

Feb. 13, 1995

Mr. Brian Lamb and the Employees of C-SPAN
400 North Capitol St., N. W., Suite 650
Washington, D. C 20001

Viewer

Dear Mr. Lamb , ET AL ESPECIALLY:

The enclosed rather concentrates on C-SPAN on pages 5 and part of 6; actually except for Booknotes and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates, C-SPAN is generously strewn throughout my long-windedness!!!!!! I've acquired a printed version of the Debates from E.R. Hamilton Bookseller in Falls Village, CT. I rarely have the good luck to enjoy the natural participation you-all encouraged from your local audiences during the debates. I could use a re-study of American history; on orientations sojourns to D.C. I would always include side-trips into Virginia, etc. In your approach you had live human beings under-acting and making it look so real. Many thanks.

Now with our changes in communications technologies, that speed factor (faxes, etc.) has turned into a volume really difficult to appreciate, a multi-Pandora's box. In today's World most anybody can have access to Pandora's boxes, but as the speed of access progresses I've noticed something wonderful on C-SPAN which you don't find much on other programming - - - a thinking contribution which enlarges on subjects and in turn encourages others perhaps to study more so they may also contribute to these wonderful thinking processes you're encouraging.

Yesterday, I listened to Sen. Byrd and Sen. Santorum debate (repeat) "how one interprets the law, or can, or is capable of such, and how the turn of a phrase often is interpreted to mean one tangent or another???" AND THEN, BOOKNOTES - "The Death of Common Sense" . . . Mr. Howard's 210 page read of this, as he put it, little idea, certainly is overdue and from my point of view the most welcome entity I've encountered in eons. And toward the end of your discussion with him, when he lauded Vaclav Havel's writings, I just applauded!!!!!! My collection of Havel is maintained in easy reach at all times . . . common sense is such nice verbiage! I've been calling it horse sense on those rare occasions when I encounter same!!!!!!!!!! Sent for the transcript today; now I must order his book.

You all have to be enjoying your work to the hilt . . . that's how it comes across . . . again, many thanks for C-SPAN!!!!!!

Sincerely

[Redacted signature block]

Cathedral City, CA 92234

ENCL: asa

Brian, et al

TOPSY-TURVY year again!!! Sorry I'm late AGAIN!!! Communications technology advances have given us all new speed figures to digest. Everybody appears to be searching for a review of history and seeking out old relic-y types of answers which can be shaped to fit today's very changed global World. Do all of the once basic text-book definitions of social, economic and political theorumms have to be thrown out en masse??

Our Federal Reserve is tip-toeing cautiously as the markets, bourses, etc. around the World run on their own time zone schedules. Several months ago I started saving stuff out of the Economist Magazine DERIVATIVES!!! New Rules, maybe strictures is a better word, need to be put in place (like someone wrapping a ruler across your knuckles!!!) to remind the various operatives to cease the little "con" games. Analyses in the Economist was great. I'm always pleased when I find something sensible like this in the Economist; they don't always make fun of us yocals across the R Atlantic. And England doesn't have a Constitution . . but MY, OH, MY!!

My two source books are out of date: Back in 1985 I purchased "Current International Treaties" edited by T. B. Millar and Robin Ward, Australian Nat'l. Univ., Canberra, published by N.Y. Univ. Press, 1984. The other documents, much used since I got onto C-SPAN in 1989, are the Rules of the House of Representatives (1991), and the July 27, 1992 printing ~~at~~ of the Standing Rules of the Senate (74 pages, a dwarf when compared to the House Rules' 1238 pages). 102nd Congress!!! Now that's dated. During the "DISCHARGE" ruling in 1994, I again tried to fathom the affects of how the Rules were being interpreted. The Congressional Quarterly publications has more often than not come to my rescue; but the old Treaties' book still has the basics for me to use as a starting point. *Foreign Affairs*

Dr. Billington, our Librarian of Congress announced the other day on the telly that we all could soon contact his huge Library via our own computers via the Internet (?), etc. I'm totally decadent; I do not have a computer but I'm beginning to give it serious thought. In the Dec. 19-25'94 issue of Wash. Post Nat'l Weekly in ~~the~~ Book World section: Birkerts' "The Gutenberg Elegies" by ~~xxxxxx~~ Jonathan Yardley (book critic for Post) . . . "The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age" - sort of a lament according to Yardley for literature and everything implicit in it . . . "for us troglodytes it's heart breaking but it is where we are going, and there is no escaping it" (quote from Yardley's review). How are they ever going to capture all the fun one finds in a dictionary. I remember eons ago looking up what I considered a word to have a very serious definition. Only to find as I read other possible usages that it was found to be used either by Shakespeare or Bacon, in a comic form . . . I laughed right out loud as I recall . . . can't remember the word!!!!!! This from The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. 1 or 2 - - these two volumes never cease to amaze me, magnifying glass et al!!!

Just returned Dr. Billington's book to the living room and caught the following on the telly: The "Regulatory Transition Act" was being discussed by Rep. DeLay, Republican Whip x x . . his complaint: that a review was needed before a person could be expected to vote!!!!!!!!!!

On the same subject: on 11-27-94, Peter McGraw briefly explained how the new communications highway may eventually operate: Prodigy Online will be capable of delivering whole printed pages via computer. Modems and Terminals in college dorms can receive data from all the libraries in D.C.?!?!?! The ribbon & on this infox was that print, and ink, and paper do still exist and will continue to exist always!!! The recent Intel glitch with a faulty spot of manufacture didn't surprise me really; I didn't like the delayed "fessing-up" routine!!!!

One recent weekend AM, I was surprised to learn I'd hear Calvin Trillin on C-SPAN in a repeat from early in November before our vote date. Evidently he's another book due out on his poetry; always the first item I read in the NATION. He got into definitions . . . he was the guest of the Nat'l. Press Club. One definition he said he'd been hearing and sometimes using just to get reaction, i.e., "deficit reduction component" . . . says you can stop a boring conversation in seconds just by inserting that 3-word phrase followed by a serious and thoughtful expression on your face - - and sometimes I guess it's worse when the person you're speaking with tries to include the three words in some type of rejoinder. Trillin pokes fun at such with his own rejoinder . . . "Hummingbirds are said to weigh a coin the size of a quarter!!!! Do they also weigh 2 dimes and a nickel??" When I find myself getting upset with some of the journalistic jargon, I keep a Trillin book handy, turn off the telly and enjoy a real dose of humor - - like putting on colored glasses, or looking in a mirror and laughing at what I see. Robert Benchley is nearby also. Mr. Trillin used to enjoy whistling and humming at the same time, but sort of gave it up when someone else bragged to him about being able to ~~hum~~ "I'm in the Mood for Love" at the same time.

SING
Saw "To Kill A Mockingbird" AGAIN a few Saturday's ago. Someone in the programming end of things on TV has still retained good taste. I saw something my eye hadn't caught before - - as the camera approaches the steps leading up to the Court House where the trial is about to begin, the camera focuses on a person drinking out of a water fountain on the left and at the foot of the steps; there's a bit of conversation as the camera pulls back to reveal another water fountain on ~~the~~ the right side at the foot of the steps and I saw dark skinned people drinking from that fountain. That HIT ME LIKE A SIDEWINDER . . . my right hand slapped my right knee with a surprising bit of force. Racial biases rather surprised me when Fred and I retired in 1972. . . I guess I was hoping I would discover changes for the better. Most of these really old films have gone through the cutting room floor process so as to fit a 1 1/2 hour time slot on today's TV. But my brain keeps remembering old dialogue and in the process discovering new "business/" of an unstated nature.

LIBRARIES FOR SALE: a quote from "INDEX on Censorship for Nov/Dec. 1994: "Books for Food" by Acil Tabbara, of the govt. office for theatre and cinema in IRAQ who was being paid 250 dinars (that's \$.50 on the blackmarket) plus a bonus of 500 dinars. Won't even feed his wife & 2 daughters for 2 days. SO, he decided to install himself

and his books on a street corner at which he can make a better living; he departed the govt. job. With the collapse of the dinar, an entire library can be bought for around 10,000 dinars, US \$20 at black market rates. People have already sold their family jewels, furniture and electrical appliances - - - now, they're being forced to part with what they value most - - THEIR BOOKS. Ahmad Saleh specialises in scholarly and academic books; the state has imported no textbooks since sanctions were imposed four years ago. Students are reduced to searching for medical textbooks or dictionaries on secondhand bookstalls, jumbled piles of ancient copies of magazines like the National Geographic from the 1970's, Egyptian romances and poetry collections." (This is a quote of Hussien Hassan, a 40-year old translator and poet. This was translated from LIBERATION, MOROCCO by Judith Vidal-Hall.)

I've acquired a few books this year (I continue to be a book junky!!): The Gardener's Year by Karel Capek (1890-1938) originally printed in Prague, Czech in 1929, then in English in 1931; this time the U. of Wisc. did the honors. Author's brother Josef Capek did the Thurberesque illustrations, the latter are for the most part humorous - - "a droll classic of wit ~~XXXXXXXX~~ wisdom" to quote the reviewer.

Next: "International Opera Guide" of major opera houses and opera companies, but also festivals and biographies. Those drawings of the interior seatings has me wondering where the best seating is acoustically. I remember that in Milan once my head almost touched the interior roof and people were bending over me from their standing stooped positions - - very cozy, we all shared my field glasses!!!! First showing (premier) of Saint of Bleaker Street - acoustics were great.

"A Captive of the Caucasus," by Andrei Bitov. Lessons of Armenia: translating past to present with language, history, and a geography lesson, etc. (just what I needed). Orig. published in Russian 1969, 1986, 1989. This a 1st Ed. in US - 1992.

Next: "Historical Dictionary of Golfing Terms" from 1500 to the present!!! by Peter Davies; sketches by Fran Carson, of ancient irons and woods. Quote: "1948 Ben Hogan (Power Golf 56): Snead like yours truly, elected to use a brassie off the tee . . . ~~Rhw~~ The brassie has more loft than a driver. It gives you more height." And another quote: "bulger n. A wooden club, especially a driver, with a slightly convex face. (1890 Horace Hutchinson (Badminton Golf 64): Henry Lamb . . . His novel driving club, in all other respects similar to others, has a face which, instead of being flat surfaced, bulges out at the centre." And then there's the "president - 1887 Sir Walter Simpson (The Art of Golf 23. The 'President' is a niblick with a hole in it." I could go on for hours here!!!! A 'cleek' which is Scottish for crook, or walking stick with a hook. I have never held a golf club in my hands, but I'm a TV golf junky!!! When I can't relax with golf, I try for billiards. In the latter the camera can be over the table and there are no undulations on that table!!!!!!

Then there's Nikolai Gogol's "The Government Inspector" and Selected Stories. Printed in USSR by Raduga Publishers, it appears to be bound in a leather. A fly-leaf quote is as follows: "I decided

to gather in one pile all the bad in Russia of which I was then aware, all the injustices which are committed in those places, and on those occasions where justice above all is demanded of man, and at the same time, laugh at everything. NIKOLAI GOGOL" (1809-1852)

And finally, "On The Air" by Dylan Thomas . . . his broadcasts of his poetry, etc. between 1943-1953. Edited by Ralph Maud. This volume does not include "Under Milk Wood" . . . I have none of his writings, but two biographies. Actually one of the books includes more an analysis of this Welsh writers form and usages. I haven't taken the time as yet to really delve here.

Two new magazines:

1-"Columbia Journalism Review" this is very timely. I don't know the political bent of Columbia Univ., but I've become quite calloused with the verbiage in reporting over the years. Sometimes I simply repeat something stupid I've heard on the telly but I change the jargon to give more pith and yet respect what might be classified.

2- "Civilization" from the Library of Congress . . very nice!!! I like their contributors' writing.

HEALTH: I sincerely believe that when Hillary and her health plan hit the fan, she'd encountered (much to her surprise, I guess) the power aspects of the AMA, Insurance Cos., and Pharmaceutical Cos.

After my physical exam in Nov. '93, I was told to contact a heart specialist. I remained on the internist' prescription (too long) and finally did see a heart group. Got off the latter prescription after encountering a 2nd Dr. in this "group" and what I was coming to accept as normal occurrences of rapid heart beats began to lessen!!!! Following is a blood pressure record I am very happy to report: On 8-24-94: 176 over 100; on 9-16-94: 164 over 98; on 12-16-94: 152 over 94!!!! An Echocardiogram shows "thickening of the mitral valve leaflets". . . The technician who conducted the "echo" said, as she was reading my physical exam results, quite amazing, you're health record is great - why do you have to have this heart business now?? Since acquiring the MAYO Clinic Heart Book and also their general medical tome, I've become more informed (every little bit helps). Now to acquire a 2nd opinion (Foreign Svc. Ins. allows such) (I'm not in an HMO of any kind); valve replacement and/or repair may be an inevitable!! Man who thought he liked my coach (up for sale) recommended a Dr. in San Diego (independently wealthy and surgery not done on a greedy spur of the moment. I'm afraid to drive to San Diego!!!), Perhaps the MAYO clinic can point me in the correct direction. My health file is a huge loose-leaf monster . . . I've kept my own records of: food consumed; daily activities; rapid heart beat occurrences; explanatory notes of each appointment w/a Dr., i.e., what he says, recommends, etc. and how I react when I don't agree with same!! Cardizem is supposed to reduce blood pressure, but when he said to go on a stronger dosage and I tried it for 2 days (it was encouraging rapid heart beats!!!), I simply returned to the lower dosage and told him about same at our next trist!!!! My BP has been showing better & better numbers. So, I'll try Scottsdale, Arizona's MAYO branch. Rather live in a city near a college and I'm guessing Scottsdale will be more expensive than I'd fathom. So maybe I'll get lucky and find a location equidistant to my needs.

C-SPAN:

This Preface to my cc of HOUSE RULES best explains the complicated infrastructure a novice like me encounters when trying to fathom what is happening on the floor of the House:

"References used in this edition are to the volume and section of Hinds' (volumes I-V, e.g., V, 400), Cannon's (volumes VI-VIII, e.g., VI, 500), and Deschler's (volumes 1-9, e.g., vol. 6, ch. 21, sec. 5.1) Precedents of the House of Representatives; the Congressional Record by date and page (e.g., Jan. 3, 1990, p. 50); the United States Reports, by volume and page (e.g., 403 U.S. 600); the United States Code by title and section (e.g., 42 USC. 1725); and Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives (Deschler-Brown Procedure) by edition, Chapter, and section (e.g., Procedure (97th Cong.), ch. 5, sec. 8X 8.1). Wm. Holmes Brown" - - A TOTAL MONSTER!!!!

C-SPAN's new agenda in programming has already gotten into some really great stuff:

During a House floor argument early on I heard Rep. Barney Frank expound a bit on the interpretation of the term "revise and extend remarks" for the Congressional Record . . . evidently revise can mean an omission or denial of a verbal statement??? Long diatribe ensued re "accountability/compliance, etc." having or required to be verbatim with no additions, omissions or changes!?!? The dialogue was sort of like someone having uncontrollable hick-ups. Rep. Frank speaks very rapidly and he came thru nice and loud and clear!!!!

C-SPAN carried "Agenda for Congress" on Dec. 28th - Scully with Richard Sammon, Cong. Qtrly in a discussion of the 'closed rule'....

"Journalism and Justice" - how to learn to trust the conveyors of news and journalism - - from the Poynter Inst. with various journalists, think-tanks, & specialists. Jos. McNamara, Hoover Inst.; Jim Moret, CNN; Ms Jacques Banaszynski, Hltd Oregonian; Cynthia Tucker, Atlanta Const. (one of my favorites on MacN/Lehrer, PBS); Howard Rosenberg, LA Times; Erma Smith, SF State Univ. Drawing the line between entertainment and actual news ... format appears to have been pushed into a competitive mode over some years.

I'm getting into very bad habits: just recently, around 11:30 PM or so, I awakened from a nap in my recliner to find the Center for Strategic Int'l. Studies in sway with a huge panel of speakers and a similar huge audience discussing "Mexican Politics and Outlook" PESO CRISIS (which seems to have affected the underpinnings of Brazil and Argentina). I was glued, the various speakers calmly (not pushy or staccato) presented pros and cons of the internal Mexican picture, i.e., the re-privatizing of the Banks, for one thing. During question and answer period, one gent in the audience came forth with Spanish and was quickly & firmly reminded by the Chmn to speak English; he was a Rep. of the PRI in Mexico and quite visibly not used to complying. A David Malpass, Bear Sterns & Co., Sr. Mng. Dir. for Int'l. Econ. finally contributed a small finale statement: "don't renegotiate the Mexican debt; can't be done this time as it was in 1982."!!!!!! WOW

Booknotes: I had already devoured NY Book Review's article on "Bell Curve" and didn't care for the source clarifications which

seemed to go dangling off into space, when C-SPAN programmed a review.

How Brian reads a book was the subject (very unusual) latter part of the year . . . I was amazed at the sometimes similarity of his process to that of my own. If a book review doesn't inform, then I just have to hope and pray for a reasonable Preface, ~~xxxx~~ Introduction.

Paragraph 2, this page: As I'm typing (1-19-95), House in Session; Rep. Dreier is Speaker Pro-Tem in debate with Rep. Barney Frank on floor - - CRUX: Rep. Dreier reads from Hinds' reference here!!!!!! Doubt my P.S. Library has references in Par. 2 here!!!!!!

Bibliography, Forward, Afterward, Notes, unless I'm an admirer of the author from previous encounters . . .

Scully and call-ins one AM: Pat Oliphant, Cartoonist, Australian by birth and after 30 years in U.S. still retains his accent. His drawing of Newt Gingrich was a fat little piglet curled up on the Speaker's chair!!! Scully was busy with Fax's, call-in, etc. and still carrying on a conversation with Oliphant!!!! Lovely.

Pierre Sallinger: Nat'l Press Club, I think; his reminiscing of the period in his life after the Kennedy assassinations when he went to live in France. He's written a book on why the Gulf War was unnecessary -- hasn't been advertised in U.S. and to date has sold about 25,000 copies. Around this date (??) CNN did an interview with Aldrich Ames (CIA spy) and Pierre's appearance here might have been part of a panel -- a Ms Chiovan Darrow, CNN Moscow is referenced in my notes . . . (My usual pencil code showing a change in program) isn't in my notes!!!!

BIOGRAPHIES: A&E; CNN (Larry King); PBS (Charlie Rose): King and Rose quite often interview same writer or performer -- not on same date. Anthony Hopkins; Sid Caesar, Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner -- riotously delicious encounters; Mallan Bloom (Closing of the American Mind), Yale Prof. has a new book -- "School of the Ages" re canonical studies from Greek days onward, i.e., education was founded in the Iliad (quite a confrontation in thinking matter no matter the time of day, for me!!); his "Closing of the American Mind" is not light reading. Chuck Jones, cartoonist for Warner Bros., followed Bloom on the C.Rose prg told Charlie he wouldn't feel at ease talking with Bloom and Charlie disagreed with him firmly. Jones "IS" Bugs Bunny and Charlie pulled him out as to a favorite ... "can't allow himself to have a favorite, enjoy and love them all;" "if you enjoy what you're doing, changes are you likely didn't start out doing it" . . . "Let us suppose you were a congressman, then let us suppose you're an idiot" (per Mark Twain, his quote here) . . . "there's no difference."

Philip Johnson (C.Rose), Robt. MacNeil (he'll retire from MacN/L on Oct. 25, 1995); Twyla Tharp!!!! Larry King's "round-piano" with singers (including Barbara Cook and Karen Akers) doing works of Kern, Berlin, Lerner, Hammerstein, Sondheim -- the latter on A&E twice

Remembrance of Things Past: The J. Peterman Co. catalogue for Xmas '94: They list an item not for sale!!! SPATS: "Circa 1906. They are old. They are useless, but they are beautiful. I bought them at a vintage clothing sale -- not to sell, but as a reminder of how well stuff used to be made: pearl buttons 1/8" thick, leather seams with 14 stitches per inch. They also remind me of more recent things, which (amazingly) we've given up with hardly a murmur of protest. Peaches worth eating and doctors who make house calls. Real starch in shirt collars. Bakelite. Books sewn in signatures. Strike-anywhere matches. Soapbox orators. Car engines you can tune yourself. Meaningful S.A.T. scores. Luchow's, foghorns, taffeta dresses, and sparklers on July 4th. Isn't it time to take some kind of stand here? I'm saving all I can. I hope you are too."

Isn't the above delightful; I didn't get their permission to copy same. I still have very old clothes, still in ~~in~~ wearing condition; I'm tremendously stodgy -- there's a hemline I simply feel at ease in so it's become too old a friend to throw out now . . .

IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING GOING ON IN THIS UNSETTLED WORLD,

HAVE A HAPPY . . .