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The Director
C-Span
Washington, D.C.

7-30-93

Dear Sir,

During World War II I worked at CBS, monitoring the German shortwave propaganda broadcasts from Hamburg. The man who ran the Nazi radio machine was a vicious mental case who, after a while, became almost funny to listen to because his views were so distorted, and his attacks on Washington and on Roosevelt so insane.

Listening to your "editorial conference" at The American Spectator somehow reminded me of these Nazi broadcasts - a group of unreasonable, prejudiced men, maniacally determined to find fault and pretending to uphold the essence of American journalism.

What I think is such a shame is that you, as C-Span, give credence to this bunch of - well, fanatics would be the best word. Would you also do an advertising job for the American Nazi Party or some other inane group? And, if so, why?

Frankly, if I were a cable operator, I'd have a good hard look at C-Span when it carries self-serving, slanted programs like this. Surely you can't argue that you are doing this out of a sense of "fairness"; and does "fairness" even apply to such an assembly of awful under-dogs? Does one have to listen to idiots like this declaring that "American liberals are just as corrupt as the French socialists?" Or that "The New York Post is a paper of record." How dumb (or blind!) can these people be! I bet even their beloved Rush Limbaugh would be embarrassed by this discussion.

The trouble is that, somehow, when C-Span - which otherwise provides us with such a superb service - puts this type of men on the air, and plugs their magazine, you appear to endorse their "conservative" views (I think that's a charitable expression. I think other adjectives fit much better). This isn't great and balanced journalism. It's providing a platform to a certain kind of zealot with a dangerous mind-set. One comes away with the impression of having listened to an assembly of particularly nasty teenagers. William Cristol would have been ideal addition to that "editorial board."

It would be different if you set the scene and if you

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balanced it all by explaining to viewers who may not yet have wasted their money on The American Spectator, what a biased and unpleasantly partisan publication this really is.

Their article on Anita Hill, which has been properly denounced in so many quarters, was a disgusting display of right-wing bias. They are not journalists but propagandists, and C-Span should recognize it. Your channel should not - under the guise of fairness - become a mouthpiece for a bunch of right-wing lobbyists. And, in any case, their "editorial meeting" didn't amount to much, and I hope most sincerely that their optimism for the future of The Spectator is totally misplaced. As Lincoln said: You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

What an apt epitaph for The Spectator. They should carry it in their masthead!

Sincerely,



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