

Muslim Broadcaster Buys American TV Station: What Now?

Pan-Arab broadcaster Al-Jazeera has announced plans to establish a new U.S. cable news channel through the purchase of Current TV. The Qatar-backed network will replace Current TV in the more than 40 million homes it's currently in with its own news network, tentatively titled Al Jazeera America.

The impact of the Muslim media outlet may be negative, says Ted Baehr, founder and CEO of the Christian Film & Television Commission (CFTVC).

The basis for CFTVC's position is the moral and ethical failings of Islamic society in many areas, including equality of women and human rights.

"We're dealing with two different systems," Baehr said. "In Christ, the Bible says that 'there is no male and female.' But the treatment of women in many Islamic societies is not in line with Judeo-Christian ethical standards."

Baehr praised Time Warner Inc. for removing the channel from its cable system. Time Warner Cable, which has 12 million subscribers and ranks as the nation's second largest cable provider, said it would terminate its contract with Current TV upon learning of the deal with Al-Jazeera. However, it backed off a bit on Thursday.

"We are keeping an open mind, and as the service develops, we will evaluate whether it makes sense, for our customers, to launch the network," Time Warner Cable said in a statement.

Until the stance of the new ownership can be determined, CFTVC cannot encourage viewers to tune into Current TV's

programming, and encourages more cable providers to evaluate carrying Current TV in the same way that Time Warner has.