

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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(202) 626-4863  
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(202) 626-7975

**C-SPAN'S ELECTION '92 COVERAGE:  
THE PRIMARY SOURCE FOR THE ISSUES, THE CANDIDATES  
AND THE PROCESS**

**Cameras in High Gear As Campaign Trail is Blazed in New Hampshire**

Washington, D.C., February 7, 1992 -- The race for the presidency is now well underway, and C-SPAN is taking the lead with substantive coverage of the candidates and issues during the early weeks of Primary season.

C-SPAN will produce a minimum of 1200 hours of election programming over the course of the campaign.

In addition, C-SPAN's Education, Promotion and Marketing areas have introduced products and initiatives which form a comprehensive approach to presenting program content and the intricacies of the political process.

"We look at the election year as our Olympics," said Susan Swain, Senior Vice President, C-SPAN. "Politics is our niche. It makes sense for us to emphasize our strengths in an era when other television networks are cutting back on their campaign coverage."

**C-SPAN's Election '92 Coverage includes:**

- \* **"Road to the White House":** A ninety minute twice-weekly series presenting the latest activity from the campaign trail. **On Fridays at 5:00 PM (ET)/2:00 PM (PT) and Sundays at 9:30 PM (ET)/6:30 PM (PT)**, C-SPAN viewers get a "video verite" look at the candidates, the issues and the process with day-in-the-life profiles of the candidates as they reach out to local voters nationwide, all speeches shown in their entirety, and behind the scenes interviews with campaign managers and media strategists. **"Road to the White House"** also regularly casts a comparative eye at campaign commercials as they roll out in different states; televising ads side-by-side for viewers to contrast campaign messages.

(MORE)



## C-SPAN ELECTION COVERAGE--2

- \* **"Campaign Call-In":** Every Monday night at 6:30 PM (ET) until the general election, C-SPAN uses its signature Live Viewer Call-In format to give viewers direct access to the candidates and campaign newsmakers. Either from the studios in Washington, or on location from the campaign trail, viewers can comment on events as they unfold. As always, C-SPAN will continue regular Live Viewer Call-In programming Monday-Friday at 8:00 AM (ET) and 6:30 PM (ET); and phone lines will be opened following national debates and Primary elections.
  
- \* **Candidate Press Conferences, Campaign Events and Stump Speeches:** C-SPAN's election coverage is shown with no break-aways for commercials, commentary, or editorializing of any kind. C-SPAN re-airs major events in prime time and on the weekend to give more viewers access to the presidential campaign.
  
- \* **Exclusive Look at Media Coverage:** Following the media's coverage of the election is part of C-SPAN's commitment to showing the process of campaigning. Simulcasting local newscasts shows the national audience what Primary state voters are seeing and being affected by. Local radio talk shows and editorial meetings at national news publications will also be televised as windows to the formation of public opinion.
  
- \* **Dark Horse Candidates, Libertarians and Other Third Party Voices:** C-SPAN's specialized programming niche makes more time available for coverage of political voices rarely heard on other television networks. C-SPAN covers campaign events from across the American political spectrum to provide the widest perspective possible on all facets of the election.
  
- \* **The Iowa Caucus and the New Hampshire Primary:** C-SPAN's extensive coverage of the New Hampshire Primary is already in full swing. Candidates wearing wireless microphones are televised in real-time at a myriad of grass-roots events. C-SPAN's "video verite" approach gives viewers a more extensive and personal look at the candidates. Nightly newscasts from WMUR-TV in Manchester, NH round-out coverage of the daily campaign activities. From Iowa comes live coverage of an Iowa Caucus, special Call-In programs and candidate speeches.

(MORE)



## C-SPAN ELECTION COVERAGE -- 3

- \* **Gavel-to-Gavel Coverage of the Party Platform Hearings:** C-SPAN provides extensive coverage of the Party Platform Hearings, where construction of the presidential nominee's running platform is hammered out.
- \* **Live Coverage of the 1992 Democratic and Republican National Conventions:** C-SPAN is the only television network to provide uninterrupted gavel-to-gavel coverage of the 1992 national party conventions. C-SPAN's comprehensive coverage includes the network's signature Live Viewer Call-In programs on-location in Houston and New York, giving viewers a national forum to express their views on the candidates.
- \* **Special Coverage Leading Up to the General Election:** Throughout the fall, live coverage of the debates, speeches and campaign events leading up to the November 3rd election.

### Supplemental Materials

- \* **Education:** C-SPAN's Educational Services Department, which oversees the 14,000 member C-SPAN in the Classroom service, will aid high-school and university teachers in taking advantage of C-SPAN's "free-use" copyright policy for all Election '92 programming. Throughout the election year, C-SPAN's specially produced weekly "Short Subject" program will include topics such as: election campaigns, Primaries, campaign finance, and political conventions.
- \* **On-Air:** New on-air promotions have been designed to alert viewers to programming and to involve them in it. Preceding each edition of "**Road to the White House**" is "Speaker's Platform"; a mini Hyde Park soap box where people on-the-street get a chance to state their views on the issues and the candidates. Most recently, C-SPAN asked "Speaker's Platform" participants to finish the sentence, "If I were elected President of the United States . . ."
- \* **Publications:** From C-SPAN's Publications Department come two new supplements to Election '92 viewing. "Race to the Nomination", written for C-SPAN by the editors of "Congressional Quarterly" is a state-by-state viewers' guide to the presidential nomination process as well as to C-SPAN's election coverage. "America Goes to the Polls", a black and white photo-essay calendar, spans a century of elections in captioned moments captured by the camera lens.

TO: RAYNE  
FROM: VIRGINIA  
DATE: 2/10/92  
RE: TOP 20 NP

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I called all the publications on our list. Here's lo que paso:

1. The following received the release when first faxed:

AP  
Denver Post  
Des Moines Register  
Houston Chronicle  
Houston Post  
Manchester Union Leader  
NY Daily News  
NY Post  
Rocky Mountain News  
Washington Times

2. I faxed again to the following publications, sometimes adding addressees, as noted below:

Boston Globe (re-faxed to Christine Chinlund, editor, national desk)  
Dallas Morning News (Ed Dufner, political desk)  
LA Times (Roger Smith, political editor)  
Philadelphia Inquirer (Dick Polman, covers primaries)  
San Francisco Chronicle (National editor Jack Briebart not interested, suggested Mike Palmer at TV desk. Also faxed to Mark Bigelow at wire desk)  
San Francisco Examiner (re-faxed and received)  
USA Today (to Bob Minzesheimer)  
Wall Street Journal (re-faxed to Peter Schenker)

3. Unconfirmed:

Chicago Tribune (best time to reach National Desk Editor Judy Peres is 12:00 pm ET)  
Los Angeles Daily News (problems with the lines in the 881 area code)



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Most updated version  
for E'92 file

TO: Linda Heller  
Lisa Kerr cc Mo  
Kathy Murphy  
Susan Swain  
Nikki Vanasse

FROM: Rayne Pollack RBP

RE: Election '92 Promotion Messages

DATE: 11/4/91

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Here at long last is the re-cap memo I've been promising. It's paraphrased from a conversation Susan Swain had with National Journal reporter Carol Matlack. (The resulting article will be distributed in this week's press clip router.) The questions and answers in their discussion seemed to frame the overall Election '92 coverage messages we all need to get out to our various audiences.

1. Q. What makes your election coverage different?

A. First, C-SPAN was there before anyone else. Our commitment to showing as much of the process as possible is evidenced by the fact that we were on the campaign trail at the outset with the first presidential announcement in April by Paul Tsongas. Other networks will jump to coverage of the campaign trail only when the "big name" candidates toss the hat in; we are ahead of the pack to provide a more comprehensive look at the campaigning process.

Secondly, because election coverage is our niche, we have more time than anyone else to be able to put events on in "whole cloth" format. Our gavel-to-gavel format is the antithesis of the soundbite, allowing viewers to see more of the candidates and keep their messages in context.

We also devote more time to other facets of the campaign process than other networks, again in an effort to provide viewers with a comprehensive education. We will look at the media's role in the process (this is part of what we always do) through our journalists roundtable discussions and behind the scenes looks at media organizations. We will air campaign commercials and discuss the strategies behind them.

We not only show more of the candidates, we show more candidates. C-SPAN is the place where parties other than the Republicans and the Democrats have a voice. We air the candidates and views of the Libertarian party, the Green party, and others in an effort to make the picture as complete as possible.



(E'92 Q and A page 2)

2.Q. With CNBC, The Monitor Channel and other news networks proliferating all the time -- does C-SPAN feel a competitive threat?

A. Not at all. We welcome other news services into the television landscape because that just means that there's more information for viewers to get. However, we are not in competition with breaking news networks. We supplement what news networks do, we don't compete with them. Why should we do what others are already doing? After seeing the headlines, people can turn to C-SPAN if they want to see more and see for themselves. C-SPAN will always be the place to come to to see the entire event.

3.Q. Since you only have one studio in Washington how will you be getting coverage from all over the country during primary season?

A. We have our own travelling crews which have already been criss-crossing the country for Road to the White House. We will use our own or hire local crews in New Hampshire, Iowa and California to broaden our base of operations.

5. Q. Is there any new technology you will be using to cover the candidates?

A. During the '88 campaign we introduced wireless mikes on the candidates-- we used them on everyone except George Bush and Jack Kemp. We will be using them again this time around because we feel it really helps to break down the artificial barriers between the viewer and the candidate. After a few minutes, the candidate forgets that the mike is there and starts to relax, allowing the viewer a chance to see more of the real character and less of the script. We can do this because we have time on our side at C-SPAN; with a 24 hour news hole, we can use the video-verite real time approach with the candidates. There is something very compelling about live television presented this way; its the same reason people loved the Thomas-Hill hearings, it was live unscripted television with real people who are vying for real power.

To Recap: What the network as a whole is doing for E'92:

- \* Road to the White House; Fridays at 5, Sundays at 9:30
- \* Live press conferences, fundraisers, stump speeches
- \* Libertarian Convention and coverage of other Third Parties
- \* DNC and RNC annual meetings
- \* the Iowa Caucus, the NH Primary and all the Primaries
- \* Gavel-to-gavel coverage of the Party Platform meetings and the Democratic and Republican conventions
- \* All E'92 programming for C-SPAN in the Classroom
- \* Speakers platforms
- \* New publications for viewers -- including the C-SPAN - CQ guide to the nominating process and photo-essay calendar
- \* The E'92 Primary Source tour across the country



# Bare Bones

**Voters are turned off. A popular President is way ahead in the polls. So the financially strapped television networks, the major source of national political news for most Americans, will keep their campaign coverage at a low volume.**

**BY CAROL MATLACK**



**W**ant to see NBC News coverage of the political party conventions next summer? Tune in to PBS. During most of the prime-time evening hours while the conventions are in session, NBC viewers will watch reruns of such shows as *The Cosby Show* and *Cheers*, while Tom Brokaw and his crew will team up with the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* for live convention coverage over the Public Broadcasting System. NBC won't start broadcasting from the convention halls in New York and Houston until 9:30 or 10 P.M.

It's hard to blame NBC: Political conventions these days are about as spontaneous as the Academy Awards ceremonies. Audience ratings during the 1988 conventions were abysmal; rivals CBS and ABC are trimming their convention coverage, too.

But the NBC-PBS arrangement exemplifies a split personality that seems to be developing in the news media as journalists gear up to cover the 1992 political season.

Although most news-gathering organizations haven't nailed down their plans, it already seems likely that the television broadcast networks, the major source of national political news for most Americans, will keep their political coverage at a pretty low volume. With a popular President facing a late-starting, little-known field of challengers, and with voter disenchantment running high, there doesn't seem to be much appetite for more-extensive coverage—even if the cash-strapped networks could afford to provide it, which is doubtful.

ABC, CBS and NBC have abandoned the traditional practice of assigning a full-time correspondent and crew to each candidate (although that may change when the field of candidates narrows). The networks will spend less on polling, too. And they're already planning to pool their election-night exit polling and vote counting, as they did in 1990. "Everybody is cost-conscious," ABC political director Hal Bruno said.

But political junkies will find plenty to satisfy their appetite elsewhere. Cable

News Network (CNN) and C-SPAN both are planning major expansions of their political coverage, including an unprecedented arrangement in which a private foundation will finance \$3.5 million worth of CNN election programming. PBS and public radio outlets have also announced plans for innovative political shows.

Just as special-interest magazines have eroded the market share of mass-circulation publications and just as the broadcast networks have lost audiences to cable and home video, the country seems to be moving toward niche marketing of presidential politics.

Some see that as a dangerous trend. "There's an almost schizophrenic thing that's developing in the country," *Newsweek* chief political correspondent Howard Fineman said. "We have almost a class of super-citizens who . . . are incredibly well informed [while] most of the country's not paying the slightest bit of attention."

Despite complaints from some Democratic challengers about scant media attention, however, network coverage of the campaign so far doesn't appear unusually meager.

From Jan. 1-Sept. 30 of this year, the three broadcast TV networks aired 106 presidential campaign stories, down from 191 stories during the first nine months of 1987, according to the Center for Media and Public Affairs, a Washington-based research group. But, center director S. Robert Lichter said, the tally for both years would have been about equal if it weren't for the extensive coverage of the Gary Hart-Donna Rice episode in early 1987.

Lichter has noticed, though, that campaign reports this year are more likely to be filed from Washington than in the past. "They're going out in the field less," he said.

The wild card could be CNN, which drew big audiences and gained a new badge of respectability with its reports on the Persian Gulf war earlier this year. CNN "is positioned to play the pivotal role in the '92 campaign," said Edward M. Fouhy, a Washington television pro-



ducer who has worked at ABC, CBS and NBC. "Since [CNN] is not bound to the rigid demands of the 30-minute evening news program, ... the dynamics of television coverage of the campaign will be altered dramatically."

Well, maybe. About a third of U.S. households don't have cable TV. And covering a presidential election is not quite the same as sending a live feed from Baghdad or Tel Aviv. CNN "won't have the only uplink out of Houston," CBS political director Martin Plissner sniffed.

Still, CNN is already well-positioned to serve the political cognoscenti. Most big-city newsrooms now keep a TV set tuned to the cable network. Starting in January, CNN will air a five-days-a-week, half-hour show devoted exclusively to politics, featuring well-known commentators such as *The Washington Post's* David Broder, Ken Bode, the respected former political correspondent for NBC, now works at CNN. So does former *Wall Street Journal* campaign finance sleuth Brooks Jackson. CNN will cover the conventions gavel-to-gavel and will sponsor a New Hampshire presidential primary debate next February with the League of Women Voters of the U.S.

CNN scored a major coup in October when the New York City-based Markle Foundation announced that it would finance \$3.5 million in election-related programming on the cable network. Among other things, CNN is planning a series of reports starting early next year, in which it will track a group of voters throughout the campaign season, exploring the issues that they consider important and their views of the candidates.

"There's this tremendous distance between what people hear discussed as the national priorities, and what they face in their lives," CNN political director Tom Hannon said. "In 1988, I think all of us felt we had an obligation to take voters inside a campaign. But the fact is, the biggest story may not be inside the campaign."

Markle originally had considered giving an even larger grant to PBS, but negotiations faltered because the public network wanted Markle to help underwrite existing shows such as *MacNeill/Lehrer*, while the foundation wanted entirely new programming. Lack of funds also forced PBS to scrap long-standing plans for a "national issues convention," in which a cross section of voters was to meet in Austin, Texas, next January, to evaluate the candidates' views on major issues.

C-SPAN's election budget, which comes from cable TV franchises, has increased by about a third over 1988; its *Road to the White House* show has been



Cable News Network political director Tom Hannon  
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on the air since April, when Paul E. Tsongas became the first declared presidential candidate.

The memory of the 1988 presidential campaign—and Republican media consultant Roger Ailes's pledge that "if you didn't like '88, you're going to hate '92"—still haunts many journalists. "Yes, the candidates had some success in manipulating the media, and that has caused us to take a closer look at how we cover campaigns," NBC political director Bill Wheatley said.

Not everyone buys such self-criticism. "I don't think the press got manipulated," ABC's Bruno said. "We all did stories on what was wrong with the Willie Horton ad. The only one who didn't respond was Dukakis."

News organizations seem torn by conflicting impulses. One is to bear down harder on candidates, refusing to cover their scripted campaign events, laying bare the tactics of their handlers and pressing them to explain how they would address major problems facing the country.

"Select four or five [issues] and day after day make candidates explain their positions in detail," former *New York Times* reporter John Herbers, now a visiting fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, advised reporters in a recent report for Harvard University's Nieman Foundation.

*The Washington Post* plans to make greater use of its beat reporters to write campaign-related stories on such issues as the economy and health care. And political editor Bill Hamilton said the *Post* is planning a major push to explore the causes of Americans' disaffection with politics.

But others are urging the press to "get out of the way," as *Newsweek* media critic Jonathan Alter put it in a recent article. "Candidates are often drowned out by all the punditry," he said.

PBS's *MacNeill/Lehrer* routinely airs candidates' stump speeches, unedited. *Newsweek* has been asking candidates unconventional questions and printing their answers verbatim. (A recent question: "What personal experience shaped your views or had the most impact on your thinking about race?") And for the genuine political addict, there's **C-SPAN**, which simply turns on the camera and follows candidates around for hours on end.

Advertising "truth squads," introduced by many newspapers in 1990, will be back, although some reporters are starting to doubt their effectiveness. Newspapers can't capture the "imagery and feeling" of a television commercial ad, Steve Daley, the *Chicago Tribune's* chief political reporter, said. And journalists often feel obliged to give equally tough treatment to rival candidates' ads—even if one ad stretches the truth far more than the other, he said.

No matter how exciting the horse race becomes, it's unlikely that politics will dominate national news to the degree that it has in the past. The media's ability to cover international events has improved dramatically; politics competes not only against *Cosby* and *Cheers*, but also against other news stories, for limited airtime and column inches.

And even if there isn't another big story breaking, Plissner of CBS said, "I don't know how much campaign coverage the American people really want to watch."



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**C-SPAN'S ELECTION '92 COVERAGE:**  
**THE PRIMARY SOURCE FOR THE ISSUES, THE CANDIDATES**  
**AND THE PROCESS**

**Cameras in High Gear As Campaign Trail is Blazed in New Hampshire**

Washington, D.C., February 7, 1992 -- The race for the presidency is now well underway, and C-SPAN is taking the lead with substantive coverage of the candidates and issues during the early weeks of Primary season.

C-SPAN will produce a minimum of 1200 hours of election programming over the course of the campaign.

In addition, C-SPAN's Education, Promotion and Marketing areas have introduced products and initiatives which form a comprehensive approach to presenting program content and the intricacies of the political process.

"We look at the election year as our Olympics," said Susan Swain, Senior Vice President, C-SPAN. "Politics is our niche. It makes sense for us to emphasize our strengths in an era when other television networks are cutting back on their campaign coverage."

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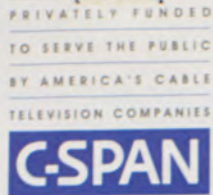
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*leave as was*

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