



Campaign 2000

Media Reality ✓ Check

Expert Documentation of the Latest Liberal Media Bias ☆ Tuesday, September 5, 2000

Press Contact:
Katie Wright
(703) 683-5004
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Criticized New York Times Reporter Sought to Promote Ted Kennedy, Demote Newt Gingrich

Bush Is Right: Clymer Is a Liberal Jerk

ABC and NBC led off with the big news last night that an open microphone caught George W. Bush telling Dick Cheney that *New York Times* reporter Adam Clymer was a "major league a-hole." All three networks returned to the subject this morning. *Newsweek's* Howard Fineman announced on NBC's *Today* "there goes the newsroom vote." On CBS, Bryant Gumbel declared "Bush may have taken yet another step backwards by sticking his foot in his mouth with a vulgar comment." This from the man recently caught calling a conservative a "f---ing idiot."

Network stars used the Clymer story to tweak Bush's aspiration to "change the tone" of the campaign, even if it was a private comment. But was Bush right on Clymer? "His coverage has been fair and accurate," said *Times* national editor Andrew Rosenthal. "His work is both fair and accurate," insisted *Times* Executive Editor Joe Lelyveld. They would be wrong.

■ On August 29, on the liberal-leaning Web site *slate.com* (as well as his own site, *kausfiles.com*), Mickey Kaus called Clymer's latest ad critique "heavily biased against Bush...Ad-checking boxes that are as biased as this one are rare." Kaus also knocked an earlier Clymer piece on Bush's health record in Texas: "He seems so convinced that all civilized men would agree with him that he doesn't really bother to hide his viewpoint, which may be why his language is jarringly self-confident and strident. ('Texas has had one of the nation's worst public health records for decades....But since George W. Bush became governor in 1995, he has not made health a priority...')."

■ Last year, *Time* magazine ran an excerpt of Clymer's florid biography of his hero, Sen. Ted Kennedy. In the excerpt, Clymer proclaimed Kennedy's role in the death at Chappaquiddick was far outmatched by his compassionate record: "Yet his achievements as a Senator have towered

over his time, changing the lives of far more Americans than remember the name Mary Jo Kopechne....He deserves recognition not just as the leading Senator of his time but also as one of the greats in the history of this singular institution, wise in its workings, especially its demand that a Senator be more than partisan to accomplish much."

■ Clymer also sounded partisan comparing presidential scandals on in this October 15, 1997 news story: "President Nixon was investigated for obstruction of justice. President Reagan was investigated for not telling investigators what he

knew of the Iran-Contra scandal. President Clinton is being investigated for making telephone calls from the wrong room in the White House."

■ Clymer was the reporter who used an illegally recorded cell-phone leak from Rep. Jim McDermott (D-Wash.) to try to weaken a shaky Speaker Newt Gingrich on January 10, 1997. Clymer groused in a story six days

later: "Last weekend the Democrats effectively failed to make their case that the taped conversation, whatever its ancestry, showed that Mr. Gingrich had broken his promises to the ethics committee."

In 1997 (see box), *The Weekly Standard* noted Clymer "is known as one of the more sour members of the media." They joked of the Capitol Police: "A generalized crackdown on reporters using profanities might seriously deplete the Capitol Hill press corps." — *Tim Graham*

Who's The Hypocrite on Civility?

"I'm disappointed in the Governor's language."
— Adam Clymer in an AP story this morning.

"Sgt. Dan Nichols, Capitol Police spokesman, says Mr. Clymer became 'belligerent' Thursday and unleashed profanities at an officer who denied him access to a roped off area off the Senate floor. Mr. Clymer says he doesn't recall using nasty language." — *Washington Times* reporter John McCaslin, May 1, 1997.

L. Brent Bozell III, Publisher; Brent Baker, Tim Graham, Editors; Jessica Anderson, Brian Boyd, Geoffrey Dickens, Ted King, Paul Smith, Brad Wilmouth, Media Analysts; Kristina Sewell, Research Associate; Liz Swasey, Director of Communications. For the most complete campaign analysis, see the *CyberAlert* at www.mrc.org