



Ogdensburg, NY 13669

March 6, 1998

Ms. Margo Amey
C-SPAN Networks
400 N. Capital St. N.W. #650
Washington, D.C. 20001
Dear Ms. Amey,

O.W.P.

I always enjoy it when Mr. Lamb puts you on the air. I think most viewers do admire you very much.

I was struck this morning when you seemed so mystified by the wonderfully articulate and eloquent gentleman caller who evaluated your policy on the phone line divisions. You say you, "just don't get it!"

Let me, in my uneducated way, try to explain further. I do not believe it is true openness and true democracy to restrict all debate and ideas to a permanent two party monopoly. We have been conditioned for many years to choose a side in a left/right, republican/democrat, rich/poor warfare by the ruling class and the news media. It is a fact that any voice

outside that static two party monopoly is depicted as radical outsider deviation.

I think that accurately describes our political reality. Therefore, your phone labels legitimize and perpetuate this reality which automatically continues to marginalize and to stifle the free flow of ideas.

The greatest appeal of C-SPAN, for me, and I'm sure millions of others has been the wonderful opportunity for a free flow and uninterfered-with presentation of happenings. We in America have no other media outlet for that but C-SPAN.

The establishment and news media furiously demean and discredit every dissenting voice outside the two party monopoly which controls the flow of information. Your phone labels help to keep that monopoly in power. "Other" is immediately presented as an outsider alternative which you generously

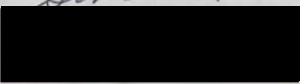
allow to also be heard. Yet, you still have only one or two guests. One representing the left and one representing the right. Rarely, if ever, do you have anyone at your table representing others. If you have three phone lines with labels, it is only fair to have three guests likewise.

I am, frankly, astonished that C-SPAN and yourself cannot understand this simple and very clear reality. I often wonder if you do understand but pretend not to. Perhaps you too are conditioned to accept the two-party monopoly as the only worthwhile or legitimate reality. If so, I feel sorry for such close-minded attitude.

I hope you will not discount my words as merely critical and cranky. Think about it using your God-given free ability. Discard convention and conformity and allow freedom in.

(over)

Sincerely,



P.S. - Your policy of no longer providing an address for your guests falls into the same category of restricting the ^{free} flow of information. You are now in the business of trying to prevent bad speech in an effort to protect journalists and others from unwelcome criticism and accountability. To have real free speech we must all accept the bad as well as the good!

I cannot afford to call. I cannot fax. I cannot send E-mail. My only option is letter writing and the cost of paper, envelope and stamp. Unless I already have an address, I cannot participate period. Thanks to C-SPAN's new policy of protecting the status-quo.