

STATIONS' PLEAS SAVE 'GUNSMOKE'

Program, Scheduled to End, Will Be Moved Instead

By **ROBERT E. DALLOS**

For a while the Columbia Broadcasting System had Marshal Matt Dillon tied to a tree. But a cavalry troop of network officials saved him just in time.

C.B.S. said yesterday that it had "re-evaluated the situation" and decided that "Gunsmoke," the longest running Western dramatic series on network television, would remain on the air next season.

"We had a change of heart," a network spokesman said. "Our affiliate stations had an affectionate feeling for the program. There was a surprising reaction to our announcement that the program was through. There's a feeling that there is life in the old boy yet."

First Move a Surprise

The Western series, which stars James Arness, had been canceled despite the fact that it had been doing well in the ratings. The announced end of "Gunsmoke," now in its 12th season, had been the major surprise of the C.B.S. fall schedule.

C.B.S. said "Gunsmoke" would shift to a new time slot in the fall, "to attract a new and maybe larger audience." The hour-long series, currently seen at 10 P.M. on Saturdays, will be moved to 7:30 P.M. on Mondays.

The program had been largely attracting an audience of older persons. In the earlier time period the network hopes to draw younger viewers.

The network said neither the cast nor the format of the program would be changed in any way.

In its new time position, the Western will replace "Gilligan's Island," which is being canceled, and "Doc," a program which was scheduled to begin in the fall.

"Gilligan's Island," a comedy series about a group of people marooned on an island, has been on the air for three years. It was No. 44 in the latest Nielsen reports, released Monday.

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Trade Paper Suspends

TV and Radio Today, a daily broadcasting trade paper, suspended publication yesterday. Its publisher, Lawrence A. Benenson, said inadequate advertising was the reason. The four-page newspaper had been published five days a week since October.