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Well Well

28 FEB 1995
(15)

BRIAN,

A THANK YOU AND SOME COMPLIMENTS. FIRST THE THANK YOU; I HEARD IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY THAT YOU RECENTLY READ ONE OF MY LETTERS ON THE AIR. I DON'T KNOW HOW THE DEVIL I MISSED THIS IF IT WAS READ ON MONDAY OR FRIDAY MORNING ON THE JOURNALISTS' ROUNDTABLE. I ALWAYS WATCH, BUT THAT'S NEITHER HERE NOR THERE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH, I CONSIDER IT AN HONOR.

IS THERE ANYWAY I CAN GET A VIDEO COPY OF THE PROGRAM? I THINK MY FATHER WOULD GET A KICK OUT OF SEEING HIS SON'S LETTER READ ON TELEVISION. IF THERE IS, COULD YOU PLEASE SEND ME THE PARTICULARS - WHERE TO WRITE, COST ETC. I WOULD APPRECIATE IT.

NOW THE COMPLIMENTS; THE NEW FORMAT FOR THE MORNING CALL-IN PROGRAM IS WORKING WELL. THE PRELIMINARY SCAN OF NEWSPAPERS WHILE TAKING CALLS FOLLOWED BY THE REPORTERS DOING THE SAME SEEKS TO BE WORKING PARTICULARLY WELL. ALSO, USING THE PHONE TO TALK TO A REPORTER ABOUT AN ARTICLE HE/SAE HAS WRITTEN IS EXCELLENT. KEEP IT UP.

INCIDENTALLY, HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT WHEN YOUR GUEST REPORTERS BEHAVE CIVILLY TOWARD EACH OTHER THAT THE VIEWER CALLS ARE ALSO MORE CIVIL, MORE THOUGHTFUL AND LESS RANCOROUS. THIS MAKES THE PROGRAM PARTICULARLY ENJOYABLE. OR AM I WRONG?

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT; I'VE WATCHED THE FIRST TWO LECTURES - TRUMAN & EISENHOWER - OF THE SERIES ON CHARACTER AND THE PRESIDENCY THAT C-SPAN IS BROADCASTING ON SATURDAY EVENING, THEY WERE BOTH EXCELLENT. I'M LOOKING FORWARD ~~TO~~ TO THE REST. I'VE READ MCCULLOUGH'S BOOK ON TRUMAN THREE TIMES. IT'S AN EXCEPTIONAL WORK OF BIOGRAPHY, AND IT WAS INTERESTING TO SEE AND HEAR THE AUTHOR. MY COMPLIMENTS TO WHOEVER HAD THE IDEA TO BROADCAST THE SERIES. WELL DONE.

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I MENTIONED IN MY LAST LETTER THAT I REALLY ENJOYED THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES BUT DIDN'T SAY WHY, SO HERE GOES. THE DECISION THAT EACH CITY SHOULD DECIDE HOW TO STAGE THE RE-INACTMENT AND WHAT TEXT TO USE WAS EXACTLY RIGHT AND, IT SEEMS TO ME, ENTIRELY CONSISTENT WITH C-SPAN'S PHILOSOPHY. THAT THE DEBATES WERE HELD IN THE ~~same~~ ACTUAL LOCALES AND ON OR NEAR THE ACTUAL TIME OF YEAR GAVE THE EVENT A KIND OF VITALITY AND "REALNESS" NOT POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE IN ANY OTHER WAY.

AS AN ASIDE; I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO SEE MORE OF EACH CITY. FOR EXAMPLE; PHOTOS AND MAPS AS IT WAS THEN, COMPARED TO PHOTOS OF TODAY, MAYBE EVEN AERIAL PHOTOS OF TODAY SUPERIMPOSED ON MAPS OF THE 1850's; SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

THE IDEA THAT DESCENDANTS OF THE ORIGINAL AUDIENCES WERE THERE, IN THE SAME PLACE, HEARING THE SAME WORDS, AT THE SAME TIME OF YEAR, WELL, THAT WAS EXCITING, AND ~~was~~ IS A WAY OF MAKING HISTORY COME ALIVE.

I HOPE C-SPAN WILL DO MORE THINGS LIKE THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES. I BELIEVE PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN HISTORY, I KNOW I AM.

AS A SORT OF OFF-THE-WALL SUGGESTION HOW ABOUT A JOURNALISTS' ROUNDTABLE FEATURE THAT USES OLD NEWSPAPERS. FOR EXAMPLE; V-E AND V-J DAY ARE COMING UP. WHY NOT DIG OUT THE NEWSPAPERS THAT APPEARED ON THOSE MOMENTOUS DAYS AND, IF POSSIBLE, REPORTERS WHO WERE THERE. USE THE SAME TECHNIQUES YOU USE WITH THE REPORTERS ON MONDAY AND FRIDAY. SCAN THE PAPERS, TAKE CALLS ETC. I THINK IT WOULD BE FUN AND VERY INTERESTING.

ALL THE BEST

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