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I LISTEN TO C-SPAN BECAUSE...

it spotlights our American History in process, our government in action, with a neutrality, balance, and fairness not found in other media. This Democracy in a Republic is a unique experiment which depends upon the understanding of an informed and enlightened electorate. Jefferson advocated selecting intellectuals and training them in the art of government. In the words of John Adams: "As good government is an empire of laws, how shall your laws be made?" C-SPAN gives, for the first time, the opportunity for citizens to observe the process of law-making. Washington wrote to Martha: "I realized that Providence was giving me a vision of America. In those faces, in those hearts abide the real strength and substance-- the future-- of our country. For if our Experiment in freedom succeeds, the people themselves will hold the ultimate authority in our new land." Monroe expressed it: "There is a price tag on human liberty-- that price is the willingness to assume the responsibilities of being free men." In our Constitution, the Bill of Rights suggests a "Bill of Responsibilities," which means all citizens have an obligation to become involved in the perfecting of our system. C-SPAN is helping Americans to complete the process set up by our founders.

We perceive "sparks of truth" in the opportunity to call and challenge rhetoric-- the rhetoric of Congress and other government leaders, as well as journalists. These words of Madison, in his appeal for ratification of the Constitution, seem appropriate: "I hope that gentlemen, in displaying their abilities on this occasion, instead of giving opinions and making assertions, will condescend to prove and demonstrate, by a fair and regular discussion." C-SPAN makes possible the opportunity for Americans to observe legislation and hold representatives to this higher standard.

Jefferson wrote to Adams in 1921: "I shall not die without a hope that light and liberty are on steady advance." In Franklin's immortal words: "Liberty will last just as long as the desire for liberty burns in the hearts of generations to follow as it burned in those who created it." C-SPAN has awakened new interest in the completion of the "Great Experiment" and the involvement and participation of the electorate. As the importance of the individual is emphasized in our Constitution, C-SPAN is making a significant contribution in the exchange of ideas. As our Founders found courage and drew upon a Higher Strength and Wisdom to meet crises, so we, working together in the true spirit of America, can find solutions and continue the tapestry of our American Heritage.

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