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opinion

October 20, 1994

[REDACTED]
Clackamas, OR 97015

Brian Lamb
C-Span
400 North Capitol St., N.W. #650
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

Thank you for C-Span.

Having had a recent operation that necessitated that I stay home and do little or nothing, I have had the opportunity to watch much more of your programming than usual.

I do appreciate the scope of your programming and your efforts to provide balance and an airing of a variety of viewpoints.

Having said that, however, perhaps it is a case of familiarity breeding contempt a little bit with some trends I perceive.

You seem to act incredulous at the perception on the part of your callers and faxers that a majority of them express the belief that most newspaper reporters, television and radio newsmen and columnists and commentators are liberal.

And, today, on the "Reporters Roundtable" you posed the question to either a caller or to your panel, that even granting that if that was the case (and your implication that it wasn't necessarily true) so what? What difference does that make? Or, does it even make a difference?

To me, it calls into question your seeming impartiality that you cannot see that by any rational measurement that reporters are not predominantly liberal and, by a wide margin, are Democrats and vote for candidates of the Democratic party.

In my opinion, this is not any great cause for alarm but it is a fact. When it is denied by whomever, that person's veracity and slant on other topics comes into question.

For myself, I am a registered independent. I am a native of Portland, Oregon and [REDACTED]

I have voted for such Democrats as Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern, also some forgotten Libertarian candidates and most recently for George Bush.

I have in recent years become a small business owner and have become more conservative over time and now at age 48, find myself voting for more and more Republican candidates. I certainly do not vote a straight party ticket because there are times when the Democrat has more on the ball and is clearly the better choice.

But, if you ask me what I am, I will readily admit I lean to the conservative side on most issues and if you want to simplify things for the point of discussion, I am a conservative.

Why do liberals seem so afraid to admit they are liberal?

I can understand it from a politician's point of view if they feel they are involved in a race at a time when liberal ideas and policy initiatives (as in Nov., 1994) are out of favor but what are the reporters afraid of?

It is human nature to have some personal views. Reporters are not going to be fired or their advancement threatened if they admit where they are coming from.

It is that type of deception and denial ("Oh, who me? Well, I am objective. I'm not a liberal. Blah, blah, blah. I don't know where people get that idea.").

Go back a few weeks in your tape file and listen again to the response of Barbara Reynolds of USA Today on your program when the topic of her liberal views came up. It really is a joke.

Anyway, you really do an excellent job overall. I just wanted to get this off my chest.

Sincerely yours,
[REDACTED]

P.S. I would like to see more reporters and editors from newspapers from the Midwest, South, Southwest and the Far West on your show. Perhaps there is a cost consideration involved that would prevent you from doing this but I get tired of the "East Coast" bias--which I suspect--dovetails with the "liberal" bias I perceive. Thanks.