

same old stuff) because that will make them financially healthy and then maybe they'll get around to those other innovations "which is what we really want to see."

In this context, public access becomes like "public service:" those bullshit shows that the networks do on Sunday mornings that people don't like, but which are "good for them." Or it becomes another stab at NET, i.e. a second chance at educational television, only this time they think, maybe they'll get it right.

At least the folks at Children's Television Workshop, which brought you *Sesame Street*, must think so. CTW is now an integral part of the "what's going to happen with cable" scene and their spokesman is Mike Dann, formerly of CBS, who stars in Les Brown's book *Television* as the ultimate cynic, a type of man who programs crap for money, but who wouldn't watch him if himself.

Sure, we all know that "Dann never really wanted to do that stuff, that is talents are needed now in non-commercial teevee", blah-blah-blah, but like it or not *Sesame Street* is just another power structure controlling kid's lives with enormous resources and influence and no outside inputs. You probably didn't know it, but the CTW moguls like to spend occasional weekends at executive type retreats in the mountains having what can only be described as "secret" meetings to determine how they'll influence cable-TV.

**COMMUNITY ACCESS VIDEO**, by Herbert Allan Frederiksen. \$3.00. Available through bookstores or from the author at: 695 30th Avenue, Apartment#E, Santa Cruz, California 95060.

Portions of this book are excerpted in this *Radical Software* along with an order form if you can't get it from your bookstore right away. We say "right away" because this is the most useful book available on making your own television. It has that detailed description of how to acquire and work with video equipment (editing, cabling, shooting, etc.) that everyone else always talks about writing and/or needing. It has a fine chapter on "Forming Your Own Non-Profit Corporation for \$20;" and a glossary of video terms unique to Porta-Pak production; suggestions as how to make money to support your own video, and finally, much information on gaining access to cable-TV.

The author is working in Santa Cruz, California trying to set-up a public access facility. Because the city did not specify public access in the original franchise agreement (with Teleprompter) Frederiksen has had to organize a community referendum on the issue. But even though he has gotten the required signatures the city government may refuse to hold the ballot arguing that it would be a breach of contract with the cable system. Thus, Frederiksen is prepared to take the matter to the California Supreme Court which could then establish a precedent by ruling that even though a cable franchise is in effect without broad-ranging public access, the community can go back and rewrite it. This would strike down what's called "grandfathering" where existing cable systems attempt to avoid liberalized access rules by claiming that their contract was in effect before the rules were issued. (Just as blacks in the south couldn't vote if their grandfathers hadn't. Hence the term). Needless to say, Frederiksen details all his experience in organizing Santa Cruz in the book.

It should be noted that Frederiksen is doing his whole trip without any outside support, at a time when foundations are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars and study projects and meetings. Moreover, the author had to pay to publish his own book (\$900 for 3,000 copies, first-run), a book which is infinitely more useful than the \$500,000 Sloan Report.

**CABLE TELEVISION**, by Monroe Price and John Wicklein. Pilgrim Press, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19102. \$2.95 paperback. \$5.95. hardcover.

Monroe Price is co-author of the Sloan Report, but don't hold that against him. While this book doesn't have the grass-roots feeling of Frederiksen's, or the pragmatism of *Cable Television in the Cities*, it is still a high-use addition for a good knowledge of cable.

**THE F.C.C. RULINGS ON CABLE** are available for only 20 $\frac{1}{4}$  a copy by writing: Superintendent of Documents, General Post Office, Washington, D.C. 20402; and specifying: Federal Register of February 12th, 1972, #30, part two only.

In brief, the F.C.C. has adopted a laissez-faire attitude which obviously reflects Chairman Dean Burch's brand of Republicanism. However, instead of keeping hands-off the public input as well, the rulings restrict it and thus amount to a form of protectionism.

Specifically, the rulings state: "There remains the issue of whether also to permit State or local regulation of these channels (public access) where not inconsistent with Federal purposes. We think that in this area a dual form of regulation would be confusing and impracticable. Our objective of allowing a period for experimentation might be jeopardized if, for example, a local entity were to specify more restrictive regulations than we have prescribed. Thus, except for the government channel, local regulation of access channels is predicted... We will entertain petitions and consider the appropriateness of authoring such experiments (as expanded public access)."

Quite simply, this means that the F.C.C. has screwed Public Access. While it does guarantee one channel, it actually forbids a local system to make more available without federal permission. This means, for example, that the New York City agreement would not have been possible if it were arrived at after these rulings. While the F.C.C. might retort that it is open to modification of the rules, it becomes an added burden on the part of community groups to have to petition the government for expanded access.

That the government has declared hands off on the business end, but then turns around and stifles legitimate public interest, is representative of the type of action that gives conservatism a bad name. Clearly, it seems, the government is still afraid of open access to the channels of communication in America.

(On the positive side, however, the rulings do specifically mention and encourage the use of half-inch video equipment and very clearly state that there will be no technical standards imposed on non-broadcast signals carried over the cable. In other words, technical standards will not be used as a form of censorship as they are with broadcast television.)

## BUSINESS

Cypress Communications based in Los Angeles has indicated it would be interested in buying alternate types of video programming. Address inquiries to: Leon Papernow, Vice-President, Cypress Communications, 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90024

For an interesting overview of why cable-TV is a good financial investment and which of the companies to invest in request the report from: Source Equities, 160 Broadway, New York, New York 10038.

The **PUBLIC ACCESS NETWORK** is apparently a complete hype being pur across by a company called Quantum Communications, 3051 Adeline Street, Berkeley, California. Their scheme is to offer cable systems a local