

C-SPAN

ALEX VA 22304

Mr. Brian Lamb -
444 Capitol Street N.W.,
Washington DC-20001

March 11, 1993

Subject: WOOLING THE PRESS

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Dear Mr. Lamb:

It has become quite obvious to me, that Brian Lamb and Susan Swain, and the rest of the crew at C-Span, have become the paint-men for the Clinton administration, and are engaged in a strategy that would promote their policies, with the most immediate goal of gaining support for the Clinton programs.

C-Span's massaging of the administration's critics is virtually non-stop. In the March 8th special program, lasting nearly 2½ hours, the object was to woo the Press.

There is an intimacy between C-Span's programming and the Clintonites, that we have not seen before. What ever happened to the fair and unbiased attitude of C-Span of the past? — It does no longer exist! They have become highly political, and contemptuous of anyone opposing any of the Clinton programs.

In the Monday special session on the Media, Brian Lamb was literally twisting the journalists arms, to get them to report favorably on the administration.

It was obvious that Brian Lamb's job was to smooth-over the tension that has crept up between the Press and the White House. The Clinton team are now concerned that the period of good will between these two forces, has been short lived. He needs the total cooperation of the entire Media to promote his program.

So, the White House used their only too-willing servant, C-SPAN, to reach out to the journalists.

But, with all the attention now lavished on key media people and correspondents, some like Bill Plant of CBS, Mrs. Liasson of NPR, and Mr. Leudorf of the Dallas Morning News, the three journalists invited to sit on this special C-Span panel, have actually felt snubbed.

It was Susan's job to lead-in, with special profiles, flash-backs, call-in questions - an effective smoke screen to cover up the real purpose of this session.

Then half way through, Brian Lamb, the master, took over. He was personally interviewing Bill Plant, Mr Leusdorf, and Kara Laissan.

After courteous give-and-take, Brian Lamb then ^{exploded the} lead question: "How would you like it if someone asked you 'what right do you reporters have to mess up Clinton's presidency?' The three reporters looked at each other incredulously.

They were even more surprised over the next question coming from Brian Lamb: "Now, after you have filed a negative report, in which you have STUNG the presidency, what do you do next? All three journalists were flabbergasted. STUNG? they looked at each other with raised eyebrows.

The next surprise was another question from Mr. Lamb: "What if the White House asked the Press: 'what do you want me to do?' Mr. Plant shut back: "I would never be put in that position."

Mr Plant had been very critical of the administration, complaining about the endless string of stories that continued

to stream out of the White House - carefully controlled - "they turn it on, and they turn it off," he said.

Then it was Susan Swain's turn, and she had Stephen Hess from the Brookings Institution as her guest.

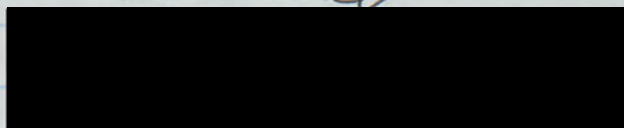
She asked Mr. Hess: "Would the fact that the president invited four leading anchors to lunch in the White House, have any effect on the way they would be reporting on the president and his programs in the future?"

"Are you asking me if a modern presidency can rise and fall on the stories reported in the Press? - is that what you mean," Mr. Hess asked.

"Well, they always say they will have open access to the Press, but there is nothing new under the sun. Basically, the White House is SHOUTING the good news, and WISPERING the bad news," said Mr. Hess.

In my view, Brian Lamb's attempt to win-over the journalists, was a TOTAL FLOP - all it accomplished was to lay bare his own ambitions. Unfortunately, he has become a consummate politician.

Sincerely,



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the raker

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