

SYRACUSE, NY 13210-2097

April 15, 1997

Brian Lamb
CEO
CSPAN
Washington, DC

Re: Alexis de Tocqueville 160 years later

Dear Mr. Lamb, et. al.:

You're bringing the CSPAN bus to educate de Tocqueville's America of the changes in the political philosophies of our nation.

You know our aristocrats' visit in the late 1830's from Albany to Syracuse and the reasons thereof.

He was shocked at the Fourth of July Parade in Albany when Americans marched as butchers, bakers, honest lawyers, and humble dentists, all proud of their professions holding the Calvinistic spirit of the Puritans that good work is everything.

He was shocked by the cutting of the trees along the Mohawk trail, the changing vert of the leaves and was abhorred by his first sight of the American Indian - we have given them our liquor and our rags.

He was curious to revisit Frenchman's Island on Oneida Lake to wonder what had happened to his countrymen in this wilderness isolation.

His reason to visit this country was in the hands of that Liverpool New York hardware store owner Elam Lynds who had the answer for the French problem in the island of Martinique, namely making the prisoners work. He did not seem to be shocked at the 8th Amendment disregard by Mr. Lynds who said - when I ran Auburn Prison, we used the whip.

O. Tocq

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My introduction to Alexis was in the late '60's, sitting on a lawn in Warren, Vermont, drinking mint juleps, feeling the summer ennui of the Sugarbush skiers and watching the Fourth of July Parade in this little changed village of marchers proud of their village, proud of their jobs.

I opened by chance Alexis' Parade chapter mentioned supra.

The next happening that may interest you is passing what is now Bob Congel's mega mall, then an open field, jogging, stopping over on a rock to tie a shoe and seeing a plaque sitting at the southern tip of Onondaga Lake, "the Iroquois confederacy was formulated on this site." I thought of the Indians who called this lake Salmon Lake, meeting to form the first rule of law in our nation, a natural venue for the six nations. This rock is now gone. Parking lots cover everything, but Bob did erect a small reserve to commemorate Webster's landing. You may need a Carousel Mall guide to find it.

A few years ago a chance Sunday morning curiosity visit with friends to the Turning Stone Pavilion in Oneida had me giving a soliloquy of de Tocqueville and the problems of the American Indian at that time. My friends, a member of the 4th estate, a physician and a candy broker are quite curious so we spent an hour at brunch with the Encyclopedia Britannica discussing this stranger. Great personal memories.

Finally, I wish to thank you and connect Alexis' to T.R. Reid's address on CSPAN this last weekend regarding the rule of government, the excellence thereof in the marketplace, the future interests for Americans to investigate their workings for the 21st century, that government being the Asian complex who, according to Thomas Reid, catalyzed their energy as a moral energy under the laws of Confucius. Reid replaces Alexis in his counter coup of the Americans getting things done better than the French.

We live and learn and use history to put our feet in the present and hopefully our goals for the future. I hope some of this helps you on your future May visit to Central New York.

O-Tocq