

O-BK

Dec 12 - 1995

Brian Lamb - C-Span
Washington D.C.

Sir,

The past 2 Booknotes interviews were most interesting for opposite reasons. A week ago Secretary James Baker was most impressive, as usual. I've always enjoyed watching C-Span coverage of Congressional hearings when Baker, during the Bush administration, was testifying about relations with Israel, diplomatic maneuvers during Persian Gulf War + other foreign affairs. I find him most articulate + quite candid for a diplomat. During hearings + in your interview he rarely did any stammering but this is easy to take because he apparently is aware that many of his listeners are weighing every word he says. (By comparison, most speakers at panel talks + in Q + A sessions are most annoying with their stammering + seems to be standard Beltway speech pattern. Many of them should attend Toastmaster Club meetings for a year or take 2 speech courses in college before doing any public speaking. Other articulate non-stammerers include Richard Cheney who speaks distinctly (but talks too fast) V. P. Gore (who talks too slow) and Pres. Clinton who is most articulate speaker + completely ~~is~~ smooth, at proper words per minute. a few people would say such fine enunciation is a sign of being slick. I don't. I think the people who think they are being folksy or humanoid with poor speech habits are merely low class.

This week's Booknotes interview with Brinkley was a fine example of bringing the egotistical + tiresome condescension of a man out in the open better than any other format. I couldn't watch it continuously, it was so hard to take, but I surfed back to it at times. Once when I did that, I heard him say that he is not cynical. This reminds me of Nixon's "I am not a crook." Brinkley is too old + tired + too cynical to work on ABC. He should have retired a year ago. He considers himself an IKON.

(over)

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Jim Baker is one Secretary of State I respect and trust, in contrast to H. Kissinger who has earned my contempt since the fall of 1972 when he produced his "Peace is at hand" just before Nov 1972 election. I was therefore willing to vote against Nixon but the Demo alternative was worse, so I voted for Nixon. Kissinger's deviousness as well as his scratchy-voiced condescension is hard to take, for me.

I heard Ben Bradlee say recently on C-span coverage of National Press Club that "Deep Throat" secret source on Watergate will be identified when he is no longer living. Over the years, I've had 3 different guesses as to his I.D., but ~~in~~ recently I've come to firm conviction that Deep Throat was Henry Kissinger. It is generally understood now that Kissinger leaked foreign affairs news to that N.Y. Times man ^{RESTON} (who died recently in his 80's). But I think Kissinger leaked the Deep Throat clues about Watergate to Woodward & Bernstein.

I have no emotional involvement for or against leakers, but I note H.K.'s ultimate hypocrisy about calling in the plumbers when he was responsible for the most important leaks. H.K. survived the Nixon debacle but he doesn't dare I.D. himself as Deep Throat even today. I mention this attitude about leaking also because Washington "journalists" have in the last 2 or 3 years generally agreed that James Baker was the greatest leaker in the Bush administration. By "greatest" I'm referring to the huge number of leaks from a "high government source" which have since been attributed to Baker. The difference between Kissinger & Baker on this topic is that Baker was loyal to his President.

Sincerely,

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