

13 SEPT 91

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DEAR C-SPAN:

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YOU'RE ALWAYS REQUESTING COMMENTS FROM VIEWERS, SO I GOT SOME, WHICH I'M SURE OTHERS WHO WATCH YOUR PROGRAM HAVE EQUAL DISTAIN.

I'VE NOTICED ON QUITE A FEW OF YOUR "CALL-IN" TALK SHOWS, YOUR GUESTS HAVE MADE STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT: "WELL, I REALLY WOULD PREFER NOT TO ANSWER THAT, BECAUSE I'LL GET IN ALL KINDS OF TROUBLE WITH MY BOSSES BACK AT THE OFFICE."

WHAT KIND OF "CONTROLLED PRESS" IS STARTING TO EVOLVE IN THIS COUNTRY, AND ISN'T A "COP-OUT" REPLY LIKE THIS MORE DAMAGING TO THE HOME OFFICE THAN IF THEY WENT AHEAD AND ALLOWED THEIR JOURNALISTS TO SPEAK FREELY. IT VIOLATES THE VERY "FREE PRESS" PRINCIPLES THEY BOAST ABOUT, WHICH FEW AMERICANS BELIEVE EXISTS.

FOR THIS REASON, I THINK C-SPAN PROGRAMMERS, WHO I HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR, SHOULD AVOID SCHEDULING REPORTERS WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE LARGER NEWSPAPER CHAINS, OR MAGAZINES WHO HAVE A KNOWN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OR AGENDA; SUCH AS "THE NEW REPUBLIC", THE NEW YORK TIMES OR THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, JUST TO NAME A FEW. YOUR C.S. MONITOR GUEST OF A FEW WEEKS PAST, TOOK THIS VERY JOURNALISTIC COP-OUT STANCE OF WHICH I SPEAK, NOT ONCE, BUT 2 OR 3 TIMES DURING A SINGLE C-SPAN CALL-IN PROGRAM.

BY CONTRAST THE TWO SMALL TIME EDITORS YOU HAD ON, WHO RUN THEIR OWN NEWSLETTER POLITICAL REPORTS FIELD ANY AND ALL THE QUESTIONS ASKED, IN A VERY INFORMATIVE SESSION, FREE FROM INTIMIDATION, AS CALL-IN PROGRAM GUESTS SHOULD BE AFFORDED.

ANOTHER THING WHICH BOTHERS VIEWERS AND GUESTS ALIKE, IS 4 AND 5 POINT QUESTIONS.

JUST AS C-SPAN ENFORCES THE 30-DAY CALL-IN REPEAT RULE, YOU SHOULD ALSO LIMIT THE CALLER TO ONLY TWO QUESTIONS, MAYBE EVEN ONE.

THIS WOULD SERVE TWO PURPOSES: IT WOULD HELP VIEWERS CONCENTRATE ON THE CALLERS BASIC BEEF, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME NOT ALLOWING YOUR GUESTS TO SIDESTEP QUESTIONS HE OR SHE IS UNCOMFORTABLE WITH IN ANSWERING.

FOR INSTANCE, IF A CALLER ASKS A FIVE POINT QUESTION; FOUR ON ISRAEL AND ONE POINT ON IRAQ, THE JOURNALIST GUEST IGNORES ISRAEL COMPLETELY AND GOES INTO A 10 MINUTE CONDEMNATION OF THE "EVIL" SADDAM AND WINDS UP TALKING ABOUT OUR GREAT DESERT STORM "VICTORY", WITHOUT EVER MENTIONING ISRAEL, ALMOST LIKE SELF-IMPOSED CENSORSHIP.

THEN THE C-SPAN HOST SMILES AND SAYS:
NEXT CALLER: "GO AHEAD PLEASE, BILLINGS
MONTANA, YOU'RE ON!"

IT MAKES YOU WANT TO THROW A BRICK
RIGHT THROUGH YOUR T.V. SET!

YOU SHOULD PROBABLY LIMIT CALLERS TO
ONLY ONE SPECIFIC QUESTION, THEN THESE
WEASEL GUESTS COULD NOT LEAP-FROG THE
QUESTION WITHOUT APPEARING DERANGED OR
DEAF.

WELL, YOU WANT TO HEAR FROM VIEWERS!
THATS MY BEEF AND I THINK ITS A VERY
VALID COMPLAINT SHARED BY MANY, MANY,
C-SPAN VIEWERS. WHY CALL IN IF YOUR
QUESTION IS NOT ANSWERED? IT MAKE YOU
FEEL LIKE A FOOL, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU
RECEIVE YOUR PHONE BILL.

Dr. [REDACTED]