

Focus on the Media

By CLIFF KINCAID

'Post' Defends Woodward's Ethics

Katharine and Donald Graham, the chairman and publisher of the *Washington Post*, have defended reporter Bob Woodward for covering up one of Gary Hart's adulterous relationships for over five years.

After the *Miami Herald* exposed Hart's affair with poster girl-model Donna Rice, the *Post* acknowledged that in the 1981-82 period, when Hart was separated from his wife and supposedly living with Woodward, Hart was actually living with another woman. Woodward says he was uncomfortable about this and would have told the truth if someone had asked.

At the *Washington Post* shareholders' meeting on May 15, Katharine Graham defended Woodward's failure to expose Hart at the time by claiming that Woodward was not "covering politics or Gary Hart" and that "Hart was not a candidate." He, of course, became a candidate in 1984 and Woodward and the *Post* still remained silent.

Donald Graham also defended Woodward against reports that he tried to deceive hospital personnel in an effort to get into the room of then-ailing CIA Director William Casey. Apparently, Woodward was trying to collect material for a book he was writing about the CIA.

"Mr. Woodward did nothing unethical," said Graham. "There are things in this newspaper that we publish every day and there are some stories for which we have to wait a few days, and this is one of them."

Katharine Graham claimed that Woodward and Casey had been "friends."