

The Hartford programs

The opponents continue to assert that Hartford failed to fulfill the promise of better and different programs. How could Hartford do better than it did, with all the difficulties and uncertainties of a test operation? It is indeed a miracle in the circumstances that Hartford did as well as it did.

This does not mean that I am satisfied with the performance in Hartford. Quite the contrary: I firmly believe that Pay-TV, if it is to become a beneficial supplemental service in the interest of American TV viewers, will have to do a lot more than Hartford did thus far; it will have to offer more than merely current movies; it will have to evolve a new programming format. If people are willing to pay for "adult" programs, then that is a good enough reason why they should get them, but this type of program will have to be balanced with far more diversified fare.

Marshall McLuhan, the communications expert, made a frightening prediction last week that the United States will have an economic depression in about five years because its youth lacks direction and described "the TV generation" as being "in a slump of human drive and ambition."

Television is one of the most powerful means of influencing the human mind that the world has ever known. We accuse conventional TV of having failed to make adequate, beneficial use of the medium. Twenty years of brain-washing the American public by a fare of mediocrity was bound to produce a negative, paralyzing impact, particularly on the minds of the impressionable younger generation. There is little that conventional TV can do about it. Advertiser-financed TV and mediocrity are as inseparable as Siamese twins.

Can STV do better? It can and it will. I have great ambitions for STV. I firmly believe that STV will be able to evolve a new programing format, that it will be able to create programs that will awaken the mind, programs that will stimulate the brain. . . . And a new generation of creative writers, directors, actors—who have little chance to get ahead in conventional TV—will be attracted to Pay-TV and to its challenge to produce new ideas, new forms. A new approach that will be able to capture the attention of both the older as well as the younger generation will emerge. Not dependent on the advertising dollar, Pay-TV producers will not be afraid to experiment. A new dynamism will be introduced into American TV, and herein lies the great promise and the real future of Pay-TV.

Cultural programs do not have to be synonymous with dullness. Viewers can and will be educated—via Pay-TV to appreciate and desire operas, concerts, ballet and the like. You have to get men like Leonard Bernstein to teach appreciation of music as he used to do—in a dramatic, exciting way—with his masterly introductions to some outstanding concerts. Advertiser-financed TV can no longer do it, since it has to cater to the lowest common denominator in order to sell the wares of the advertisers. Pay-TV is fortunately free from such stultifying shackles! And that is why Pay-TV ought to be given every chance of fulfillment.

The question has been raised in the Sub-Committee hearings whether *one* Pay-TV operation in a five station market—as proposed in the Fourth Report, would not create a Pay-TV monopoly for the particular station. Teleglobe agrees with this point of view. Teleglobe did accordingly suggest in its statement to the Commission and in the oral arguments held last week, to permit competition by authorizing *two* Pay-TV operations in markets with *six* or more TV stations.

Mr. Chairman, the opponents fearing the healthy competition of Pay-TV have done their utmost to mislead the American public. One has but to remember the testimony of Dr. Frank Stanton, head of CBS, before the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce in January 1958, in the course of which Dr. Stanton pictured the frightening prospect of an average American family having to spend about \$480 a year for Pay-TV programs. The figures submitted by Zenith and Teco show an annual subscriber cost of approximately \$104 (\$65 from programs and \$39 from decoder rental and maintenance). This is approximately but $\frac{1}{5}$ of the figure given to the Congressional Committee by Dr. Stanton. Teleglobe projections for nationwide Pay-TV visualized, in its statement to the FCC of July 8, 1965 and its Comments of October 10, 1966 a possible gross income from programs and decoder rentals and maintenance of \$2.50 a week or \$130 a year per subscriber, approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the estimate given by Dr. Stanton. One has but to remember that Mr. Richard Salent, President of CBS News, and at the time a CBS Vice President, in a TV debate on Pay-TV sometime in 1958, dramatically displayed and read to the multi-million TV audience a letter from an old widow who stated that she invested her life savings in the purchase of a TV set