

Amsterdam, 23-7-'88

Dear Sir,

For four nights from 1 till 4.50 a.m. I was addicted to Sky's transmission of your coverage of the Democratic National Convention. I was hooked on the blue screen for these thrilling 'mini-series' with it's humour (Ann Richards), it's moving social engagement (Jesse Jackson), it's shy, nervous first appearance (John Kennedy Jr.) and it's convincing professionalism (Michael Dukakis).

It was amusing to see the difference between the podium with ~~the~~ big-shots, hand shaking, shoulder tapping, heel licking each other, and the auditorium with ordinary American people, supporting their favourites in the original and enthusiastic way of popstar- or sportfans.

I learned a lot about speech-writing (and I hope Dutch politicians did aswell), about party politics in America, about your way of television making (just great) and about the political system in the U.S.. But above all: it was a great show!

However, a great deal of your political system and election process remains a mystery, for ours is so totally different.

Here in Holland we have a situation slightly comparable with the system in Great Britain: a constitutional monarchy. There are two main differences: we have more parties (nine are represented in parliament now) and proportional representation.

Our main election is that for the house of representatives (the parliament) every four years. Everyone older than 18 may vote, there's no special registration. We have to choose one person out of a list of all the about 20 party lists of candidates. One of the top candidates of the major parties (Christian-democrats; social-democrats; liberals) is likely to become prime-minister. After the election the Queen appoints someone to form a majority-coalition of the biggest parties which want to govern together. Those parties form an administration and the topman of the biggest party in the coalition usually becomes prime-minister.

So, no caucuses, no preliminary, and no big party conventions! We are only a small country with 14 million inhabitants and Amsterdam is our

biggest city with a population of only 800.000.

A support as big as for Jesse Jackson - seven million, to quote Bob Clark, - would here mean 95% of all the voters. And If I were to be American, I would certainly vote for him. That is to say..... I've only seen one convention so far.

I'm looking forward to see you back in August and hope to see a lot more of you in the future. Keep up the good work!

(And I would be very pleased, ofcourse, if you would send me the booklet and the button as a memory to my first American National Convention)

With love for all of you,

Drs.

Amsterdam
The Netherlands.

Amsterdam, 23-7-'88

Dear Sir,

For four nights from 1 till 4.50 a.m. I was addicted to Sky's transmission of your coverage of the Democratic National Convention. I was hooked on the blue screen for these thrilling 'mini-series' with its humour (Ann Richards), its moving social engagement (Jesse Jackson), its shy, nervous first appearance (John Kennedy Jr.) and its convincing professionalism (Michael Dukakis).

It was amusing to see the difference between the podium with the big-shots, hand shaking, shoulder tapping, heel licking each other, and the auditorium with ordinary American people, supporting their favourites in the original and enthusiastic way of popstar- or sportfans.

I learned a lot about speech-writing (and I hope Dutch politicians did as well), about party politics in America, about your way of television making (just great) and about the political system in the U.S.. But above all: it was a great show!

p.t.o

address
on last page

However, a great deal of your political system and election process remains a mystery, for ours is so totally different.

Here in Holland we have a situation slightly comparable with the system in Great Britain: a constitutional monarchy. There are two main differences: we have more parties (nine are represented in parliament now) and proportional representation.

Our main election is that for the house of representatives (the parliament) every four years. Everyone older than 18 may vote, there's no special registration. We have to choose one person out of a list of all the about 20 party lists of candidates. One of the top candidates of the major parties (christian-democrats; social-democrats; liberals) is likely to become prime-minister. After the election the Queen appoints someone to form a majority-coalition of the biggest parties which want to govern together. Those parties form an administration and the topman of the biggest party in the coalition usually becomes prime-minister.

So, no caucuses, no preliminary, and no big party conventions! We are only a small country with 14 million inhabitants and Amsterdam is our

biggest city with a population of only 800.000.

A support as big as for Jesse Jackson - seven million, to quote Bob Clark, - would here mean 95% of all the voters. And If I were to be American, I would certainly vote for him. That is to say..... I've only seen one convention so far.

I'm looking forward to see you back in August and hope to see a lot more of you in the future. Keep up the good work!

(And I would be very pleased, ofcourse, if you would send me the booklet and the button as a memory to my first American National Convention)

With love for all of you,

Drs.

Amsterdam
The Netherlands.