

July 16, 1996

Ms. Connie Brod
C-SPAN Networks
400 N. Capital St., N.W. #650
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Ms. Brod and C-SPAN,

After this morning's Washington Journal I felt so disgruntled and unhappy with your decision about your phone lines, Dole, Clinton, and other, that I'm compelled to write again on the matter.

You, Ms. Brod, claim the calls to C-SPAN were more frequently from Conservatives, so in the interest of something you call "fairness", the idea for the phone line change is being tried out.

I have always felt that the random calling policy has always been a forum for all points of view. Rather than creating "fairness", you have now restricted all points of view by forcing

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callers to choose between the two major party candidates, or something called "other", which can be ignored by the C-SPAN call monitoring if it chooses. Therefore, if one wants to speak, although not be forced to make a choice for Dole, Clinton, or other, he is being left out.

I very much prefer the kind of "fairness" which C-SPAN has always practiced in the past. Perhaps the larger percentage of callers have been conservative, but then perhaps that accurately reflects the leanings of the country as a whole among "the people." Such a fact may be far more important in that context than to assure that there be an equality of liberal voices who are a minority.

"Other" is a real minority, but is growing. Your restrictions relegate "other" to something far less credible and important than the two major parties.

Further, you typically have what

- you consider a "fair" balance when you have a guest table with a Democrat and a Republican, as if that is all there is. Rather than promoting fairness you are encouraging the idea that Democrats and Republicans are the only real serious choices.

If you insist on having phone lines labelled Dole, Clinton, and "other", then you ought to seat an "other" at the guest table along with the representatives of a very restricted and monopolistic two party non-choice.

Although you certainly are the only network which allows Americans to hear voices outside the two party monopoly, you seem to be over-reacting to caller criticisms of "balance" and "fairness" which automatically excludes other ideas, opinions, and ^{political} ~~political~~ hopefuls.

Open, random, and free calls are the best ways of assuring a diversity of all ideas.

Sincerely,

