

INTERVIEW WITH SENATOR SUSAN RYAN: BENEFITS OF
DOMESTIC SATELLITE

22/2/79

Senator Ryan:

Well the Government's being very irresponsible about this whole proposal. They are allowing country people to believe that all sorts of communications services, telephone, education over the air, medical services, will be a part of the proposal when in fact they are not. They are things that could happen if the Government was prepared to spend money on them. To date, of course, the Government's main strategy has been to reduce public expenditure in all those areas. Now they are expecting country people to believe there will be a massive input of public expenditure to provide the programs which satellite technology could bring.

Question:

Why do you say that the public won't really benefit from domestic satellites?

Senator Ryan:

Because no case has been made that there will. Certainly big business interests will benefit from the facility to communicate data. Certainly if a media proprietor were to get a new commercial television network he would benefit enormously but what it would mean for country viewers is that one form of television would just be replaced by another. There wouldn't be more choice. There wouldn't be better quality and of course if regional broadcasters are put out of business that would exacerbate the unemployment in regional centres.