

Willcox, AZ 85643

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C-Span
400 North Capitol Street
Washington, DC 20001

Gentlemen:

I believe you do not encourage your viewers to respond to your programming by U.S. mail as I am doing. But my resources do not allow for holding on a long distance telephone connection for an extensive period even if I should be fortunate enough to eventually get through your screen. Then you might not appreciate my comments anyway. And, since this is intended as constructive criticism for what I think would be a mutual benefit, and is not in itself a subject worthy for broadcasting as a topic of national interest, I'm choosing to communicate by mail. My risk will only be the investment of time and a postage stamp and I'm sure it will at least reach your in-mail. Maybe someone with some policy making authority and some objectivity will find it worthwhile to read and consider. If it succeeds to that extent, it will be entirely successful, whether or not I am ever made aware of that result.

First, though, I do want you to know I think C-Span provides the best public information programming available and I tune in every morning. But I have to earn a living and cannot watch it beyond 7:30 or so during week days. Saying it is the best is therefore not based on exhaustive analysis and it does not mean that I consider what I do see as uniformly beyond criticism, but I've not yet found any other media source your equal for balance and objective treatment of public issues and concerns. I usually enjoy most of the Washington Journal.

But it is disappointing that sometimes, such as during the Washington Journal show this morning, your host allows a caller to ask a question of one of your guests and then fails to allow the guest an opportunity to respond and immediately moves on to another caller or introduces a new and unrelated news article for discussion. Other times callers do not ask a direct and explicit question, but offer their own opinions, citing what to me are "facts" of which I know little or nothing. Nevertheless, assuming the facts, there are obviously implied questions begging for response which are sometimes unilaterally consigned by your host, without comment, to oblivion.

This morning one of your guests on Washington Journal was Ms. Mary Ann Akers from the Congressdaily. One of your callers was from Raleigh, North Carolina. He wasn't hysterical and off the wall - not a loose cannon concerning his topics of interest. His underlying theme was his unhappiness caused by some of the methods ABC employed in their investigative reporting of the Food Lion stores and the fact the balance of the media

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seems to condone those methods by failing to even acknowledge that such behavior is worthy of any discussion - pro or con. As a related topic he alleged as "fact" that Vice-President Gore, who has attempted to gloss his image by admitting his previous participation in the tobacco industry but who is now born again and proclaims he has discontinued that disgusting pursuit, did in fact sell his tobacco allotment rather than abandon it and that has likewise has been ignored by the media. J. J. permitted Ms. Akers no opportunity whatever to comment on either allegation. I would have liked to have heard some support or denial of the "facts" as your guest thought appropriate, and would have been further interested in hearing her opinion of the implications if either of them are.

Another caller from Wisconsin this morning asked a direct question of your guest concerning partial birth abortions. It was a technical question asking for clarification of the health risk to the mother that is purportedly sometimes present if certain natural births are permitted to be completed. That is a question which has also been on my mind and unanswered during this emotion driven controversy. Evidence in the form of supportable facts or recognized expert opinion would be helpful. While perhaps beyond the scope of your guest's expertise, she could have been allowed to respond to the caller. J. J. thanked the caller, noted there were about five minutes left in the segment and then moved on with no response or allowing Ms. Akers to respond to the caller's question. That, in my opinion, was clearly rude to the caller and it failed to permit your guest to fulfill her purpose in being there.

Sincerely,

