled radio group based in Boston, signed a letter of intent last Thursday (April 7) with NBC to purchase urban contemporary WKYS(FM) Washington, for a price said to be \$46.75 million.

Metropolitan came in and left like a lion, as the original purchase—by Carl Brazell, former president of Metromedia Radio, and Morgan Stanley & Co.—of the nine-station group from Metromedia for \$285 million set the radio-only deal record in 1986 (BROADCASTING, March 31, 1986). Sillerman told BROADCASTING that it had purchased 100% of Metropolitan, but that the structure of the new company had not been determined. It could be a joint venture of Legacy Broadcasting—which is principally owned by former Malrite executive, Carl Hirsch, and Sillerman—and Sillerman-Magee, or present Metropolitan management could be left in place. "We haven't decided yet," said Sillerman. "We're leaving all our options open." Metropolitan was in the process of slimming down the company to reduce debt, selling two of its original nine stations: WASH(FM) Washington to Outlet Communications for \$29.25 million and WIP(AM) Philadelphia, to Spectacor for \$6 million, and trying to sell stations in Tampa, Fla., Detroit, and New York (BROADCASTING, March 21), hoping for about \$75 million for the stations.

WKYS purchaser Albimar's principals are Bertram Lee, chairman, who is also a major campaign fund raiser for Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential bid, and Skip Findley, president. The company also owns KDAB(FM) Ogden, Utah.

The WKYS sale is part of a divestiture of the seven-station NBC radio division. Emmis Broadcasting, based in Indianapolis, purchased five of the stations in a \$121.5-million deal in February (BROADCASTING, Feb. 22). The remaining NBC radio property to be sold is KNBR(AM) San Francisco. NBC, which had announced its intention to separately sell WKYS—considered to be one of its more profitable operations—to a minority-controlled group, will receive a tax credit for the move.