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C-SPAN Update

Viewer Mail
400 N. Capital St. N.W.
Suite 650
Washington, D.C. 20001

Attention: C-SPAN Program Scheduling

During the past year C-Span has become one the most frequently watched television channels in my home. If we aren't watching C-Span at any particular time it seems that it is because we have at least first screened the C-Span schedule to see if we will be missing something important to us and only then decided to watch a different channel. This is a television viewing selection criterion not enjoyed by any other television channel that we could chose to watch. As a result, I feel that I am better informed on current U.S. and world news events than I have ever been. I offer this as a voluntary testimonial to honestly thank the cable television industry for the wisdom they have shown in producing such a program for the benefit of the viewing public.

But this is not the sole reason for my writing this letter. During the past year, I do not recall viewing any *C-Span* coverage of specific conferences or events in Alaska. This is understandable because of our remote location and the lack of a large number of newsworthy events that might draw the interest of a significant number of viewers throughout the cable and satellite system. However, during the past year, there have been a few news events that could have been covered that would have been excellent viewing material for your audience. Live or delayed broadcast of the Exxon Valdez oil spill daily news conferences immediately following the oil spill would probably have been one of the best services that you could have provided your viewing public during 1989. This would have provided all Americans with an objective, on-the-scene perspective that they were denied by the national new media coverage.

During the upcoming years, as our energy crisis grows and the extreme perspective of the environmentalist/preservationist movement is enhanced and supported by much of the established news media, Alaska will become the battleground of ideas and ideologues. To the majority of Alaskans, this one-sided treatment by the national news media tends to lead to governmental decisions which unfairly limit Alaska's economic future.

One sided coverage of news stories tend to exclude the objective, scientific approach to solving problems in favor of an emotional appeal often based upon intentional dissemination of misinformation. I believe that this tendency is a symptom of the decline of educational standards in the U. S. I do not intend this to be solely a criticism of our educators or the educational system, but more importantly and more directly, a criticism of parents who, in the comfort of their relatively high standard of living, have chosen either consciously or unconsciously to be entertained rather than educated.

cc: a-desk

I believe that this trend will continue until the national news media makes a commitment to more objective news coverage and the discovery of scientific truths.

Few, if any, pro-development forces would encourage disrespect for our natural environment. I suspect that all would recommend reasoned judgement with human values considered primary above all others. Likewise, I suspect that all embrace the application of wisdom acquired by the scientific method.

This leads to the motivation behind the writing of this letter. I appreciate the national and international aspects of the contribution *C-Span* makes to the problem solving process for regional and global issues. For these reasons, I bring to your attention the **International Conference on the Role of the Polar Regions in Global Change** that is scheduled for June 11-15, 1990 at the University of Alaska (UAF), Fairbanks, AK. This scientific conference will be interdisciplinary in scope and deal with role of the polar regions in global climate changes. It is my understanding that several international papers (U.S., U.S.S.R., Canada, etc.) are anticipated for presentation and discussion (see attached brochure). I encourage your coverage of the more important papers or keynote speeches that will be presented at this conference.

I believe that thousands of scientists, engineers, educators, and other environmentally concerned professionals in the U.S. who cannot attend this conference would watch if it were broadcast on *C-Span*. Since I do not represent UAF in making my request, I would urge you to contact the chairman of the conference organizing committee, G. E. Weller, at UAF in Fairbanks, AK if you also think that national cable television coverage of this event would be of interest to your *C-Span* viewers.

If logistical and equipment availability are concerns of yours that might preclude your consideration of televising an event from Alaska, let me assure you that we have state-of-the-art telecommunications equipment available in Alaska. I recently attended the taping of a couple of programs for "Tony Brown's Journal" using a combination of Mr. Brown's staff and equipment and personnel from Alaska Public Television (APT). It is noted that APT also support the live, continuous coverage of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) hearings on the grounding of the Exxon Valdez. So, in my opinion, national televised coverage of the Polar Regions Global Change conference can be done. I hope that it will.

Sincerely your loyal *C-Span* viewer,



Anchorage, AK 99516