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C-SPAN

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Washington, D. C. 20001

Hi everyone!

Writing fan letters isn't something I normally do, but after yesterday's Inside C-SPAN I just couldn't resist. Thanks for being there and providing the public with both sides of the political scene. This may not be the best statement to make to a cable industry supported network, but after 8 years of trying to convince 4 successive cable companies to provide C-SPAN full time we gave up and put in a satellite. The last straw was being told by the latest programming director that there wasn't enough interest in C-SPAN to warrant moving it from a very full public access channel--even during the budget debate. Needless to say, even with 200 channels to watch, C-SPAN I and II are our favorites.

The one program we enjoy most is Friday morning's Journalist Roundtable. We don't have local access to a lot of publications referred to on the program, had never even heard of some of them; but thanks to the addresses you provide we now subscribe to some.

Since it's nearly impossible to reach you on the phone, I'd like to take this opportunity to put in my two cents worth. I think a lot of your guests are out of touch the feelings of the American voter. I keep hearing about how uninformed and apathetic we are, now I'm hearing that we won't remember this fall's congressional scandals come next November. I agree that a lot of voters are uninformed--they are tired of listening to rhetoric that has nothing to do with real life and shut it off. I don't think apathy is the correct term for low voter turn out. I believe that not voting at all is a form of voter revolt for people who feel they have no real choice. Perhaps a choice of "none of the above" on ballots would help. The voter turn out this spring for the city-county elections was only about 20%. The turnout for Tuesday's elections on 13 state constitutional amendments and 16 city charter amendments was nearly double that. I'm not saying 40% is good enough, but it certainly surprised everyone.

I don't believe voters are going to be very forgiving or forgetful during the next year, there is just too much discontent with government from the school districts up to the federal. Let me share with you the atmosphere in this backwater part of Texas. Last spring we threw out the rascals in city and county government over tax and spend issues. The new county commissioners wanted to increase taxes 50% but settled for 40%+ and are now facing a tax roll back election as we can't do much else just yet. The new mayor and city council increased taxes too, and petitions for a recall election on the mayor and half the council will be circulated before the end of the year.

Ronald Coleman, who represents the 16th Congressional District of Texas, is in trouble at home even with his own party. It looks like there will be 3 or 4 other candidates for his seat in the Democrat primary alone. Mr. Coleman did not support President Bush on the Gulf War despite the fact that El Paso is proud to be the home of the Patriot and the 3rd Cav as well as a large number of retired military. Mr. Coleman says he didn't bounce those checks, it was a bank error; and he isn't saying much at all about the \$60,000.00 loan a local developer allegedly paid off for him. I hear that Mr. Coleman has done very little to promote El Paso as the sight for the Mexican free trade conference. In short, he doesn't seem to be very representative of his district at all. I don't think the loyal opposition will let us forget the shortcomings of our federal or local representatives during the next year.

The one thing I would most like to see covered more by C-SPAN, and the rest of the networks and print media, is the power of committee chairmen in general and of the Rules Committee in particular. Too many people seem to believe the office of the president is all powerful and that if legislation isn't initiated it's because the president isn't interested.

The movement toward a Constitutional Convention is also a subject I would like to see covered. It is my understanding that thirtysome states have already taken steps in that direction--what states? How many more are needed? What would the agenda be and how do you go about having a Constitutional Convention?

I think the pent up frustration of a continuous busy signal is completely gone. Thank you for being there to inform and listed to John Q. Public.

A C-SPAN Junky,

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