

The Alliance of Seniors to Protect Canada's Social Programs

March 8, 1996

Mr. Keith Spicer Chairman CRTC
Les Terrasses de la Chandiere
Central Building
1 Promenade du Portage
Hull, Quebec K1A 0N2

telecopier (819) 953-1555

Dear Mr. Spicer:

Re: Complaint filed by Cable Watch pursuant to s.12 of the *Broadcasting Act*

The Alliance of Seniors to Protect Canada's Social Programs consists of 19 organizations, representing the interests of more than 500,000 Canadians. The Alliance is concerned with issues affecting the cultural, political, social and economic health of Canada.

Many seniors are on limited fixed incomes and rely upon cable television service as a source of entertainment and information.

At a time when cuts are being made to essential services for ordinary Canadians, it is totally unacceptable that consumers are being overcharged for basic cable service by their cable companies with the permission of the CRTC.

Please confirm the status of the complaint filed with the CRTC by Cable Watch on November 28, 1995, regarding the collection of fees from basic cable subscribers pursuant to subsection 18 (6.3) of the *Cable Television Regulations, 1986*.

Individual members of the paying public have a right to know the cost of CRTC public policies. This fundamental democratic, legal and financial right has been completely ignored by both the CRTC and the cable industry in regard to subsection 18 (6.3).

The Alliance joins with Cable Watch in calling for all the money collected pursuant to this regulation without prior notification to be refunded to cable subscribers immediately. Furthermore, we support the request for the CRTC to hold a public hearing to review this policy because Canadian consumers were never provided with an opportunity to fully participate in the CRTC process prior to the implementation of this public policy; this is not democratic.

We anxiously await your reply.

Goldie Leibman
Coordinator

cc: Prime Minister
Minister of Canadian Heritage-Sheila Copps
Minister of Industry-John Manley
Dan McTeague, M.P.

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