



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, JULY 23, 1999
WWW.USDOJ.GOV

AT
(202) 514-2007
TDD (202) 514-1888

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE MODIFIES 1957 CONSENT DECREE WITH KANSAS CITY STAR

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Department of Justice today agreed to modify a 1957 consent decree with the Kansas City Star that would require The Star to provide the Department with advance notice of certain acquisitions of other newspapers in the Kansas City metropolitan area. This provision would enable the Department to evaluate the competitive effects of any such acquisition, and to prohibit any anticompetitive transaction before it occurs.

The modified decree, filed today in U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Missouri, is subject to court approval.

The original decree was entered November 15, 1957, following the filing of civil and criminal monopolization charges against the newspaper. The decree contained provisions aimed at preventing The Star from monopolizing the dissemination of news and discriminating against advertisers who used competing media. Some of the provisions listed in the original decree prevented The Star from passing on to advertisers the savings produced by recent advances in publishing technology, and from engaging in other procompetitive conduct. As a result, the Department has tentatively agreed to terminate portions of the decree and to modify others.

Among the changes contemplated are:

- rather than being prohibited altogether, acquisitions of publishing interests above \$5 million must be brought to the Department's attention in advance;
- an absolute prohibition on the acquisition of radio and television stations will be terminated (such acquisitions will be subject to FCC regulations and the antitrust laws);

- the prohibition against tying advertising in the evening edition to advertising in the morning edition is terminated, as there is no longer an evening edition; and
- the prohibition on price discrimination is terminated, because it prevents procompetitive discounting.

A notice of the Department's tentative consent to modification of the decree will be published in the Federal Register. Copies of The Star's motion, as well as the Department's supporting memorandum, may be obtained from the Department upon request and payment of copying fees. Any person may submit comments on the proposed modified decree within sixty days to M. J. Moltenbrey, Chief, Civil Task Force, Antitrust Division, Department of Justice, 325 7th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20530.

###