

## State and Local

# Member of Forbes 400 will buy B-CS cable television franchise

By Olivier Uyttebrouck  
Senior Staff Writer

The McCaw Communications Inc., Bryan-College Station's cable franchise, will soon belong to one of the wealthiest men in the nation: Jack Kent Cooke. The transaction may go through as early as late March, a local McCaw official said.

Cooke — cited by Forbes Magazine this year as one of the 400 wealthiest men in America — owns the L.A. Daily News, a Los Angeles newspaper; the Washington Redskins and a number of thoroughbred horsebreeding farms in Kentucky and Virginia, according to a McCaw press release.

Cooke will buy the entire McCaw system in an all-cash transaction that local McCaw Systems Manager John Southard estimates at \$755 million. McCaw — the 20th largest cable company in the nation — operates in 40 U.S. markets and has

430,000 basic subscribers, according to the McCaw release.

Southard said the new owner plans no personnel changes, from the senior staff on down. Nor are any rate or programming changes in the works at present, he said.

Cooke, who resides in Middleburg, Va., was unavailable for comment.

The College Station City Council approved the transfer of the local franchise on Feb. 12 and the Bryan City Council approved the transfer on Feb. 23.

Bryan City Manager Earnest Clark said the cities based their approval of the transaction only on the financial stability and management capabilities of the buyer — qualifications Cooke had no difficulty demonstrating.

"If the buyer has the management capability

and the wherewithal we have no reason to deny the sale," Clark said.

"We have been told by the new owner that there will be no change in the operation of the cable system," he said.

The two McCaw brothers, Craig and John, will be the only two personnel changes, Clark said.

"There may be more personnel changes down the road, I don't know," he said.

Clark said Cooke has made no indication of rate changes, "as of yet."

However, the latest Federal Communication Commission regulations have stripped cities of control over cable rates, a power cities previously enjoyed, Clark said.

In 1964 Cooke founded the American Cablevision Co. which eventually became the largest privately-owned cable company in the country, the McCaw press release noted.

## Business association supports drug tests

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas Association of Business went to court Wednesday on behalf of employers who want to give drug and alcohol tests to their workers.

The TAB, which represents about 3,000 firms in Texas, asked to join in defense of a suit filed against Minco Technology Labs Inc. of Austin to stop random drug tests.

"There is simply no basis, either legally or logically, to interfere with efforts by Texas employers to address the menace of drug use in the workplace," said the intervention motion, filed in state district court.

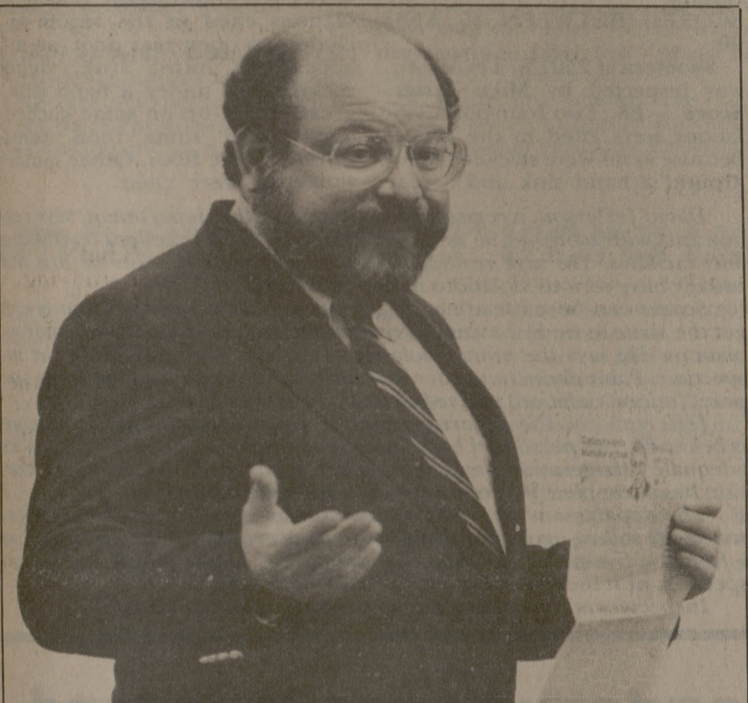
The Texas Civil Liberties Union filed the suit in the name of Brenda Jennings and other

employees of Minco, claiming their constitutional rights were violated by the drug tests.

Philip Pfeifer, a San Antonio attorney for the TAB, said the TCLU suit involved only drug tests, but the TAB considered the suit a challenge to rights of employers to give both drug and alcohol abuse tests.

"We are intervening to stand up for the rights of employers in Texas," Pfeifer told a news conference. "We are not pushing any particular test. We want the right to test for drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace in Texas."

Pfeifer said drug and alcohol abuse cost Texas employers \$11 billion in 1984 alone.



Investigative journalist Karl Grossman

Photo by Dean Saito

# American intervention in Nicaragua parallels Vietnam, NY professor says

By Jade Boyd  
Reporter

America's ongoing intervention in Nicaragua closely parallels the United States' involvement in Vietnam during the 1960's, an investigative journalist said Wednesday.

Karl Grossman, a professor with the New York University System, award-winning journalist and five-time author, spoke to an audience of about 75 at Rudder Tower on his book "Nicaragua: America's New Vietnam?"

The program was sponsored by MSC Political Forum.

"We're talking about a potential confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union over Nicaragua," Grossman said.

Nicaragua is not the classic example of a communist country, Grossman said.

Its economy has both public and

private sectors, he said, and banners and billboards across the country proclaim, "There is no contradiction between Christianity and revolution."

Grossman showed slides from his trips to Nicaragua and Honduras and cited examples from his interviews with Sandinista leaders and soldiers, as well as his contacts with Contra leaders in Miami.

Grossman said most Contra leaders were soldiers in Nicaragua's Somoza regime, which was overthrown by the Sandinistas in 1979.

He said human rights violations by Contra soldiers far outnumbered those of Sandinista troops.

"I'm worried about terrorism and terrorists being supported by my government," Grossman said.

He said that U.S. support of the Contras is a contradiction of the charters of the United Nations and

the Organization of American States, and it also violates the U.S.'s own Neutrality Act.

Grossman showed slides taken from the freedom fighters' manual that was printed by the CIA and distributed to Contra soldiers.

"This is a terrorist comic book," Grossman said.

The greatest current danger surrounding the Nicaraguan issue, he said, is the possibility of an invasion by U.S. troops.

"There are people in the administration who feel that an invasion of Nicaragua would be just like Grenada," Grossman said.

He showed pictures of several Sandinista arms caches and said that Nicaragua would be considerably harder to invade than Grenada.

"They've trained an entire population in guerilla warfare," Grossman said.

He cited a Rand Corporation study that said several thousand U.S. soldiers would die and over ten thousand would be wounded if U.S. troops were ordered to invade Nicaragua.

Grossman answered several questions from the audience amid some heated debate.

He advised Aggies to check out the situation in Nicaragua for themselves — both by reading and by visiting the country for themselves.

Nicaragua is only two hours from Texas by airplane and the people are friendly, Grossman said.

He said students would benefit from a visit to the country.

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