

Modesto, Ca. 95350

4/18/84

I Watch C-Span Because...

Of a commitment I made over forty years ago when I cast my first vote in a National election when I was a senior at the University of California in Berkeley: a pledge to assume my personal responsibility as a citizen to keep informed of political, economic, and social problems and issues.

Of a commitment I made several years later when I began my career as a high school civics teacher: a responsibility to teach my students how to obtain information from print and electronic media on political, economic, and social issues and in handling this information, determining what appears to be authentic evidence, and in drawing conclusions.

And of a commitment I made thirty years later when I retired: to continue as a senior citizen to keep informed of what was happening in the American political process. It was then that I joined the League of Women Voters, became involved in our community government, and discovered C-Span.

My day begins at 6:00 a.m. with the Call-In program on C-Span which focuses on what is in the headlines of some of the daily newspapers throughout the country. I have found C-Span's coverage of some of our leading daily newspapers, its interviews of editors, journalists, columnists very interesting. This has given me more insight of how decisions are made in selecting what is to be on the front page, left out, or run on the editorial page. I am always very impressed with the level headed and professional manner of the entire C-Span staff in conducting the interviews and responding to those who call in. No one is put down and I am amazed at how diverse the people are who call in: in age, political point of view, employment, etc. And now and then, someone from my hometown, Modesto, calls in.

I try to plan my morning so that I can hear the proceedings of the House of Representatives when it is in session. There before my eyes are the party leaders, the rules and regulations, and the whole drama of the Representatives on the floor of Congress. After watching what has gone on in Congress, I find I am often ahead of the evening news when Congressional action is reported and have a much better understanding than that I would have gained by just listening to the evening news.

I especially find stimulating the Congressional hearings that are televised over C-Span. Presiding hearings are open to the public, but I never expect to attend one personally. However, I feel that I have been there after seeing the process on C-Span. Several times I have observed the National League of Women Voters President, Dorothy Ridings, testify.

There are so many other reasons why I watch C-Span; to name a few:

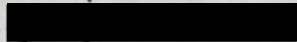
1. The meetings of the National Press Club
2. The interviews of Congress members
3. The televised programs on the caucuses - These were very enlightening. It is a complex process and one to see in order to understand.
4. Sessions of the governor's conferences and of other segments of the American political process

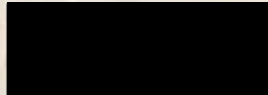
C-Span is one of the best things that has happened to me since I retired. I have several television sets so I can work in various parts of my home and not miss C-Span programs. Cablecom, which has the franchise in Modesto, moves away from C-Span at 3:00 a.m., which is a disappointment to me. I am hoping for two things in the future: C-Span coverage of the Senate and expansion of C-Span coverage in Modesto.

Sincerely,



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