

13 April 1984

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Eugene, Oregon 97403

I watch C-Span because of a life long interest in observing the government in action. One of my first recollections is listening to the President on the radio. This does not sound very remarkable today. But at the time, there were very few radios in the country, and this was the first time a President spoke on a nationwide Broadcast. Many friends and neighbors gathered at the one home in our area with a radio.

We all marveled at the modern miracle that enabled us to hear someone speaking to us from a distance at three thousand miles. As a child, I listened to President Roosevelt's Fireside Chats. I felt, as most Americans, that he was speaking directly to me. As a young adult, I listened with great interest to the Political Conventions, and with the advent of television, I began watching the important political events that were broadcast on the commercial networks.

What a joy it was to watch the young Kennedys charm a nation, and what a heart rendering experience to watch their deaths and the rituals that followed.

During the Watergate Hearings, I watched moment by moment as that story was unraveled on the Educational Channel.

And now, for the last five years, we have been able to watch the Congress in its day to day deliberations, committee hearings with all the testimony that shapes the laws of our land, and interviews with these "movers and shakers" and can pick up the phone and speak to them ourselves.

What a Fantastic Voyage for the small pre-school child listening in awe to the scratchy voice on the first National Broadcast of a President to the intimate, person-to-person services offered by C-Span.

I think it is significant that most people who do call C-Span begin their conversation by saying they watch C-Span non-stop and consider it to be one of the greatest things ever to happen in this country.

This station has turned a government of over two hundred million citizens into a Town Hall Meeting.

Long may you (air) wave.