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Petaluma CA 94952
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Dear Sirs --

We are outraged by Viacom's recent decision here to limit C-Span coverage to 3 AM to 5 PM, excluding weekends -- thereby assuring that no working person will ever be able to view it -- in fact stupidly leaving only the most angry people in the country (the jobless) to view it.

We would like a guarantee of 24-hour broadcasting. I have cancelled my Cable subscription because of this recent rule, which goes into effect on June 1. I was told (I am disabled) they "couldn't get to me" until June 22nd to pick up my box. This may mean I end up paying for 22 days of garbage I don't even want?

Viacom has falsely claimed that FCC rulings mandating more local programming is causing these changes -- which is grounds for a class action lawsuit. The FCC rulings have not stopped Viacom from having "twin" channels we don't even want -- foreign language channels, Cnn plus another "world update" channel, twin PBS channels (maybe the 3rd will be identical, I don't know) and "shop-at-home" on two different channels -- programs we don't even want. Plus sports ad-nauseum.

The quality of programming, outside of C-Span, is usually bad -- catering to emotional morons (NICK) and combining violence with bad music (MTV) and constantly giving us reruns of reruns which were no good to start with.

Even the "preview guide" is not important enough to push C-Span off the air, yet this is being allowed to happen. Not long ago I asked my Cable company how I could get C-Span 2 -- and now I find that even C-Span-1 is begrudgingly given to us.

It was my impression that the air waves belong to us, the public -- and that only through our generosity are these various networks allowed to broadcast. We would like to know how we can keep our air waves from being polluted with mindless violence and politically-motivated news (on other channels) -- or at the least how we can view C-Span 24 hours a day without having to suffer the arrogance of Viacom International.

I have sent letters to Congress people, Attorneys General, the FCC, and various other places, in an effort to (1) get it written in stone that this "commitment" to us is for 24 hours a day and (2) stop the monopolies that allow such arrogance.

The "gathering of companies" which results in a monopoly of any sort is clearly against antitrust laws. We would like antitrust laws to be strengthened. There is no alternative here to Viacom, so therefore it is a monopoly.

I understand there's a "little black box" somewhere that I may purchase instead of Viacom, and would like to know how to get it. We would like C-Span 2 to be on one of our channels too. Alternatively, is there a satellite dish I may purchase, that doesn't cost an arm and a leg, which would allow me freedom from Viacom's arrogance? (I should say "us," because I'm writing for more than one person.)

C-Span is the most democratic thing to have occurred in this century, and it's sad to see Viacom "using" it as a manipulative tool. This shows us all the more that we quickly need legislation against monopolies.

cc: Peter Kiley

Sincerely,