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C-Span
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Dear C-Span,

Congratulations on a job well done. I include some observations for your perusal:

1. The increased amount of exposure given to ideas, individuals, and discussion has vastly opened the political process and will result in a greater understanding of issues among the public, essential if they are to determine direction our policy makers should take. By having C-Span 24 hours a day they force other stations to expand the coverage to compete.
2. C-Span's coverage pulls a rug out from under the two major parties and media interests: C-Span negates their efforts at minimizing choice of candidates and discussion of issues, especially those questions certain interests would rather have ignored. Both the parties and the media want a minimal either/or choice of candidates so they can focus their own interests for maximum effect. A news division can do that when only two candidates oppose each other, as in traditional election years. But 1992 has fielded a wealth of prospective leaders, whose ideas and coverage, when exposed for public consumption, limits the control placed on the process by party, party leaders, or media businesses.
3. C-Span call-ins provide a national outlet for the common man to express his views. This is a laudatory achievement; previous campaigns saw discussion by candidates and media analysts, all of whom are among the top 2% of American income-earners, and thereby are as distant from the common man as could be poss-

ible, except by their own redefinition.

4. The reaction of analysts on C-Span to the possible Perot candidacy indicates their preference for the traditional either/or choice. The impression is that the analysts do not want an outsider coming along to show up their predictions and analyses. The safety and happiness of the collective citizenry is always a priori; if someone bets on the wrong horse they deserve to lose their two bucks.
5. The only problem I notice with the coverage (which is the best by far, despite my comments) is the representational aspects.

The citizenry is made up of a vast array of differing peoples and interests, most of whom are not represented by political analysts, despite their credentials and connections. A weekly roundtable discussion with 4 common citizens (farmer, trucker, hairdresser, fireman, etc) would reveal interests and analyses beyond the accredited scope of professional journalists, think tankers, politicians, and media persons.

This main point: that most of the analysts are distant from the lives of common Americans, is significant: voter disgust this year obviously includes incumbents, but also the traditional presentation by media and analysts of the repeatedly failing policies and programs which caused the present voter outrage.

6. To an extent C-Span has excluded the Laughlins, Agrans, and other outsiders, but not to the extent of the other media, and more especially the unelected party officials. An hour a week of the fringers would serve the public.

In all, kudos to C-Span; keep it up, be more expansive and more inclusive. A realignment of parties is coming in the next 10 years---and its unlikely we will go into the 21st century led by dual 19th century parties.

