

by many in Congress as a sign of the cable industry's willingness to be responsive to members of Congress's concerns," he said. And NCTA's efforts to "try to work out some kind of resolution of the must-carry issue has been noticed up there too," said Mooney.

"The fact that must-carry was not addressed by this Congress was not our doing. That was really a function of differences some members of Congress had with the broadcast industry on another matter." (Mooney is referring to the fairness doctrine.)

As for the next Congress, Mooney hesitated to make any predictions. He does, however, think the telco-cable debate "may in the end" not be as much of an issue as many people anticipate it will be. Furthermore, he said he believes the issue is being driven by the trade press and "to a very significant degree by [FCC] Chairman [Dennis] Patrick."

Senator Al Gore (D-Tenn.), who failed to win passage of his controversial home satellite bill, is prepared to again battle with the cable industry (BROADCASTING, Oct. 17). But Mooney refrained from discussing what might occur on that front next year. He is, however, hopeful the backyard dish industry "at some point will devote its energies to marketing and pursuing business strategies."

Asked what the likelihood is for any future Hill action on cable's compulsory license, Mooney thinks it will largely depend on what happens with syndex. "If syndex sticks, I am not sure what the compulsory license issue would be because they no longer could say that they [broadcasters] are being deprived of anything that they should

have. All syndex is, is a kind of retrenchment of the compulsory license." Reexamination of cable's compulsory license on Capitol Hill failed to materialize despite efforts on the part of independent television to make it an issue in the must-carry debate.

There are few signs that cable's critics will be any less vocal before the 101st Congress. Based on INTV President Preston

Padden's assessment of what lies ahead, there will be continued pressure. "I think some of the collective voices of concern about what is going on in the communications marketplace are going to be heard in the next Congress. I think the heat is going to be greater than ever." Padden feels policymakers will want to "fashion something to put the house in order." □

Sketching scenarios for network-cable crossownership

Analysts say if FCC prohibitions are repealed, it's more likely an MSO might try to buy a network than vice versa

The FCC's proposed rulemaking to lift restrictions on broadcast network-cable system crossownership may be debated in the language of public policy. But whether any ownership changes actually take place, if the rules are changed, may more likely be decided by business considerations. The current view from Wall Street says that the three TV networks would encounter a mess of complications were they to attempt to take advantage of the proposed rule change. If anything, the proposed rulemaking, while understood as allowing ABC, CBS or NBC to buy cable systems, may more likely permit an MSO to buy a broadcast network.

Especially for NBC and Capital Cities/ABC, programming for cable is a higher priority than purchasing systems, analysts say. NBC is launching its Consumer News and

Business Channel in 1989; ABC owns most of ESPN and part of Lifetime and Arts & Entertainment.

General Electric, NBC's parent corporation, appears most able to afford an extensive cable purchase, and has expressed the most interest in the recent move toward crossownership repeal. But before investing, "They want to see the cable-telco situation work its way out," said John Reidy, an analyst at Drexel Burnham Lambert. Capital Cities/ABC would have more limited resources, and CBS, which has \$3 billion in cash reserves, probably would prefer to spend its money elsewhere. "Mr. Tisch does not buy things that are highly in vogue," Reidy said. The company has stated, moreover, that one of its major objectives is to continue station acquisitions so that its owned and operated stations, currently in markets covering about 21% of U.S. households, reach the maximum allowable 25% level. The cost of such a purchase, Reidy

Media agendas of Dukakis and Bush

Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts is not saying "no" or even "maybe" to invitations to appear on television. Dukakis, who is trailing Vice President George Bush in the presidential race, will be the subject of a 90-minute interview on a special edition of ABC's *Nightline*, beginning at 11:30 p.m. NYT this Tuesday. Dukakis and his wife, Kitty, will appear for an hour on *Larry King Live* tonight (Oct. 24), starting at 9 p.m. NYT, on CNN. Those appearances followed the governor's appearances on ABC's *Good Morning America* and CBS's *This Morning* last Friday (Oct. 21). The Bushes were nowhere to be seen on any of that free media.

In fact, Dukakis's scheduled solo, face-to-face appearance with Ted Koppel tomorrow night in Denver, where the governor will be campaigning, is a consequence of the Vice President's refusal to participate in a 90-minute debate on *Nightline*. Dukakis had accepted the invitation to debate within a week of its issuance on Sept. 30. Bush made it clear he was not interested, but did not finally reject the offer until the day after his second televised debate, Oct. 13, during which he stated unequivocally his refusal to participate in any more debates. Koppel had said that if only one of the candidates accepted the invitation to debate, he would be asked to sit for a 90-minute interview.

Bush may yet show up on a special edition of *Nightline*. ABC News President Rooney Arledge, during a press tour, said he would "entertain having the Vice President on," although he said that was not a commitment. Bush was already the subject of a lengthy interview on a special one-hour *Nightline* on June 4.

The interview is remembered primarily because of the insistence of the Vice President—who was not in the studio with Koppel but was visible to him and the audience on a monitor—on calling the anchor "Dan."

Dukakis also appeared on ABC in a five-minute block of purchased time, on Saturday night (Oct. 22).

In his interviews with *GMA*'s Charles Gibson and *This Morning*'s Kathleen Sullivan, Dukakis explained his eagerness to accept invitations like theirs: "I want to get my message across in the final 18 days of the campaign." Bush last week had not yet responded to invitations by the two shows to sit for live interviews. Larry King was also awaiting an answer to an offer to the Bushes to appear on his show. He said a campaign aide told him the couple "might do it."

Dukakis, meanwhile, has decided to take advantage of another opportunity offered by *GMA* to get his message across. It will come in connection with Gibson's planned East-West tour of the country, examining issues in key states during the week of Oct. 31-Nov. 4. *GMA* invited each of the candidates to sit for taped interviews with Gibson on the issues. Dukakis has accepted, Bush last week had not responded. If he does not accept the invitation, a spokeswoman said, *GMA* will produce pieces on his positions.

A spokesman for the Bush campaign in Washington said the Vice President "hasn't ruled out appearances on television shows." But he said Bush was campaigning "on a personal level in media markets."