

O-Faw

3 March, 1996

President
C-Span, Inc.
400 North Capitol St., N.W.
Suite 650
Washington, DC 20001

Dear C-Span Chief Executive:

Don't expect this letter to reach you, the chief executive, but it is from a faithful C-Span viewer and an educator since 1950. Thus, I trust that it will be taken seriously even by a "gatekeeping" subordinate. I say that with no disrespect because, even at age 70, I am a public university's program coordinator who is occasionally a "gatekeeper" for my Director. I do not use letterhead because this is personal rather than job-related or employer-related.

Since I have twice been blind for months and a beneficiary of today's technology in eye operations, I certainly appreciate TV in general and C-Span in particular. This being a Presidential election year, I expect to be watching C-Span plenty in the months ahead. Be that as it may, I trust that my concerns related to C-Span programming will be taken seriously. I am not the "call in" type and I see much of C-Span's coverage as taped reruns after work and during weekends.

I may have serious concerns about what members of Congress call "work" but your coverage of that "work" is a valuable public service. I do have serious concerns about your industry's illusive morality, a morality not obvious in customer billed cable programming, but I'm one of your industry's 1,000,000's of captive consumers willing to tolerate the "bad" we don't buy along with the "good" we do buy.

With only South Carolina as a political hot spot this week and since members of Congress have spent most of the past month avoiding work in Washington, I'm a nonjournalist who assumes that, even for C-Span, the past week was a week of "slow news days". You, however, call yourselves "the political network". I'm no Ph.D. in public communications but I do have a doctorate, I'm functionally literate, and I do know the difference between politics and religion in the dictionary. Thus, I admit to being unconvinced that "The Nation of Islam" is a political entity of the political Establishment. Frankly, I do not appreciate your endless hours of free publicity for a private citizen and religious demagogue who meets with anti-American foreign dictators and who utters what used to be treasonous statements before the current era of historical revisionists and First Amendment alchemists.

I can only assume that C-Span's demographics at the decis-

3 MARCH, 1996

ion-making executive level do not reflect America's cultural core. I fully admit to being an descendent of the first immigrant Harlow, Sgt. William Harlow, who was a resident of Plimouth Plantation with only a little American Indian blood in my veins. I believe, however, that both the minorities and the majority have rights and I'm sure that most of your salaries come from majority taxpayers and customers. I had no problems with your "Million Man March" coverage which was, after all, a National Capitol event of historic proportions. One of my associates at Boston university during the 1960's marched with Martin Luther King and I would have done so had it been possible.

I feel certain that you will manage to misread this letter but that's for you to choose and live with. For your information, however, I'm not a Buchanan Republican, I don't belong to the Christian Coalition, and I'm certainly not a closet segregationist. If anyone's a segregationist, it is Louis Farrakhan and others who want to do to America what the French Canadians are trying to do to Canada. Sorry to enlighten the "enlightened" but I've been a Democrat since voting for Truman. Thus, I'll have to do the right thing next Tuesday and vote for "Neither of the above". I don't vote for draft dodgers and I don't vote for convicted criminals but I do vote.

I don't expect the "instant experts" and "overnight authorities" of the TV cable industry to consider this customer's letter worthy of routing to your chief executive's "in-basket". That doesn't bother me. I feel better now that the letter is done. Fortunately, there are now many cable channels to save us from your operation's preoccupation with minority events coverage at the expense of really important Congressional happenings during House and Senate sessions we'd appreciate seeing via tape delay during evening hours. There must be other activities at least as important as D'Amato's portrayal of the late Senator McCarthy. I'd be surprised if there is an honest politician in the State of Little Rock High School but talk about "the pot calling the kettle black"!

Thank you for your time and courtesy.

Sincerely,

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