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GOOD TIMES

Supervisors told: Cable Plan Too Costly

TOO EXPENSIVE," was the reaction of County Administrator George Newell to Group W's proposal to expand local cable service. The company plans to offer an improved basic service of 27 channels for \$9.35 and a 60-channel service for \$11.95.

The present cost for the 10-channel system is \$6.40, and the average cost for cable in California is \$9.50.

Newell's comments, delivered in a letter Monday to the board of supervisors, was the second unfavorable response to Group W's plan. City and county consultants have already called the plan "extremely moderate" in scope.

Newell compared Group W's new pricing policy to Teleprompter's, its predecessor, which he characterized as "high-

priced basic services and very high-priced premium services which maximize profits."

He also claimed that Group W's proposed rates are higher than for comparable services in other areas.

One company, in a bid for the Pasadena cable market, offered an 80-channel system for \$5.95 (as compared to Group W's 60 channels for \$11.95), according to local media consultant Tom Karwin.

Group W's general manager Stuart Butler said his company's rates are competitive with systems in the Santa Cruz area, and added that Newell didn't take into account increased capital expenditures to improve and maintain the system.

Negotiations for the city-county contract are expected to begin April 26. •

