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Producer Is Named President of CBS News

By LAWRIE MIFFLIN

Andrew Heyward, a longtime producer of news programs at CBS, was named president yesterday of CBS News, where his mission will be to revive a journalistic operation that has languished in recent years.

Mr. Heyward, who has been the executive producer of the "CBS Evening News" since October 1994, and before that produced two CBS news magazines, will replace Eric W. Ober, who was recently forced out after five years on the job.

Peter Lund, president and chief executive of CBS Inc., decided to change the division's leadership shortly after the Westinghouse Electric Corporation completed its \$5.4 billion acquisition of CBS in late November.

Mr. Heyward, who is 45 years old and has spent 20 years at CBS, is widely respected within the industry. He now faces the substantial challenge of reviving a news division that has lost many talented journalists and many thousands of viewers in the last few years.

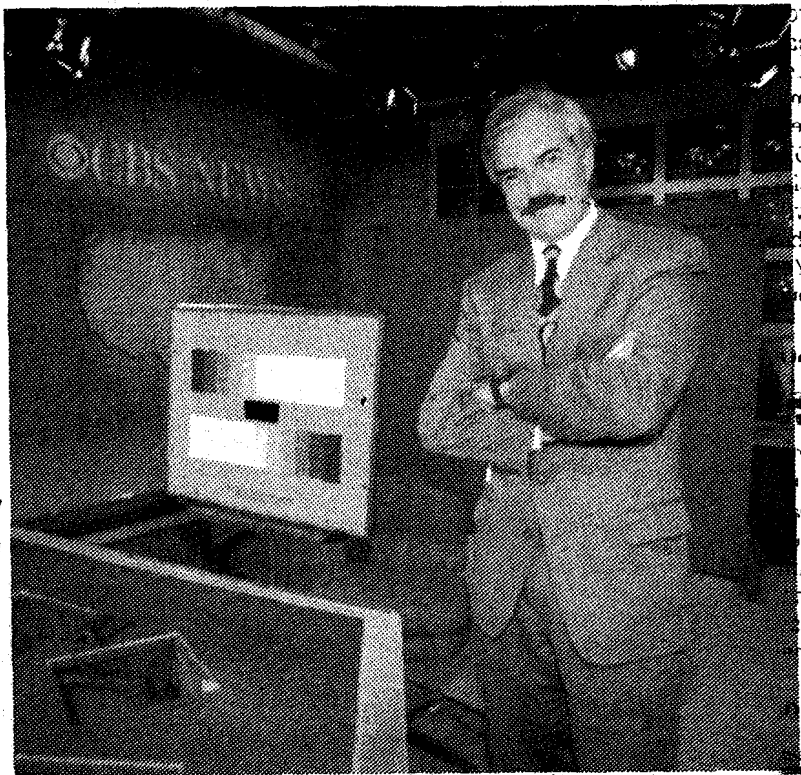
"CBS Evening News" is in third place in the Nielsen ratings, as is the two-hour morning show, "CBS This Morning." The news magazine "48 Hours," which Mr. Heyward created, has also slipped in the ratings. And while "60 Minutes" remains the most-watched news magazine, it has been hard pressed to hold its own now that CBS no longer has National Football League to lead into it.

And because of financial handcuffs put on the entire network by its former chairman, Laurence A. Tisch, CBS has not kept up with ABC or NBC in exploring cable networks, on-line ventures and other new media projects.

"It would be hubris to say I'm not feeling anxiety about it," Mr. Heyward said. "There's a pent-up desire throughout our organization to be recognized as the journalistic news leaders that we have been, and still are. I don't want to over-promise. It's going to be a long haul."

Most observers believe the change in ownership will have more impact on CBS News than the change in the division's president, but Mr. Lund is sending a signal.

"I certainly recognize the unfairness of this to Eric," he said of Mr. Ober. "But I felt as we step out here with a whole new company and a new emphasis on growth, we need to



Philip Greenberg for The New York Times

Andrew Heyward, a longtime producer of news programs at CBS, was named president of CBS News, replacing Eric W. Ober.

communicate this turn in the road to all our constituents — our affiliates, the people who work at CBS News, our competitors, our viewers, Wall Street, the press. We couldn't do that simply by issuing a statement."

Lawrence K. Grossman, a former president of NBC News and a media critic, said that while Mr. Heyward had an excellent reputation, "Everything really depends on the aggressiveness and interest of Westinghouse in a strong news division."

Mr. Heyward said he was confident that he would not face the same financial roadblocks that Mr. Ober did, because, he said, "Westinghouse has a rich history in broadcast news, and they're well aware that news is critical to the strength of the company."

He acknowledged a need to attract additional producers and correspondents to replace those who had left. But he insisted that CBS's talent pool was "one of our major strengths" — one that needed to be "better exploited and better promoted" to help rekindle ratings growth.

On the "CBS Evening News," he must choose a new executive producer, and then spend money to recruit "top-flight producers and cor-

respondents and retain the ones we have." He also wants to toughen up some of the in-depth segments.

"CBS This Morning" recently changed its format to devote the second hour to one topic. Mr. Heyward said, "Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't," adding that he would re-examine it.

As for "60 Minutes," which he called "the best of the news magazines, by far," he said its longtime executive producer, Don Hewitt, had already been talking about trying some new approaches in the show.

And to improve the ratings of "48 Hours," which explores one topic through the eyes of ordinary people, Mr. Heyward said he would like to make the program "more responsive to breaking stories" while preserving its "unique story-telling method."

But the "Evening News" is the network's flagship program, and Dan Rather, its anchor, likes the change. "Andrew has the indefinable eye and ear for the right script fitting the right visuals," Mr. Rather said. "And, he's a leader. He knows the difference between leading and just managing. He's good news for anyone who wants to do news well."