

You know it wasn't easy for me to decide to come here and talk to a room full of journalists, especially when I knew that a lot of you would have been drinking, and have access to sharp objects. (like knives and forks) I wondered - would I be safe? Is this a time to pack a piece? Then I figured I'd better come up with a title for my speech, you know, like a headline for a story. I had a little trouble doing that, but I thought that you might enjoy hearing about the process. My first thought was to keep it simple, something like,

“I HATE THE NEWS MEDIA”

It's simple, direct, it expresses how I feel. But then I thought, it's not fully accurate, it was somehow incomplete. So then I thought about this title:

“HOW I HATE THE NEWS MEDIA”

But that became a problem too, because it started turning into a poem, and I'm not really into poetry, you know –

HOW DO I HATE THEE? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS . . . .

Then I hit on this title:

“WHEN I HATE THE NEWS MEDIA”

That's it I thought, that says it. That's how I really feel, because I don't always hate the media, it's only sometimes that I hate the media. So tonight I'm going to talk about when it is that the media really bothers me. I should be finished in about three hours.

WHEN DO I HATE THE NEWS MEDIA?

- WHEN YOU DON'T TELL THE WHOLE STORY
- WHEN YOU TAKE WHAT I SAY OUT OF CONTEXT
- WHEN YOU'RE IN A GROUP (KIND OF LIKE NOW), RATHER THAN DOING A ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW
- WHEN YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MY TENDENCY TO ANSWER ANY AND ALL QUESTIONS
- WHEN YOU GO BEYOND REPORTING THE NEWS AND START MAKING THE NEWS
- WHEN YOU AMBUSH ME IN THE MIDDLE OF A BASKETBALL GAME
- WHEN YOU CONFUSE PROFIT AND WHAT'S IMPORTANT (OR WHEN YOU DON'T ADMIT YOU'RE OUT FOR A PROFIT)
- WHEN YOU QUESTION MY SINGING ABILITY
  
- OUR RELATIONSHIP IS A LITTLE LIKE A SHOT GUN MARRIAGE- - WE DIDN'T REALLY ASK FOR EACH OTHER - IT JUST KIND OF HAPPENED, AND WE CAN'T GET OUT OF IT. THE DIFFERENCE IS THIS IS MY FIRST SHOTGUN MARRIAGE -

AND FOR SOME OF YOU THIS IS YOUR FOURTH OR FIFTH. HOW JADED CAN YOU GET AFTER YOUR FOURTH SHOTGUN WEDDING? WHAT WITH FOUR STORMY MARRIAGES, AND YOU LIVING IN A RAT-INFESTED BASEMENT, YOU CAN SEE WHY I THINK THERE OUGHT TO BE TERM LIMITS FOR CAPITOL REPORTERS.

- WATCHDOG ROLE OF THE PRESS (Watch dog, lap-dog and Franklin)
- At its best the news media plays the traditional watchdog role - serving the people by keeping them well-informed, while holding the politicians accountable. More and more often you seem to go with the entertaining story to get good ratings, and you ignore the important stuff, because you figure nobody will watch or read - that's not being a watchdog, that's being a lapdog. The worst of you get a little like my dog Franklin after too much hamburger.
- I know that the media has an important job to do, and any leader in a democracy has got to value the First Amendment - the freedom of the press. I remember President Richard Nixon, and how he was held accountable for his actions by two aggressive reporters. Still, Woodward and Bernstein weren't creating news, they were uncovering a truth that had been buried. Watergate was a cover-up.
- Let's talk a little about my comment linking concealed weapons and the massacre at Littleton High School. I was criticized nationwide for bringing up concealed weapons the day after the tragedy. But what was the FULL story? I didn't bring up concealed weapons. Reporters brought up concealed weapons. They asked me three times to comment on Colorado's concealed weapon law and Littleton High School. The first two times I refused. But the third time I said what I thought.
- That context was not reported. Why didn't you ask me what I thought about Littleton and parental responsibility?
- Maybe that would not have made big headlines. This is what I mean by the difference between reporting the news, and making the news. And then not telling the whole story.

- And then there's the increasing focus on trivial topics, while you often ignore more important things. – At first the news media prided itself in presenting solid information - Then it became info-tainment –
- Here's an example of when the trivial overshadowed the important news - . -when Terry's "retirement" became a big story and knocked out the legislature as the lead story. Now, I am not going to tell you that you can't make a profit; you know I'm a big believer in capitalism. Now what is it I hear from you all the time ? - Keep your public servant life separate from your profitmaking side. Don't tell me you can dish it out but you can't take it. When you select your lead story - how often is it what you think is most important - and how often does the important story left behind? (Kesler - how many times do your important political stories follow trivial lead stories?)
- I know that part of your job is to hold me accountable; but who is holding you accountable?
- I know as a watchdog the media is concerned not only with exposing the wrongdoing of public officials, it must also question apparent wrongdoing. I don't always like that, but I accept it. Even when it's not a terrible wrong – such as when a proposed DNR commissioner went fishing without a license.
- But what about apparent wrongdoing by the media? Who checks that out? Is it unfair to even raise the question of media wrongdoing? I was criticized when I questioned the amazing coincidence of timing when the St. Paul paper just happened to be ready for a story alleging corruption in the university's basketball program on the eve of a major basketball tournament. Who is allowed to question the media? Who holds you accountable? Who dares?

- As a talk show host I came to respect the First Amendment, and I still support it. But I also think the news media in particular has a strong duty to be responsible to public needs, and not just to making a profit. I know I catch heck anytime someone suspects me of putting profit before governing. But what about you? Who gives you heck?
- And as Governor, I have to admit that the First Amendment has become a painful necessity. I've found that there's no such thing as a private life anymore. I know I'm not the first elected official to feel this way about the media.
- Journalists often like to quote one of our founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, who wrote: "were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."
- I should point out that Jefferson wrote that before he was elected President. But when he was president - his attitude changed. It was more like "Isn't there anything we can do about these people?"
- After he left office, Jefferson wrote:  
"I deplore the putrid state into which our newspapers have passed and the malignity, the vulgarity, and mendacious spirit of those who write for them. As vehicles of information and a curb on our functionaries, they have rendered themselves useless . (1814)
- I still support the first amendment, but at the same time I wonder about you sometimes.
- Finally, I would like to know how one gets qualified to write about politics, without ever actually getting elected to office?
- Therefore - Radio – "LUNCH WITH THE GOVERNOR" - unmediated - can't be taken out of context.