

## BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

N'YORK CITY — Fortune magazine, the gospel of the nation's top multi-monied corporations said it, and I am just writing it along for the information of some and the pride of others like this writer. "NBC's Peacock struts again," is the top-line and the first paragraph eyes so: "Three years after Grant Tinker moved in to run the third-rated network, prime-time television viewers are flocking back to its programs and profits are soaring." Deeper into the piece by Colin Leinster, it was write hand pointed out that immediately after Tinker took

over as chr'man and chief executive, NBC's profits bounced up, but for three more years the network languished at the bottom of A.C. Nielsen Co.'s ratings. "Now the ratings have come back too. When the 1984-85 season ended in April, NBC had vaulted ahead of ABC in the household ratings race for prime-time (evening) viewers. And whereas CBS and ABC lost audiences over the season (CBS was down 6 percent and ABC, 10 percent), NBC's ratings increased 9 percent. CBS still leads in the number of households that tune in

during prime time, but NBC gets more prime-time viewers per household and a larger total viewing audience, 25.25 million per minute, vs. CBS's 23.8 million and ABC's 22.9 million. NBC enters the coming fall season as the clear winner in the chase after the big spenders whom advertisers treasure most — and pay the most to reach — particularly adults 18 to 49. Advertising Age, a trade newspaper, predicts that NBC could hit \$1 billion in advance ad sales for the season — a network first.

"Much of the credit for NBC's comeback belongs to The Cosby Show, a situation comedy about a black doctor and his family. Cosby came to NBC by default; ABC turned down a proposal for a sitcom starring Bill Cosby. Last season, its first, Cosby ranked as the third most popular program in the U.S., after Dynasty and CBS's Dallas. In recent weeks reruns occasionally edged into first place. Last year NBC charged about \$100,000 for a 30-second commercial on Cosby. For



the coming season the rate has jumped to some \$250,000. This means that Cosby will pull in revenues estimated at \$80 million over the coming year for NBC." I hope that NBC will never forget him and will him a life time in.

FAN-TASTIC — Made possible by, "The generous contributions of local and nat'l corporations, unions and foundations," State Senator Marty Markowitz successfully staged his 3rd annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. free concert series in B'klyn. To the joy of some 80,000 fans, the eight evening events offered all the musical and vocal sounds acceptable to the ears. The nite that I was the guest of the United Mutual Life Insurance Co., a co-sponsor, the Note Book was intro'ed by the Senator to some 10,000 onlookers. Bobby "Blue" Bland, Etta James and Pieces of a Dream were the magnets. The B'klyn Philharmonic Symphony Ork. and Nina Simone, back in the states after a decade in Europe, opened the series. It segued through the likes of Lionel Hampton, Rev. James Cleveland, Thad Jones and the Count Basie Ork. with the Divine Sarah Vaughan. Backed by a dozen sponsors, just as many contributors, 26 patrons and more than 100-helping hand companies, individuals and agencies, it was totally fantastic . . . In the midst of its 15th b'day celebration, Ed Lewis, publisher/ceo Essence Communications, revealed that John Johnson, topper

Johnson Publications, has purchased a small equity interest in Essence, the fast growing femme mag. J.J.'s big guns are Ebony/Jet . . . Marc Davis has made Sammy Davis Jr. a grandfather with the birth of his son. He has named the 7 lb. 6½ ounce lad Andrew Marc Davis. It made Elvera "Baby" Davis a great great grandmother with bragging rights over Barbara Jacquet, the second prettiest grandmama . . . Leola Edwards, her daughter Pam Jackson, her trio of kids and mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Ethel Sayles, all motor van'ed in from Texas to keep a court date in the Catherine/Count Basie estate will dispute. The hope for an out-of-court settlement now seems out of the question. The judge is still trying for an amicable deal that would keep any dirty linen off the public line . . . To prevent the late Madame C.J. Walker's Irvington, N.Y. manse from falling into the money grabbing hands of some greedy developer, the American Health and Beauty Aids Institute should pool some dollars and sense and purchase the million dollar house and property. Madame Walker was the nation's first Afro-American female millionaire and beauty culture pioneer . . . Since everybody insists on calling Afro-Americans black as a race, and we accept it, why not demand that the term be spelled with a capital "B!"

PEOPLE'NALITIES — Dental surgery came between Dionne Warwick

and several engagements in the East. However, no hard feelings have erupted and her flings at the North and South Shore Music Circus Theatres have been reshuffled . . . Producer Freddie Fields is spreading the word that Quincy Jones will supervise, and Thomas Dolby will write, the music for his upscheduled MGM/UA flick, "Fever Pitch." . . . You should love the 1986 commemorative stamp madly! It will carry the likeness of the immortal Duke Ellington. He was selected over film comedians Laurel & Hardy as the U.S. Post Office annual salute of someone from the arts . . . The Ass'n of Comedy Artists' were not well acquainted with the late Jackie "moms" Mabley's close friends. Too many of them were missing from that groups induction of her into their Hall of Fame ceremony at Smalls Paradise . . . The Actors Fund of America has been successful in getting the once super actress Claudia McNeil admitted as a patient of the Inglemoor Nursing Home. It's in Englewood, N.J., should you want to "ride your write hand" her way . . . There's good news about Scatman Crothers, who's out of the Bev Hills Hosp. Said he feels great as he starts taking chemotherapy . . . The George Sanford Browns, she's Tyne Daly of teevee's "Cagney & Lacey," are expecting a tax deduction in Sept. . . . Super horn blower Maynard Ferguson may do the lecture circuit after his six wks vacation/religious pilgrimage in India . . . Maurice Hines' directed and choreographed history of Harlem musical is a massive Atlantic City hit. It is being talked about as being restaged for a B'way run . . . Kareem Abdul-Jabbar leads Herschel Walker, Rickey Henderson, Dwight Gooden and Marvellous Marvin Hagler in the 2nd quarter voting for Gordon's Gin "Black Athlete of the Year" . . . STAY LOOSE . . . Billy Rowe is a syndicated columnist.

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