

5 Feb 1992

Terrence Murphy, Programming
CSPAN2
444 North Capitol St. NW
Washington DC 20001

Dear Mr. Murphy:

CSPAN has already demonstrated how public financing of our political campaigns could be implemented in a most effective way. Just as we made a public investment in our Interstate Highway system, we should now use public funds to provide a Highway for Ideas accessible to all political candidates. CSPAN has already demonstrated how this can be done. Instead of giving MONEY to individual candidates, give them, as a public investment in our political well being, the MEANS for debate and discussion of the issues facing us. For non-cable viewers, extend this highway of ideas into the Public Broadcasting System as well.

The recent *all-day* Rainbow Coalition conference televised by CSPAN, during which Democratic candidates spoke at length on issues raised by panels of questioners, was a impressive demonstration of what can be done. What a pleasure to be free of the sound-bite limitations of the network programs! And, Jesse Jackson made impressive contributions as he skillfully managed the presentations during the conference. By a remarkable coincidence, the Feb 3rd issue of the NEW YORKER magazine printed two days later the first of a three-part article by Marshall Frady entitled "Outsider" which provides a fascinating view of Jackson's unique position on today's social and political stage. As I read this first installment, it occurred to me that Jackson may move to center stage in a role reminiscent to that of Mahatma Ghandi. Could CSPAN have Marshall Frady appear on your BOOKNOTES program?

And then, this week, I've listened to the Governor's Conference. Several of them spoke on the Readiness Issue in Education with great force and insight. As Andy Rooney said at the close of last week's 60 Minutes program, what we need are better

students, and that requires better parents, and that requires that our society place higher value on education in its customs. Many old assumptions are giving way to the demands of reality. I am hopeful that the growing number of informed people, many educated by watching C-SPAN, is beginning to have an influence. I hope it will not be too late.

Sincerely yours

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