

AS I SEE IT



Pat Costa

What is more frustrating than a Sunday evening with "Sixty Minutes" not scheduled? Answer: "Sixty Minutes" cut, abbreviated, delayed because of football.

Why does CBS allow its finest and most watched news-oriented program to be treated in this manner? Money has to be the answer. Advertising revenues connected with the sports wrapup that follows the game as with the recent Redskins and Forty-Niners tilt are obviously too great to lose.

Listening to commentators Phyllis George and friends attempt to inject excitement into a wrapup of a game that was only of medium importance is not about to turn those who merely tolerate the game into fanatics. And it's bound to turn a lot of "Sixty Minute" buffs sour. Since there isn't a chance in a million that CBS or any other

network would terminate a sports telecast for a news program, the only hope is that CBS will see fit to reschedule Morley, Mike and Co.

Jimmy Carter now says he won the election by virtue of the exposure of the TV debates. Maybe so. But the debate that clinched the voting decision for this viewer was not the presidential ones. It was the bout between the vice presidential candidates that shifted the balance. Walter Mondale who heretofore had been primarily a name came across as stolid, even a little stuffy. But (to keep it alliterative) his sincerity and solidity surfaced as a rock amidst the shifting sands of his opponent's wisecracks.

We never did get to review such TV entries as "Ball Four", "Gemini Man", "Cos" and others. And now it looks like we never will as their respective networks have already eradicated them or plan to. Obviously we didn't miss much. Speaking of series failures, it appears that Van Dyke and Andy Griffith have the same sort of problem. Both were solid winners in the sixties with family type situation comedies. Neither has been able to hit the bullseye again although both have tried. Since both men have demonstrated their talents over and over again it appears to be a matter of chemistry or the lack thereof.

Current situation comedies as my viewing partner pointed out recently seem to be reaching, reaching for their humor. Often it is in bizarre directions. A recent "Phyllis" revolved around her attempt to have the body of her late husband Lars reentered in San Francisco. Homosexuality has been the dominant theme on the "Nancy Walker Show", "Alice", "Phyllis" and heaven knows how many others. It was done at least two years ago on "All in the Family" and the imitators refuse to call a halt.

"Alice" also has used obscene phone calls and "Welcome Back Kotter" has dealt with a few unsavory themes for its young viewers. "Kotter" dialogue and plotting incidentally have deteriorated horribly this season.

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