

programs and I can get into the student participation in cable too at some later date.

We also have the "People and Ideas" series in which we have Mr. Stanfield, Mr. Trudeau, Mr. Rasminsky, people of major importance in Canada who are in Toronto expounding on some very significant topic. This is a real backgrounder, of course, because CBC and CTV can interpret that and show perhaps a 35 second clip, whereas we show the entire text of the message. In many instances this is very important to really understand what the man said.

Continuing with our Public Affairs programming, we offer access to political groups, institutionalized political groups as well as recently formed citizens groups and we have provided a set formula in which they can participate on a weekly basis. This, of course, ties in with our Ottawa Cable News which is really three services.

The first service is M.P.'s reporting directly to their constituents. We were in fact doing our filming yesterday in the press building whereby Members of Parliament came in and talked on an informal basis for 10 or 15 minutes about issues directly related to their own constituents. This, of course, they cannot get especially in the Metro areas or the urban areas in Canada. They cannot get this message across except by that news letter.

Mr. Fortier: Do you only offer this to those M.P.'s who ridings are within your system?

Mr. Lind: At this stage, Mr. Fortier, but this is part of our Ottawa Cable News and any cable system that wants this and informs their Member of Parliament, we get in touch with them and these tapes are made available to them, so that will go right on.

Mr. Fortier: Do you sell the tapes to cable systems?

Mr. Lind: Yes, very cheaply.

The second instance in the Ottawa thing is the Ottawa Cable News Parliamentary report, which is much like a backgrounder as well because we cannot make it as contemporary as TV or radio. Our correspondents here will background the news. The report yesterday dealt with Arctic sovereignty and the historical background.

The third thing—we have not quite finished negotiations on this—but we feel these backgrounder press conferences that are held in

the press building that are reported, again with the 35 or 40 second clip, we intend to tape in whole and again offer it as part of the service.

You know, we are not there yet and we are certainly open to more ideas, but we are really trying to make a start on things.

I can go into our other programming aspects. I am sorry I have taken so long.

The Chairman: That is all right. Mr. Graham?

Mr. Graham: Mr. Chairman, I think there has been so much talk on local programming on cable that some things should be kept in context. It is less than 12 months since permission really was granted to cable companies in Canada to programme and what you saw in the presentation earlier is an example of our first steps.

Everyone, if they are honest, is crawling before they are walking and walking before they are running. It is an evolving matter and the cable companies are certainly not in competition with commercial television. They are providing, as earlier has been said—Mr. Rogers made the comment—local programming.

In Toronto, we can programme, for example, for the Borough of Scarborough or for the Borough of Etobicoke and we can air or make available for viewers on our system things which could never get on a commercial television station or commercial radio station for that matter.

Mr. Fortier: How do you seek to finance this increased service to your viewers?

Mr. Rogers: Well, right now through this experimental period it is being done out of general subscription revenues.

Mr. Fortier: Have they increased at all in the last year?

Mr. Rogers: The per charge has not increased. The number of subscribers has. Now, when we financed the system at the beginning there was no budget for local programming so obviously there is a problem, but we hope, in the year that has just passed, and what we are going through now, to be able to justify it in our own minds by attracting new subscribers so it will be, if you will, sales promotion expenses.