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[REDACTED]
Bristol, PA 19007
[REDACTED]

Mr. Brian Lamb
CNN

via FAX 202-737-6226

9/8/93

Ref. last night's "Election '68"

Dear Mr. Lamb:

By way of preface, as to your guests last night, whom I would have saluted if I could have gotten through:

Rollie Evans, AP; Joe Loftus, New York Times; Steve Galpin, Wall Street Journal; Al Adams, United Press; in 1954 staked out my Washington Hotel Room as they sought what we would do with John R. Steelman ("The Real President") and his proposed settlement of the Truman Rail Seizure case. It was the first, perhaps only time the White House ever got scooped on its own inside the WH itself story. We arranged a direct line from WSJ to WH press room with a bulletin already set on tape. When I got a pre-arranged signal from signers standing next to Steelman inside the presidential offices, I relayed to WSJ. A button was pushed at the WSJ, setting the WH press room printers on bells of announcement. Steelman, later a friend, as was Mr. Truman personally, came running into the press room with hastily written denials which, in the words of Galpin, "are being 'filed' in the waste basket; we just thought you'd like to know." --I had put my job on the line and risked for my boss the wrath of the President.

Your Hugh Sydey, then a very young fellow, asked me if we could delay acceptance for three or four days -- "til Tuesday, when we go to press." I told him we hadn't been able to postpone the Normandy invasion either for Time's deadline.

I think Rollie Evans would have enjoyed the remembrance.

As to '68:

Where were you in '68? You asked of callers. (1) I was "on the ballot." Leastest among the least. In PA, Humphrey's name was at the top, mine at the bottom, for state assembly -- endorsed like him by the Democrat Party, but unlike him, supported vigorously also by McCarthy-ite independents. It was not enough as factions within the party fought against each other; and a well liked local Republican incumbent was returned to office.

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(2) Also in '68: I had walked with Mr. and Mrs. King into Montgomery. That assassination, contrary to one of your people last night, was no surprise to either of them. I wish you could have seen how they quietly held hands as if they never would let go; he, a clear mark every day in his blue shirt, walked in the line just six or seven paces directly in front of me. We had been asked by Dr. King to join the front line of the march from the airport into the city.

In microscopic scale, trying to walk between and among the Democrat organization and the anti-organization McCarthy-ites was in timing and circumstance apparently and exactly what Eugene McCarthy seemed to have experienced in macrocosm.

It turned out that my instincts, turns, responses were exactly as his; as if some mighty other force dictated separately to each where the mind changes and shifts would have to take place. I received a warm letter from Humphrey as I separately in my little way but at the same moment as McCarthy accepted Humphrey's word on the war, only a couple of weeks before the election and shifted to support him. Whether that timing was right in terms of service to our country has been debated ever since, but not by us.

Scotty Reston, my idol who got me my job-switch from the NYTimes to the AP, had written a line about McCarthy as being one not "victimized by loyalty, but truth," and I used the quote in big posters and campaign literature. Reston was furious with me, later apologized.

What I went through by insight, instinct and prayer I found out later was true too of McCarthy. For I have had the privilege in later years of corresponding with him on these and other points.

I think your program might have delved more into THE MEANING OF SIXTY-EIGHT, as well as of anecdotal evidence on happenings. In that year, always as in every year since, and today, I think 1968 was The Year of Silver. I used to ask my son what color "eight" is. Silver and shining. He was 15 and we stayed up late nights figuring talking about what he would do when drafted for Vietnam. -- Your program did not deal with fatherhood, parents of sons who were drafted but opposed the war -- My son was not drafted, by age differential. But we had agreed he would go even though he detested the war. He decided, but I thought he was right. And I think Clinton was too favored by circumstance to make the same right choice.

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I think 1968, the silver year, was the year of Epiphany -- I am suspicious of the word -- an appearance and the planting of the flag-and-cross at the top of the next great hill, for America. A time of re-defining -- of who we are and where we are going. A sacrifice of martyrs; and the next ennobling of our goals toward the meaning of America: brotherhood, here, and throughout the earth.

McCarthy was the Amos, who halted the king's carriage, the "prophet of disdain." That's what he said he offered again last year at Harvard; to the Clinton camp, and was turned down. We might be off to a faster, firmer start now had he been accepted.

McCarthy in '68 was The Selected Man of Moment. Selected (yes, in a mystical sense) when no other had vision enough, timing enough, courage enough, alone-ness enough to step out with or without a crowd. He was alone. Look at those tapes of his announcement on the Hill, the unruly reactions, the electricity that followed. He truly was our Thomas More, for all seasons.

When the others...saw crowds gather behind him they stepped immediately to the front of a parade that had already formed. I remember my resentment at Teddy knocking in the night on McCarthy's door. But McCarthy today denies emphatically the rumors of hate, discontent and animosity. And I believe him. Those traits are not in him. Sardonic wit, satire, irony, yes...and plenty of them. Dispensed likewise to the "blackbirds" of the press. Remember?

This is no denial of the worth of Bobby Kennedy. Far, far from that. Though as we flew into Montgomery, I asked aloud why Bobby was climbing the Rockies' Mount Everest as a sign of masculinity when he could have been with us from Selma.

(3) AGAIN, where was I in '68? ON LABOR DAY '68 I shared the opening Pennsylvania campaign platform -- at U.S. Steel's largest plant, Fairless Works -- with Joe Clark, running for re-election to the U. S. Senate. I asked him what he thought of my idea to organize a "Levittown Brigade." Local WWII vets here who would agree to walk into Prague empty handed, without arms, and stand confronting the in-rolling Russian tanks. I think the Russians would have backed off. We were the ones who had pulled their chestnuts out of the fire after Stalingrad.

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Just old, fat veterans in their useless late 40's and early 50's, willing to take a peaceful but firm stand before a friend and former ally. Clark dismissed it. Told me not to make a move without clearing with the State Department. I think he was wrong. I wish I had done it.

Finally, as for your program last night: someone bemoaned the fact that you could not talk to the dead -- i.e., Abe Ribicoff, Mayor Daley et al. But you can. McCarthy is at home in Washington, he has a phone (see below).

And you had not a single voice from among the great crowd of McCarthy-ites, yet you let a fellow like Pat Buchanan wax endlessly about them as if he understood what he was looking at, let alone what was in their minds and hearts. You can reach Harris Wofford today, who can tell you how he, the only White House level aide of rank who marched in the front line that night in Chicago -- let him tell you about it as he has told it to me -- how he sought non violently to put his body on the line, herded into a paddy wagon and spent the night in jail with the other young Americans who non violently, non-abusively opposed that war. For Buchanan to talk about "verbal abuse" in light of his record, is a sacrilege.

In 68 and thereafter in Pennsylvania and other swing states, you couldn't get elected a Democrat dog-catcher without endorsement of the McCarty-ites, later to elect Milt Shapp a governor twice by wide margins.

(4) AGAIN, where was I in '68. A speaker at a Jackson Day Dinner, behind then featured U.S. Sen. Tom McIntyre, New Hampshire, who told me, self-deprecatingly, "I was the one who told President Johnson at the White House: "Don't you worry a second, Mr. President, you don't have a thing to worry about in New Hampshire. We have it locked up. McCarthy won't get three per cent of the vote."

Sununu told me years later how the NH voters were pinpointed, how McIntyre missed the count. But Sununu missed the meaning of that election as he missed how a White House press corps works.

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So how 'bout getting the one man on your show who started it all in '68, understood it all, better than anyone else, and who understands it all, better today than anyone else; in terms of a spiritual significance and the grand new pursuit for America among nations and an infant charter, seeking constitutional law and justice as America and the Greeks foretasted them.

He was our Sir Thomas More, the man in '68 for all seasons, who rose to the great occasion that even now is redefining the nation after a sea of shootings and recalcitrance. When a nation murders and condones by inaction, as we still are, the murders of its prophets, a period of Dark Age inevitably follows -- the likes of Nixon, Agnew, Ford, a weak counter culture of Carter malaise, Reagan, "trees that poison the atmosphere," a man who actually believed he fought in WWII because he was in a movie about it; and Bush.

These are the jeremiads, the bitter fruits, before such a nation can come back to and move forward from the staff that our American martyrs left firmly planted on the mountaintop. So many of your voices last night thought it was all in vain. But it was then and now the Illiadian night before dawn. Their work, 1968 itself, will go down as one of the greatest, one of the brightest and shining landmark breakthroughs for social justice.

I think this hesitant, Homeric "rosy-fingered dawn" is what we are just beginning to see in the country now as Clinton and nation are getting the meaning of 1968 together, gropingly, haltingly, searchingly for sure. We will not have heard the last of '68 until 2035.

Respectfully, yours, [REDACTED]

c: Hon. Eugene McCarthy
[REDACTED] Woodville VA 22749

PS Sen. McCarthy's summer home number is [REDACTED]
He will be final speaker at a "Georgetown University Symposium on 1968" at 1:30 PM. Friday, September 10. Why don't you cover it? Minnesota U., preparing documentary on him and same subject. To coordinate matters you can reach his daughter at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED] TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Date: 9/9/93

TO: Mr. Brian Lamb

PAGES 6 inc cover

FIXING PREVIOUS...ASKING FOR COVERAGE OF
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY "Election '68" Symposium
as attached.

ALSO TO: _____

FROM: [REDACTED]

FAX [REDACTED]

REMARKS: _____

