

September 3, 1992

Mr. Brian Lamb
C-Span Network
400 N. Capitol Street, N. W.,
Suite 650
Wash, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

I have been an attentive C-Span viewer for many years, and I don't recall any guest ever deliberately and maliciously giving false information - until September 1st.

I viewed only a small segment of the show, but a "so-called" author whose book allegedly focuses on fraud and waste in government, delivered a stinging attack on the military retirement system, and deliberately gave false and intentionally misleading information. Unfortunately, I do not have the gentleman's name; however, I believe I have given you enough data for you to identify him.


He gave one example of a colonel retiring with 30 years service, and receiving 75% of pay, along with free health care, etc. What he failed to tell your viewing audience was the truth. Only one officer in three is ever promoted to the grade of Colonel - and less than 10% stay on board for 30 years, for a variety of reasons. The period of years that officers and enlisted personnel may remain on active duty is governed by law, and is restricted according to age and grade attained. Only those who attain the highest enlisted grade (E-9) can remain on active duty for a full 30 year. Enlisted personnel must retire at age 55, regardless of grade, and officers must go at 60. That is the law! Since there is a federal ceiling on the number of enlisted personnel that may occupy the top two grades; 02% for E-8, and 01% for E-9, the number who retire with 75% pay is miniscule. In the commissioned grades, those who achieve the grade of colonel are, in all cases, well educated and multi-skilled. Those who are not promoted to star rank by their 23 or 24 year, and that is the vast majority, will retire because promotion opportunities dwindle sharply beyond that point. Also, such skills generally command more lucrative pay in the private sector. As for health care, I can tell you that military health care, particularly for retirees, is absolutely the worst anywhere. I can assure you that people on welfare receive significantly higher quality medical care than do military retirees. Health care is available to us on a "space available" basis, and often, space is **not** available, and when it is, care, attention, and medication is deliberately lacking. Many who are authorized this level of "free" care have chosen to enroll in a private health care plan at their own expense. My wife, often frustrated by the poor quality of care, administered by those **who don't care**, now has private health insurance. I will soon follow her example.

I realize that C-Span is not responsible for the opinions and views expressed by guests; however, I feel strongly that C-Span most assuredly is responsible for their credibility. My hope is that you will advise your viewers accordingly, and forward a copy of this letter to your

untutored "guest." If the benefits of a military life are so great, how come more haven't taken advantage of it? Most have the opportunity, but few would spend most of their productive lives living out of suitcases, and bouncing all over the world. Now that the cold war is over, and the nuclear sword no longer hangs above our collective heads, those critics step forward to crucify the military retirement system as too lucrative and too expensive; those critics who either didn't - or wouldn't serve! Some love their country and want to serve; others just want to write and find fault with those who did!

Thanks for taking the time and permitting me this opportunity to "sound off."

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area of the letter.

San Antonio, Texas 78219