

[REDACTED]

May 9, 1997

Belhesda, Maryland 92816

[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Lamb:

I can't tell you anything about the value of CSPAN, and your commitment to it, that has not been said numerous times by many people, so I forego that. Alexis de Toqueville is neither the first nor the sole *foreigner* (using such words in a land whose foundation has been laid by, and whose existence is owed to, foreigners is simple sacrilege) who came to America since the birth of this nation that, in my opinion, is still in its earliest infancy, and who wrote books and articles about it in his and her own tongue as well as in the languages spoken and understood in this land. This program being created to celebrate De Toqueville and his work, however, I am not going to talk about Chateaubriand, Du Maurier, Costain, Sabatini, and myriad more known and unknown "foreigners" who have told tales of seemingly fictional nature about their own and others' trials and tribulations in the New World.

I am a Persian of a most noble decent who came to America in early 1946 at the age of twenty-eight with the aim of pursuing my engineering education at Stanford University. For the next six years or so, while attending classes at Stanford, first only as a student and eventually as an instructor as well, I learned about America and Americans first hand and wondered. I have never stopped learning about this, the world's youngest and most stupendous nation.

From the first day I arrived in New York until today, I have kept a sort of diary which I have titled, "*What's worth in America to write home about?*". With your permission, I'd like to quote a passage from March, 1947: "I wonder why people here are so preoccupied with taxation. Compared to the rest of the world's population, Americans are only a small handful. Yet, they use most of the earth's resources and enjoy humanity's highest standard of living. I know much sweat and blood have gone into the creation of this magnificent nation. What I have problem understanding is why are they complaining about paying for its upkeep. Things that are taken for granted here are phenomenally complicated elsewhere. In London and Paris, let alone Tehran and Bagdad, anyone wishing to get something as simple as a telephone line must wait for weeks, sometimes months, and more often than not, years. Here in America, people building their homes atop high hills and in the dark of the woods apply for water, power, and a telephone and if they don't have them all available at their doorsteps in less

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than a week, they clamor to high heaven and threaten to sue the pants off the City Hall. I wonder who else, in their opinion, is to pay for a social order that must build and maintain such a unique standard of living. In other lands and in other times, it was mostly booty taken, and reparation exacted, from fallen foes that paid for the upkeep of the victors' higher social structures. In the absence of such wars, who but those who use these niceties are expected to pay for them? Who must bear the cost of building and maintaining these excellent roads, some of which incidentally go nowhere but into the wilderness of some national park or the heart of a national mountain? Americans do not seem to understand that it is the taxes that they so reluctantly pay to their government that help make this, the youngest of all nations on earth, the richest and most advanced one of them all. I wonder why they all constantly complain about taxes and why their politicians try to use the promise of a tax cut as the reason why they should be elected to the government of their land. I truly wonder..."

I've been living, and paying taxes, here in America for some time now, Mr. Lamb, but am still awed by her and wonder about this matter of *taxation*, that is definitely "*with representation*".

Most Sincerely,



PERSONAL and URGENT

From:

To: Mr. Brian Lamb at (202) 737-3323

Date: May 9, 1997

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Message:

Attached