

Microwave system offers cheaper cable alternative

United Press International
NEW YORK — The scramble for expensive cable television rights going on across the country has obscured the fact that, for 10 years now, a cheaper alternative has been available.

It is the multi-point distribution service, a super-high-frequency, line-of-sight microwave signal authorized by the Federal Communications Commission a decade ago but little used up to now.

In its present application through local systems set up in about 50 cities, it delivers various types of pay TV programs over the air instead of by cable. But it is different from conventional over-the-air pay TV, which uses the broadcast band.

Equipment for MDS is made by several companies, including Electronics, Missiles & Communications, Inc., of White Haven, Pa.

President Frank Misso of EMC says MDS is a lot less expensive way of transmitting pay TV programs than cable in the long run.

The local purveyor of pay TV programs by MDS makes a one-time investment of \$500,000 to \$1 million in equipment, which he rents out to the users, collecting

fees for the use and fees for the programs.

The programs are distributed locally at the relatively modest transmission cost of microwave compared with \$14,000 to \$25,000 a mile for cable TV transmission. This can run to \$20 million or more in many communities and an estimate of wiring Washington, D.C., for cable TV ran to \$70 million.

So far, MDS has not resulted in any significant new programming, according to Don Franco, head of Microband Corp. of America, New York, which has built up a series of franchised MDS systems in 50 cities.

Franco said these systems are common carriers providing supplemental and alternative delivery of programs from such established pay TV program producing and distribution firms as Home Box Office, Showtime and others.

The system makes use of satellite ground stations and other facilities to take the programs from the conventional distribution channels for local delivery over the air by the super microwave band.

Franco said most of the consuming customers are homeowners in areas where there is no

cable TV or where cable service is not well developed. The home owner pays an installation fee of \$100 and a monthly fee of \$13.50 to \$15 for service. The program packages are the same as those delivered on the more comprehensive cable systems.

The most important piece of equipment the homeowner must rent is a special antenna. Conventional broadcast TV antennas won't pick up the signal. Master antenna systems for a hotel or apartment complex are possible.

But MDS and Microband have started to develop new uses for the system. In addition to picking up conventional pay TV programs, the local MDS studio can originate special programs by means of prerecorded tapes or films or even from an electronic data processing terminal in the case of business information.

Among the special types of programs being broadcast via MDS are off-track betting prices, commodity and securities market prices and the latest news on local airport schedules and current operations.

Franco foresees a steady but not necessarily rapid proliferation of special information programs via the MDS microband.

Plans for Oswald's burial kept secret

United Press International
FORT WORTH — A curtain of secrecy has been drawn on funeral arrangements for Marguerite Oswald, who requested to be buried next to her son, Lee Harvey Oswald, accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy.

A spokesman for Baumgardner's Funeral Home said Sunday that members of the Oswald family requested no details be made public about services.

He said Oswald's son, Robert, the only person to view the elderly woman's body, made arrangements for the burial and then returned to his Wichita Falls home.

The spokesman said services for Oswald, 73, would be private but that she would be buried in Fort Worth. He declined to reveal when funeral services would occur.

Oswald died Saturday morning of cancer.

Her physician, Dr. John Johnson, said she had been in and out of Harris Hospital for more than a year for cancer treatments. He declined to reveal what type of cancer Oswald suffered from. Her hospitalization had been kept secret even from hospital personnel.

Oswald was hospitalized for the last time Nov. 21, one day before the 17th anniversary of Kennedy's assassination.

"She was alone and estranged from her family and had to make all the decisions concerning her own care and welfare," her doctor said.

Johnson said one of the woman's last requests was to be buried next to Lee Harvey Oswald in Rose Hill cemetery. Oswald was buried at Rose Hill after he was shot and killed by Jack Ruby in the basement of the Dallas police station, two days after the Kennedy assassination.

Oswald disputed the findings of the Warren Commission, which concluded her son acted alone in killing Kennedy in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963, and she campaigned to have her son's name cleared.

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\$8 million television epic highlights Peter and Paul

United Press International
ATHENS, Greece — Greece is the setting of a new Bible epic for American television based on the life and work of two early Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul.

"I was curious about what happened to the 11 men left behind after Jesus' crucifixion, and how they they managed to make the new faith take root," said producer Stan Hough. "I read the Book of Acts and that became the basis for a script. It's a tremendous story and it revolves around Peter, the blunt fisherman from Galilee and Paul, the thinker."

"Peter and Paul," a Universal Pictures-CBS television production with an \$8 million budget, will be screened during Easter week next year in two parts of two hours each.

It traces Christianity's first 30 years, when the disciples preached Jesus' word around the Mediterranean, facing often-hostile mobs and puzzled Roman administrators.

"We decided to shoot in Greece because much of the story happens here. Paul's journeys to the Greek cities make up a large part of the film," Hough said.

He and screenwriter Christopher Knopf took advice on the script from senior rabbis and academic theologians, the Vatican and the Greek Orthodox Church.

Robert Foxworth as Peter and Anthony Hopkins as Paul head a cast of American, British and Greek actors with a background of classical stage acting.

"Growing up in Houston I didn't have a lot of religious background, and this is the first time I've played a biblical part, so I did a lot of reading," Foxworth said.

"What impressed me was the power of those ideas and the struggle in the relationship between Peter and Paul."

Welshman Anthony Hopkins' most recent role was Adolf Hitler in another CBS-TV special. He said he always wanted to play a biblical role.

Except for the scene of Paul's conversion on the desert road to Damascus, locations for "Peter and Paul" are in Attica and the island of Rhodes, where the medieval city of knights appears as Jerusalem in the first century A.D.

"We're trying to make this story as direct and natural as we can," said director Robert Day, who was pilot director for the "Dallas" series. "There are no Cecil B. de Mille booming voices from Heaven or dramatic miracles. The great advantage of doing a four-hour film is in the opportunity we have for developing characters across a broad time span. We finish with Peter's crucifixion outside Rome in 64 A.D."

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Search for killer continues

United Press International
SAN ANTONIO — Chilling rain falling in from the north and temperatures dipping into the 30s failed yesterday to drive a 29-year-old murder suspect from the bush country south of San Antonio.

"There's been no sign of him yet," Bexar County Sheriff's Department Capt. Alfred Carreon said of the wanted suspect, who fled into the brush country Jan. 5 after Mrs. Norma Logan, 77, was found stabbed to death inside her rural home.

Carreon led a stepped-up search during the weekend that involved helicopters and sheriff's deputies on horseback and in land rovers.

A man believed to be the fugitive turned up Saturday at a drive-in grocery store in the area. He bought both drink but became nervous, dropped the bottle on the floor and fled again toward the brush.

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