

# Gravel Makes Statement

## STATEMENT BY SENATOR MIKE GRAVEL

On the Floor of the Senate

Mr. President, I wish to bring to the attention of this body a growing apprehension that the benefits of a hard won space technology shouldered by a patient American taxpayer will continue to be denied the general public.

The nation's largest commercial utility, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, recently announced its intention to lay another high-capacity, underwater trans-Atlantic cable.

Ironically, the announcement comes at a time when large groups of trans-Atlantic satellite circuits are unused. It also comes at a time when several high-capacity communications satellites soon will be launched.

These latest international communications satellites, manufactured under the stewardship of the Communications Satellite Corporation, face an uncertain

financial future should this cable be approved.

Are the dice loaded against the public? I think they are.

Congressional action in 1962 created the Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT). Common carriers were given the option to exercise as much direct influence in its management as the public.

Yet, in the case of COMSAT's financial life-and-death, its primary competitor —AT&T— has several seats on COMSAT's Board of Directors.

There is no question that AT&T has access to important cost information and marketing strategy that otherwise would be denied a competitor.

Were it denied, as normally expected in an unregimented economic society, the public would benefit from free competition. Instead, it is like playing with a set of loaded dice.

The public has no chance but to come up snake eyes on the first throw.