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Section 2 - 17

TV Today: Early TV Convention Coverage Not Very Rousing

Nets Fumble While They Await 'Cast'

By CLAY GOVERN

TELEVISION PROVED again last night that gavel-to-gavel coverage of a national political convention can be, at least in the conventional early hours, something considerably less than breath-taking for the home audience.

Both the National Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting system started their marathon reporting of Chicago's Democratic convocation at 6:30 p. m., when, from the lodge of the Amphitheater, there was practically nobody in the place but the Andy Ryan unit.

Thousands of words were used in exploring every possible facet of the Presidential contest for Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, with the networks' live center diffusion, for some time, in finding enough varied, lively, significant material to put before the camera.



Walter Cronkite

Another topic explored almost to the point of exhaustion in the repeated hours of coverage was the waning or waning strength of Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey—depending upon who was being interviewed at the moment.

To this viewer, it could have been interesting if either the NBC team of Chat Hunter and David Brinkley or CBS' Another man, Walter Cronkite had—just for a breather—sent a reporter around the vast hall to interview one or two of the rare early arrivals visible in the delegate seats as coverage began.

Cronkite tried to inject an air of lightness into the proceedings by "congratulating" CBS reporter Don Walker on the little, four-legged animal he was attached to his head, to transmit the signal of his walk-talk. Walker told Hunter he looked like he had already beaten the Russians and NASA to the moon.

Mayor Daley showed up prominently on the picture tube as convention coverage got under way, although he couldn't have been exactly happy about some aspects of his portrayal.

First, photographer David Douglas Duncan, reporting the convention for NBC, presented a little picture-essay about the mayor, in which, among other things, he showed a shot of the sign at Soldiers' Field which says Daley "welcomes" the Democratic convention to Chicago. Duncan pointed out that the field has become a campground for troops here to prevent trouble.

Next, CBS presented a profile of the mayor, in which the commentator stated that in Daley's domain "all decisions are made on the basis of what is best for the organization"—HIS organization.

Daley himself was on the convention platform later to deliver a speech in which he welcomed the visitors, told them there will be law and order in Chicago as long as he is mayor, and—in an obvious play of critics who contend it is ridiculous to hold the convention in this strife-torn metropolis—declared that it is "not of faith" on the part of the Democrats to convene here rather than in "some resort center," meaning Miami Beach, where the G. O. P. held its convention.

First-night coverage of the Democratic meeting proved anticlimactic compared with the passing of the network pendants, or some of them, gave Chicago and the Democratic leadership in weekend broadcasts. Then, the forces which have been built around the convention area, the large security forces which have been assembled, and most of all the restrictions placed by the Democrats on the number of TV and radio news men to be allowed on the convention floor all become targets of comment.

On Sunday, convention officials notified the networks each would be permitted only two radio reporters, two TV reporters, and three camera men on the floor—seven men, against 20 at the G. O. P. convention, and 31 at the last Democratic convention.

NBC's David Brinkley on Sunday tore into the restriction and the thinking behind it, pointing out that the job of the floor men of a network is to report what is happening, and asserting that by this action the Democratic leadership has shown that "it does not want reported what is happening."

TV HIGHLIGHTS

[R] indicates rerun.

6:30 p. m.—Channel 2, 5—Democratic Convention. Live reporting of the Democratic convention in the Amphitheater. Chat Hunter and David Brinkley anchor NBC coverage on channel 5 and Walter Cronkite leads CBS coverage on 2.

7 p. m.—Channel 7—H Takes a Thief [R]. Alexander Mundy persuades the SIA to obtain a parole for a lady thief so she can help him steal a fur coat that has special information in the lining, in "When Thieves Fall Out," Robert Wagner, M. A. L. A. B. Thorne, and Susan B. Lewis.

8:30 p. m.—Channel 4—Democratic Convention. Nine-minute news wrap-up of the convention with Howard K. Smith, Frank Reynolds, William H. Lawrence, and political observers William F. Buckley Jr. and Gene Vidal.

9 p. m.—Channel 11—NET Festival. Gaetano Donizetti's comic opera "L'Alfano" with the bearing father confronted with the generation gap. The opera, Bill Trent.

TV Hour by Hour

- At 3:30 p. m.—Moe Griffin's guests: Lou Ragan, Jackie Mason, Bart Lough, Dick Gregory, and Elton Janeway, on Channel 5.
- At 6:00 p. m.—Mike Douglas' guests: Bobby Vinton, London Law, Stewart Robb, and co-host Jane Morgan, on Channel 5.
- At 7:30 p. m.—Steve Allen's guests: Joanne Woodward, Pat Harrington, The Irish Rover, Tommie Van Zandt, and Louise Luper, on Channel 7.
- At 10:30 p. m.—Tonight. Bob Newhart is substitute host for vacationing Johnny Carson. Guest: Marilyn Maye, on Channel 5.
- At 10:30 p. m.—Joy Bishop's guests: Homer and Jethro, Telly Furst, and the Temptations, on Channel 7.

SPORTS ON THE AIR

- 7:55 p. m.—22—Baseball. White Sox vs. Detroit Tigers at Fox Park.
- 8:00—Summer Semester. Children's Edition.
- 8:15—News and Sports.
- 8:30—Sunday '68. Today in Chicago. Five Minutes to Live by 6:35—Top of the Morning.
- 7:00—Ed Bradley. 7:15—Mop and Broom. 7:30—Reflections. 7:45—Leave It to Beaver [R]. 7:55—Three Sheeps [R].
- 8:00—Captain Kangaroo. 8:15—The Cat in the Hat. 8:30—Beverly Hills Cop. 8:45—Theatre Guild.
- 9:00—Conrad Combs [R]. 9:15—Judge John. 9:30—Excuse with Gloria. 9:45—Shark Market Observer. 10:00—News. 10:15—Beverly Hills Cop [R]. 10:30—Conrad Combs. 10:45—Dick Cavaliere. 11:00—Love of Life. 11:15—Jeopardy. 11:30—Squid Light. 11:45—News. 12:00—News. 12:15—Let Philip. 12:30—The World Today. 12:45—News. 1:00—Child's Duster.
- 10:00—Love is a Many Splendored Thing. 10:15—The New York Yankees. 10:30—The New York Yankees. 10:45—The New York Yankees. 11:00—The New York Yankees. 11:15—The New York Yankees. 11:30—The New York Yankees. 11:45—The New York Yankees. 12:00—The New York Yankees. 12:15—The New York Yankees. 12:30—The New York Yankees. 12:45—The New York Yankees. 1:00—The New York Yankees.

The Sound

Music and radio: for young listeners

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