



C-SPAN Statement on the Passing of Robert M. "Bob" Rosencrans

(August 3, 2016) In August 1977, Bob Rosencrans, then president of UA-Columbia Cable, and his business partner Ken Gunter, were the first cable operators to agree to support Brian Lamb's idea for C-SPAN. At that time, only about 19 percent of American homes were wired for cable and Lamb envisioned launching a public affairs -- "not news" --channel for the fledgling cable TV channel lineup.

Mr. Rosencrans wrote Lamb a check for \$25,000, but equally important, he prevailed upon more skeptical cable industry figures to make similar commitments, allowing Lamb to collect 22 checks totaling \$450,000. With that seed money, Lamb and C-SPAN created the infrastructure to send out cable television's first live views of the U.S. House of Representatives on March 19, 1979 to some 3.5 million homes served by 350 cable systems.

These initial cable industry investors agreed to serve as the network's first board of directors with Bob Rosencrans as C-SPAN's first board chairman. Mr. Rosencrans steered the non-profit network through its initial challenging years and continued to serve on C-SPAN's board of directors until his death, most recently in the role of Chairman Emeritus.

Brian Lamb, C-SPAN's Executive Chairman, says, "I've never met a person who didn't respect Bob Rosencrans. He was not only interested in being a successful business person, but he was very interested in civic responsibility; he was conscious of the need to help others. Bob helped me tremendously by explaining to a start-up cable industry that it made sense for a network like C-SPAN to have a place. He never wanted any personal credit for it, but if it hadn't been for Bob Rosencrans, there probably wouldn't be a C-SPAN. Bob was a tremendous human being."

Watch this appreciation of C-SPAN's first board chairman, Bob Rosencrans:

<http://cs.pn/2afrGyU>

