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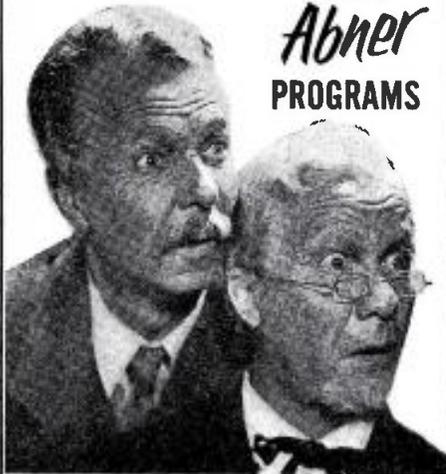
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attending the meeting—and letters of explanation and invitation have been sent to many in the industry including the top 50 multiple-system operators—will be asked to contribute a proportionate amount of “seed money” to help the would-be consortium to organize and to commission a major feasibility study. It’s estimated that it will take a pledge of a total of between \$100,000 and \$200,000 to give the new organization its marching orders.

The study would cover the technical, financial, legal, marketing and economic ramifications of the cable television industry having a meaningful role in satellite communications on a national basis. Most important, the study would determine the availability of programming to a satellite interconnected cable-TV system and the possibility of getting enough of it cleared for national release. “The satellite is a means to an end,” acknowledges Cox Cable Communications Inc.’s John Gwinn, among those in the industry who have been meeting informally since early 1972 to explore the possibilities of an active satellite involvement. “The ultimate end is to get a good variety of programming available to cable TV.” Mr. Gwinn, former NCTA chairman, admits, but doesn’t over-emphasize, the pay-cable possibilities in a satellite interconnection.

Among those who have met with Mr. Gwinn previously are Hubert J. Schlafly of Teleprompter Corp. and Bruce E. Lovett of American Television & Communications Corp. Teleprompter’s Robert E. Button, who was hired away from the Communications Satellite Corp. to help develop a national satellite network, previously has described a plan where there would be a ground station at practically every cable head end in the country and indicated that his company is prepared to interconnect on its own (BROADCASTING, March 19).

## Ohio PUC plan described

More than 150 cable-television system operators and manufacturer representatives—said to be the largest such group ever to meet in Ohio—heard state Public Utilities Commissioner Sally Bloomfield outline a plan to regulate cable. Speaking at the two-day convention of the Ohio Cable Television Association, Mrs. Bloomfield told of proposed legislation which, if passed, would create a cable bureau within the Public Utilities Commission. Currently there is no state cable regulation in Ohio.

The proposed central cable bureau, as outlined by the PUC commissioner, would, among other responsibilities, serve as a “monitor” between local communities and cable companies. The legislation to provide for such a bureau is the second PUC plan to regulate cable television in Ohio in recent months. Last year the PUC proposed a one-year moratorium on cable franchising, saying in effect to state legislators that the commission wanted to take a look at cable development in Ohio during a period when there is no activity to decide what is needed. This proposal failed, reportedly

from a failure to find a legislative sponsor. The current proposal, according to cable-TV industry sources, is languishing in the office of Ohio Governor John Gilligan and will not be introduced in the Ohio state legislature during the current session.

## Commission idea in California

The state of California, which until now has not taken an active role in the regulation of cable television, is being called upon by a state legislator to “enforce standards for reliability, nondiscrimination and local origination of programs.” State Senator Alfred E. Alquist (D-San Jose), who is chairman of the Public Utilities and Corporations Committee, has introduced a bill that would create a California communications commission specifically to regulate cable television. The proposed legislation would create a five-member appointed cable television commission with the authority to set rules and regulations and supervise the uniformity of cable television franchising procedures.

## Pay-cable device patented

Warner Cable Corp., New York-based multiple system cable TV operator, has received patents for a converter unit that can permit reception of two to four additional mid-band video signals otherwise unavailable. The converter device—one of which has the capability of adding four channels; the other two channels—attach to the top of a TV set. The four-channel converter has the added capability of a scrambling system that impedes the possible pirating of program material. Both converters were designed specifically for pay cable services by Gridtronics Inc., a subsidiary of Warner Cable. Gridtronics is now using the two-channel converter as part of its so-called “Star Channel” pay-cable service in seven Warner-owned cable TV systems. Recent motion pictures are being presented on the additional channels. They are offered for an additional monthly fee by the cable TV subscriber.

## Trotters for a price

Home Box Office began a weekly cable-casting program of Harness Racing from the Yonkers (N.Y.) Raceway last Friday (May 25) for distribution to cable systems on a pay basis. The series of nine cablecasts will run through July 24 and will be carried on Saturday evenings, except for last Friday’s. Home Box Office now supplies pay cablecasts of major sports events and motion pictures to about 12,000 subscribers belonging to nine systems in eastern Pennsylvania. The 90-minute cablecasts of the Yonkers races will include live coverage of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth races and video-taped coverage of the first and second races. Sportscaster Marty Glickman will be the commentator.