

5

Letter from R Bercaw April 3, 2002

petition from Harvard to purchase a permanent easement under Cambridge Street for \$300,000. Nor have I heard any strong opposition from him to the current plan by Harvard to destroy another residential neighborhood and push further into Cambridge. Can we assume that he has no strong opinion on the Harvard project as a professional? How will that provide to citizens, access to television which is denied to others. These are all people who have access to television, newspapers and radio; all part of the local establishment.

The Executive Producer of the proposed funded show, Regina Berkowitz, Development Officer of CCTV, told me that City Councilor David Maher will also participate. Is he denied access to mainstream media coverage?

This show is an outrage for two reasons. It thwarts the mission of funding community access television. And it is funded by foundation money, to provide a forum for public relations flacks to promote their elitist clients' views. This is an improper and inappropriate use of foundation money, subscriber fees, and the airwaves of CCTV. I urge the City Council to scrutinize the current management of CCTV to insure that they do not abuse their privileged position of trust within the community.

"'If you can influence the leaders, either with or without their conscious cooperation, you automatically influence the group which they sway,' [Bernays] said." (*Toxic Sludge is Good for You*, page 23; quoting Scott Cutlip, *The Unseen Power*, page 193-214) Susan Fleischman has a sterling and well-deserved reputation within the liberal Cambridge Community.

She devoted many years to building up CCTV to its current position of prominence within the cable access community. CCTV has won many national awards for excellence. It has the latest technology available to television and internet producers. CCTV is on the cutting edge of community access television stations. So why the remarkable and contrary panel of leadership, without any members of the denied-access class? Those who are denied having their voices heard are not represented in this funded production?

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for You, page 32; quoting Edward Bernays, *The Later Years*, page 139)

"Bernays also pioneered the PR industry's use of psychology and other social sciences to design public persuasion campaigns. 'If we understand the mechanism and motives of the group mind, it is now possible to control and regiment the masses according to our will without their knowing it,' Bernays argued." (*Toxic Sludge is Good for You*, page 23; quoting Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* page 47-48)

"'The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country,' [Bernays] wrote. ... In almost every act of our lives, whether in the sphere of politics or business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number of persons ... who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind." (John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton, *Trust Us, We're Experts*, page 42; quoting *Propaganda*, page 9)

The management of CCTV plans to air a "public affairs" program to promote propaganda by the two of the world's most elitist universities. How are their views any different from what appears on mainstream media outlets? This conflicts with the mission of the funding of CCTV by subscriber fees.

Harvard University with a \$17 to \$19 billion endowment, and MIT with a \$6 million dollar endowment do not have trouble gaining access to the media outlets anywhere in the western world. Do they need to be given an opportunity to promote their propaganda on town gown relations in Cambridge? Do either of those deep pocketed universities need help to have their views known by citizens of Cambridge?

But even if they did need the help of CCTV to be heard, what will two PR flacks contribute to the propagating of facts to local citizens? Their job is to promote and protect the image of their clients, which are elitist universities. How does that objective comport with telling the truth, informing the public?

Hearing from a "former member of the Zoning Board," may be of interest. But is that an opinion which is historically or presently denied access to media coverage? Local media outlets frequently print government position statements, and report on actions by government agencies. A "former member of the Zoning Board," is a former public official.

The City of Cambridge also employs a public relations flack. How does that job differ from Harvard's and MIT's flacks? Only the client's interests. Will such government testimony be any more reliable than that of a PR flack?

The proposed moderator is a long term resident of Cambridge, an architect. He did not return my call to inquire of his views on the subject of town gown relations, or his role as moderator. But as a member of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association I have not heard from him about any strong opposition to the current

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April 3, 2002

Thwarting Cable Access TV mission

Subscribers to Cable television subsidize Cambridge Community Television. Part of their monthly fees go to pay for the facility to allow ACCESS to broadcast television for members of the Cambridge Community. Thus Cable Access Television.

Susan Fleischman, Executive Director of CCTV states,

This is very different from what you'll see on mainstream media, on the regular broadcast channels. And that's why this is one of the few places you can turn to hear alternative news and information about things that are happening around the world. ...

If you're interested in alternative news very different from what you see in broadcast media you can turn to channel 22. ... And you can hear a little bit more about another side of what the United States is doing around the world right now ... Also on our channels you can hear from representatives of Amnesty International, The Islamic Society of Boston, the Cambridge Police Department if you prefer [she does not state that the show is produced by the Public Information Officer of the Cambridge Police]. Lots of different people, organizations, interests, views are discussed here. ... So please tune in to channels 9, 10 and 22 and find out what your neighbors are doing, find out what is going on in Cambridge. ...

Just remember that it's really important that there's a place in Cambridge you can turn to to find out what's going on in your neighborhood, in your community and find out what people in your ... " (Free Speech and CCTV, March 24, 2002)

The *Cambridge Chronicle* reports (March 27, 2002, page 25) a new series to be produced on CCTV, "Cambridge Uncovered." Funded by a \$65,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, MI, the report states, "Guests will include Mary Power from Harvard University, Sarah Gallop from MIT, resident Laurie Sheffield, a former member of the Zoning Board, and will be moderated by resident and architect George Metzger."

Both Mary Power and Sarah Gallop are public relations professionals, also called PR flacks. Edward Bernays, a long term Cambridge resident, often called the "father of public relations" said, "... it [is] possible for anyone, regardless of education or ethics to use the term 'public relations' to describe his or her function." (John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton, *Toxic Sludge is Good*

S-101

**Consent Communication #5**

A communication was received  
from Roy Bercaw, regarding cable  
access TV mission.

**In City Council April 8, 2002**

**PLACED ON FILE.**