

To: C-SPAN Host and Guests
From: [REDACTED]
Re: All Subjects

Greetings to All;

I love to get up at 4 am and watch, and listen to the parade of "Experts" that appear on your programs. C-SPAN does a good job of presenting differing ideas for the viewers to consider. All guests are well dressed, well educated, and well fed.

But there are several little things that puzzles me. When you talk about politics, you have real politicians there to talk to. When you talk about the Press, you have real reporters there to talk with. What I am getting at is this. You always have people there who talk about what they do. They are experts. But you never have a real "poor person" as a host.

I listen to these experts talk about what it is to be poor. Some times we are described as lazy or dumb, and the cure is get a job and go to college.

Sometimes, we are described as lost and helpless souls that need to be taken care of.

Well guess what. I am a poor person. I barely graduated from High School, and have no college. My mother raised 9 kids. She was a waitress and received Welfare checks to help pay for our up-bringing. I remember going to school without the benefit of breakfast to quite my stomach. I remember being teased by others because of my ragged clothes, bad hair cuts and because I was poor. Our house, which was taken because of the taxes which couldn't be paid, was a beat up, old, rundown 3 bedroom, one bath place that my friends made fun of.

After I left home, and was on my own, I started working. Dishwasher, gas station attendant, stockboy, cutting lawns and planting flowers and trees, working in tire shops and auto repair shops, these are the kinds of jobs that I worked at. They all start you at the minimum wage. So I stayed a stranger to money. ALL OF IT GOES TO PAY THE BILLS.

Add a wife and children and poverty is all people like us ever know.
Because.....

J-WJ

Our labor wears the body down, and there is no money for vacations and other luxuries like a car that doesn't break down every week. The small amount of money that doesn't go to the rent, electric company, the phone company, the water company, the food store and the clothing stores is spent on things like tires and parts for the car that takes us to these wonderful jobs. Yes, I am poor. I am an expert on poverty.

I have been offered ways out of poverty. Crime is an easy way out of poverty. But my mother ruined that option for me by teaching us that we should love our fellow man, not do him harm.

I have also been offered management types of jobs. All I had to do was cut my hair, dress as instructed and I could leave all the poverty behind. I prefer the freedom to be myself. That is the choice I made, and blame no one else for my condition.

My yearly salary has been as low as \$750. I didn't like dishwashing. So I hitch-hiked around the country, living off of the generosity of those who cared. That too is a story, but not right now.

Up until 8 years ago, my maximum pay at any job was \$7.50 per hour. With overtime, my largest yearly income was \$17,500. After taxes, and paying the usual bills, I was broke.

Now, something happened 8 years ago that changed me forever. But that is for later discussions. But let's just say that opportunity forced itself on me, and gave me another point of view.

My point is, that I hear, forgive the expression, the rich and powerful- that's you guys- talk about us poor folks like we don't know what we are doing. We are dumb, so we should get more schooling. We are lazy, so we should get more jobs. Or we are helpless, so we should hand ourselves over to your wisdom, and let you handle things.

I still have my long hair, and still hang out with poor people. I am 43 years old. I still have no college education, and my mother still loves me. Every once in a while, the Police will try to harass me, but they have learned that it is best to stay away from me.

I could clear all of this up and lead you to the answers to the questions that you might have, but are you worth my effort?

I have left a lot of my employers richer than I found them. I have never worked for anyone who could have survived without us poor people doing the leg work. Money doesn't build a thing without the hands of experienced workers, and we poor workers have to make up for the lack of planning on the part of our employers. The parts must be modified, the tools must be repaired, the boxes must be shipped to the right places. The dishes must be cleaned. The toilets and floors must be cleaned, or all the people stay away, get sick or injured.

Look, I know you can't find an Expert Poor Person to debate these professionals on your network. We can't afford to call in and wait for a half-hour on hold, only to be cut off before a point can be made. We can't afford to pay a lobbyist to speak for us. And, we can't afford to stay home and watch C-SPAN all day like most of your conservative callers do. We have to do the real work while the boss is in San Francisco or Washington DC at a seminar on productivity, or cost cutting, or whatever.

I want you to know that groups like the Eagle Forum and people like Bill Clinton do not know or speak for the poor. They speak for their own interest, and they do not speak for us.

For your information, because of a simple twist of fate, I am forced to make \$52,000+ a year. But I'm still broke at the end of the month. How do I do it? That too, is another story.

Thanks for your time,
Peace to you

[REDACTED] Susanville, Calif. 96130 tele-fax [REDACTED]