

January 28th, 1992:

It is now one month since my Dec.28th letter to you on the subject of the misuse of Cable Channel 23. So far I have not received the courtesy of acknowledgement or reply. I can only regard this delay as being typical of the manner in which your office (specifically Paragon Cable Co); handles complaints from its viewing public. It is very clear that Paragon Cable is failing to fulfil its responsibilities in the public interest, and should be subject to investigation by the Cable Commissioners, and the City Council of El Paso.

Your

El Paso  
Texas, 79925-4302

December 28th, 1991

Paragon Cable Co., El Paso. 7010 Airport Rd., Texas 79906

C-SPAN, 400 N. Capitol St., Washington, D.C. 20001

Senator J. Danforth; 249A, SHOB; The United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. (Kindly send me a copy of your Senate Resolution SR.12 ... thankyou).

Congressman Ronald Coleman; 416 CHOB; The House of Representatives Eashington, D.C. 20515

The Community College of El Paso; Valle Verde Campus; Box No. 20500  
El Paso, Texas, 79998

The Cable Commissioner; El Paso.

Dear Sir/Madam:

Reference: The Misuse of Cable Channels by Cable Companies that do not Carry C-SPAN During the Daytime Hours.

I am writing to discover why, among some 40 or more cable channels available from Paragon Cable in El Paso, it is apparently not possible to allocate one channel to C-SPAN (and also a second channel to C-SPAN II when The United States Senate is in session) and to carry this program material during daytime hours.

C-SPAN daytime programming, and much of its evening programming,

is pre-empted on Channel 23 in El Paso by material which is of minimal significance and in one specific instance, in my opinion, totally unacceptable material for a public service Corporation. The example I have in mind is the transmission of 12 year old diatribes by the John Birch Society, for which there can only be a limited "fringe" interest; these broadcasts are in every way unacceptable if they are to require the allocation of what Paragon Cable says is a "scarce resource".

However, apart from this, there are many channels out of the 40 or so, which carry pablum, while C-SPAN cannot be received. The so-called educational programming on Channel 23 (controlled by the El Paso Community College contains many, many items which can only be described as "entertainment" programming, masquerading as education (repeated over and over without seemingly much attempt to maintain a co-ordinated schedule).

It is not, I believe, overstating the case to say that at least 50% of the Community College so-called educational programming is little but "filler" and of very limited educational value. Of course, I recognize that it comes cheap and that even if there is virtually no demand for it, the promoters can say that they have kept the channel occupied. Well, why not keep it occupied with important material such as is carried over the C-SPAN networks? It is little wonder that so large a part of our eligible voting population is "turned off" by politics ... they hardly ever see what actually goes on in Government; and when there is a network designed to fill this need, the one and only allocated channel is used to broadcast "pap". I need not remind you that few working people have the fortitude to stay up nights to see C-SPAN "reruns".

The Cable Industry ... having obtained for itself "monopoly" status has a civic responsibility to insure that C-SPAN reaches a significant part of its daytime audience, and that if they do not carry C-SPAN (for whatever specious reason they may advance) then they should be regulated by Government so to do. I pay for C-SPAN twice .. once through taxation to support the cost of Congress, and a second time through my monthly Cable billing. And I believe I am entitled to a better explanation as to why this situation is allowed to continue, than the one that is implied by all earlier discussion on the subject: i.e. that there is no revenue to be derived from C-SPAN.

I shall look forward to receiving a considered reply to this letter, instead of the "pro-forma" replies that I have received from both C-SPAN and Paragon Cable Co. in the past.

Yours very truly,

