people to participate rather than spectate in determining their own present and future.

Once upon a time the Town Hall was the place where all citizens could participate in their own affairs. With the growth of population in urban areas we have to move the Town Hall into people's homes. Community channels can be the way.

**Summary of Findings**

1) The use of V TR with industrial sync for cablecasting is feasible, and the technology is improving to the point where it will not have a high technical gloss but this is not of prime importance if the raison d'être is "people-participation".

2) Local programs have proved popular wherever they have been produced, but this novelty would wear off if people are only "programmed-at", and not programmed-with.

3) The present C.R.T.C. guidelines state that a community channel should be provided but there is an inevitable confusion between "community programming" and "local programming".

**Community Programming**—to us, means that EVERYONE has the privilege of using a local channel. It is not supposed to be granted by the Owner. Community programming means citizen participation—guaranteed by a truly representative body of all social strata that excludes neither the poor nor the police. IT MUST mean FEEDBACK and two-way communication. Perhaps it should be called Community Service.

In practice LOCAL PROGRAMMING means coverage of local events by the cable company. The company decides what goes on the air—and, therefore, what does not go on. Some companies are owned locally and open discussion of local community affairs is often avoided because of conflict of interests. Furthermore, the costs of doing "TV only for cablecasting would kill community programming."

4) It is quite possible for "beginners" to produce adequate material after a very short period of practice. The finished product will not have a high technical gloss but this is not of prime importance if the raison d'être is "people-participation".

5) Local programs have proved popular wherever they have been produced, but this novelty would wear off if people are only "programmed-at", and not programmed-with.

6) The major part of programming MUST originate in the community. It cannot be provided by outsiders. It is doubtful whether it is sensible for the cable company to be the sole authority which should control all community programming decisions.

7) Feedback should be strongly encouraged as an essential part of community programming—whether this is in the form of wired locations with cameras installed, or videophones, or phone-in audience reactions or open-ended audience participation shows. For example, in Fredericton, a community hall (in a section of the town not yet "cabled") could be wired to become a studio for $5,000.

8) Minority groups should be encouraged to produce their own programs for a community channel. This could be done by the provision of federal or provincial grants to help them with equipment and general production costs.

9) Legal liability for a given program has to be transferred from the cable company to the program originator—not only to get the operator "off the hook", but to ensure "responsible" programming.

10) To ensure that all segments of a community are given the Right to Access—local coordinating bodies have to be created that will not be dominated by political or commercial vested interests. It is possible that some form of rotating Charter Board is proposed in Thunder Bay could be the answer. This Board would also guard against the abuses of the right to programme by operating as a Review Board rather than a Programming Body.

11) A production nucleus is essential to guarantee production continuity, "adequate" technical standards, and to initiate programs. In the case of small systems—this could consist of one person.

12) Some way has to be found to finance production. Although the costs can be very low some groups will not be able to afford even these. Three alternatives for financing were suggested by one cable company manager:

1) Increase the subscription rate with the proviso that a determined percentage of the subscription be used for community programs.

2) Allow "institutional" advertising.

3) Let the station be partly exempt from provincial tax.

We feel that the introduction of advertising on the community channels will inevitably lead to a ratings system—to the detriment of the specialized programming which is one of the community channel's greatest assets.

C.R.T.C. in its recent publication Cable Television in Canada suggests $20,000 as a minimum per annum figure for a simple studio operation. Given this, it should be possible to work out a scale where a system of X number of subscribers (5,000 has been suggested by F.C.C.) must provide this basic studio facility and then as the number of subscribers increases so the cable company must provide an additional amount of money into community programming. However, even below the 5,000 figure we feel that all cable stations must provide some facilities for local origination even if it is a half "camera plunged into the head end and a broom closet as a studio.

Throughout the cable flurry I have been haunted by one question. The aggressive marketing of cable and the importance given it by government are out of all proportion to its apparent economic or propaganda value. Why are the authorities so interested in installing a coaxial cable into every home in Canada? Interest not only is predicated on the meager returns that cablecasting would produce, but there remains an even more profound flaw in the cable vision: and that is, whether we want to rehouse all community affairs is often avoided because of conflict of interests. Furthermore, the costs of doing "TV only for cablecasting would kill community programming."

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To ensure that all segments of a community are given the Right to Access—local coordinating bodies have to be created that will not be dominated by political or commercial vested interests. It is possible that some form of rotating Charter Board is proposed in Thunder Bay could be the answer. This Board would also guard against the abuses of the right to programme by operating as a Review Board rather than a Programming Body.

But beyond the technological supermarket, there remains an even more profound flaw in the cable vision: and that is, whether we want to replace Johnny Carson with Jerry Rubin, whether we want to develop a brighter, more intelligent, ever more seductive TV, even if it has the purest socialist heart. True, poor people's housing developments don't usually have their own auditoriums, and hence a cable TV town meeting would offer some organizing potential. But why not just build a meeting hall, instead of using twice the resources to construct a TV system? Television watching is, to begin with, a passive activity. That's why you ought to keep your eye on it. If it is true that passivity, alienation, and a sense of powerlessness are among the most dangerous epidemics in our society today, the television set is suspect at the outset regardless of what's programmed on it.