

LUCILLE BALL

continued

I started to cry. 'I need an hour,' I told him. 'I just gotta have an hour for more thinking.' I said to him, 'Do you know, Mickey, I haven't ever seen this man. I like to see a person's eyes, shake his hand.' Well, Mickey got Bluhdorn on the phone, and guess what he said? He said, 'Miss Ball, one of the things I am prepared to like about you is that you care.' I cried again. Then I said yes."

From all reports, Lucille Ball has not regretted her decision. In addition to the tremendous financial advantages of the deal, it released her from a gigantic burden of responsibility. It has also meant that she has more time to spend with her husband—the marriage is a good one—and her children. "I've been as good a mother as I know how to be," she told GH, "and so far the kids haven't disappointed me. We *touch* in our house. If I come home dead tired, and feel one of the kids stiffen, I say, 'Honey, don't stiffen up. There's so little time. You'll be gone soon and we'll have to wait till you bring your own kids back home to have you again. Let's have kisses and hugs while we can.' "

The new show format will mean that in the future Miss Ball will be spending a lot of time with her children. "They couldn't believe it when I told them," she said. And it will also doubtlessly mean that America will have several more years to love Lucy.

Why does someone as rich as Lucille Ball keep on working? Because she enjoys work, that's why.

"I have no feeling for money," she says. "I never see any of it, so it means no more to me than when I was a stock girl at RKO and stood in line for my fifty-dollar paycheck.

"I don't live any differently—well, that's a silly thing to say. I *do* live very differently and I spend an awful lot of money. But I could be just as happy on one-eighth of what I spend.

"I've worked too hard to have much time to lavish money on myself, and I've tried not to spoil the children with money. If there's any money left, they'll get it, but not in one big chunk; they'll still be receiving it in their fifties. It would be a disservice not to allow them the joy and satisfaction of making their own way in life. I want them to have their own goals.

"I've had mine. Generally, they've added up to work—any kind of work. I think I could be happy in a hamburger stand. Work is what sends me." ♦