



Tell the Truth! 2004

Media Reality ✓ Check

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Vol. 8, No. 26
www.mrc.org

Expert Documentation of the Latest Liberal Media Bias ☛ Friday, July 30, 2004

Democratic Convention, Day 4: On ABC, CBS and NBC, No Liberal Labels For Kerry's Proposals

TV Networks Applaud John Kerry's Speech

To document the heights (or depths) of liberal media bias during the week of the Democratic convention in Boston, the Media Research Center staff is preparing twice-daily *CyberAlerts*. For more detail, come to our Web site at www.mrc.org. The following items are a sampling of the latest findings of notable convention media coverage:

■ **ABC Loved It.** ABC's reporters and anchors all seemed to admire John Kerry's Thursday night convention speech. Peter Jennings insisted "this has to qualify as a good finish," while George Stephanopoulos said it was a "blistering attack" that will be "tough for the Republicans to respond to." Reporter Dan Harris passed along how he watched a Kerry speech writer during the speech: "The look on his face, rhapsody throughout."

■ **CBS Loved It.** Dan Rather's reaction: "John Kerry working himself into a sweat...an almost literal thunder inside the hall, shaking the Fleet Center in a way that it seldom shakes....These Democrats...united in a way the Democratic Party has not been for about half a century." Bob Schieffer called it "the best speech I have ever heard John Kerry make....This was a very deft critique of policy."

■ **NBC Loved It.** Tom Brokaw said the "strong speech" showed "John Kerry demonstrating what has been known about him in his political career — that he gets stronger as the campaign goes on." Tim Russert saw a Kerry who "stood before his party and said I am tough enough to go toe-to-toe with George Bush and I have the passion on the issues that really matter to you."

Worst of the Day: Pitts Swoons, Again

"It was four years ago during the Democratic convention, not far from where we stand tonight, that John Kerry stood near his father on his deathbed. Earlier, as the family was preparing to leave John Kerry's home in Boston, I'm told he whispered to his sister, 'remember the words of our mother on her deathbed when she said, 'John,' knowing he would run for President some day, 'remember, John, integrity, that's what matters.' Tonight, John Kerry tried to show that integrity."
— Reporter Byron Pitts following Kerry's speech during CBS live convention coverage, July 29.

■ **More Love.** *Time's* Joe Klein, appearing on CNN, said when he saw Kerry walk into the hall, "I just knew at that point that he's going to nail this, and he did. I have never seen the man speak so well." On MSNBC, *Newsweek's* Howard Fineman on Kerry: "He sang, 'My bravery, my service, will be for the country now.' There hasn't been a Democratic convention like this with a speech like that."

■ **Byron Pitts, Kerry's Best Spinner.** The CBS News reporter assigned to scrutinize John Kerry spent most of the convention pleading his case. Before the speech, Pitts repeated fawning spin about how "inside his left jacket pocket are...the Vietnam dog tags he wore in Vietnam, still wrapped in the black gaffers tape he used in Vietnam to keep those dog tags quiet as he went on patrol." After the speech, Pitts resumed his sycophantic attempt to humanize the candidate. (See box.)

■ **Lowering the Bar.** On Thursday's network morning shows, reporters aided the Kerry campaign's effort to lower expectations for the evening speech. ABC's Claire Shipman worried that the candidate had not spent enough time rehearsing, reminding viewers, "he does not have a reputation as a charismatic speaker."

■ **"Band of Brothers."** Before Kerry spoke, CNN noted how some Vietnam vets opposed Kerry, but ABC, CBS and NBC skipped that pesky detail as they touted Kerry's "Band of Brothers" spin. Full details, plus more at www.mrc.org.

— Tim Graham, Brent Baker, and Rich Noyes

Read the Media Research Center's complete Conventions 2004 analysis at www.mrc.org.
To schedule an interview with an MRC spokesman, please contact Katie Wright at (703) 683-5004