

Subject:

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A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

Despite large profits and past commitments to maintain neighbourhood studios which have been extremely helpful in maintaining a community spirit, address community, cultural, and social issues, Shaw Cable will soon close two more neighbourhood studios including the one in North Vancouver.

In a recent letter addressed to Mayor and Council Lynda Leonard in Vancouver, stated that we as Canadians must decide who is in charge of controlling our public airwaves - corporations or our governments.

She asked that District Council study the documents she sent and discuss what measures could be taken to again provide access to our public airwaves. She further suggested that Council contact the Hon Joan Fraser, Chair Senate Committee on the Canadian News Media.


Nov. 19 marks the eight year anniversary of the closure of neighbourhood community television offices by Rogers Cable. The Cable company at that time, said, the closures were the result of changes in deregulations by the CRTC. In fact, community television was deregulated. Over the past eight years ICTC Independent Community Television Co-operative and C.M.E.S. Community Media Education Society in Vancouver have been lobbying Parliament for reintroduction of public access to the community Channel. In 2002 CRTC introduced Public Notice 2002-61 which required cable companies to once again provide some access to their channel.

According to the letter from Leonard Local Government airtime on the community channel has never been shut down, but local governments have never fought to keep access open to community member and groups.

Shaw Cable will close two more neighbourhood studios at Metro town and in North Vancouver states the letter from Leonard. There are two studios in Shaw's new Coal Harbour Tower but the facility will not be as accessible to producers as Metro town was. ICTV producers have access to editing facilities at Shaw but must travel to Surrey to use the studio. Mobile production vans must also be brought in from Surrey. ICTC does not get any share of the cable levy even though it produces a substantial amount of community programming, practices public access and trains volunteers. It follows the CRTC guidelines for community programming which Shaw does not.

I have sent a letter to Mr Ridge our CAO asking for a staff report to what extent this measure if any will impact the District of North Vancouver either directly or indirectly. In addition I will make a motion to this effect. I will do so within the next few hours for the sole reason to alert the community to this potentially harmful event.

Ernie Crist

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