September 15, 2004 CBS Evening News Report

Rather: CBS News, 60 Minutes and this reporter drew fire today over our reports that raised questions about President Bush's military service record, including whether he followed orders and whether he fulfilled his obligations to the National Guard. CBS News Correspondent Wyatt Andrews reports on the latest attack on the 60 Minutes story and the CBS News response.

Wyatt Andrews: Congressional Republicans turned the high heat on CBS News, charging that last week's revelations about Lieutenant George Bush which aired on 60 *Minutes* were based on fake documents and demanding that 60 *Minutes* and Dan Rather retract the story.

Rep. Bennett: It's very clear the documents were forged. They were laid on him and this time he bit.

Wyatt Andrews: Forty members of the House signed this letter accusing the network of deception, asking CBS if the documents are authentic, why won't the network say how it got them?

Rep. Roy Blunt: Well, I think at the very least CBS should characterize the source. It's amazing that they haven't already done that.

Wyatt Andrews: The dispute surrounds memoranda 60 Minutes says came from the personal file of Lieutenant Bush's Air National Guard commander, Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Killian, memos that accuse Mr. Bush of disobeying an order and of using connections to have Killian sugarcoat Mr. Bush's record. However, some experts doubt the authenticity of those memos. Killian's secretary, in an interview for tonight's 60 Minutes, tells Dan Rather she too believes the memos are fake, but accurately reflect Killian's view of Lieutenant Bush.

Marian Carr Knox: I know that I didn't type them. However, the information in those is correct.

Wyatt Andrews: Marian Knox says Colonel Killian liked Mr. Bush but not his attitude.

Marian Carr Knox: Killian was very friendly with Bush, they had fun together. And I think it upset him very much that he was being defied.

Wyatt Andrews: CBS News officials say the memos came from a confidential source and that they are certain the content of the story is true.

Andrew Heyward: We would not have put the report on the air, if we did not believe in every aspect of it.

Wyatt Andrews: But News President Andrew Heyward also says the network will try to resolve what he calls the "unresolved issues."

Andrew Heyward: Enough questions have been raised that we're going to redouble our efforts to answer those questions.

Wyatt Andrews: Some at this network believe the backlash against the 60 Minutes report is pure politics, but that's the critics' point as well. That fake or real, the fact that 60 Minutes got these documents during an election year was no accident. Wyatt Andrews, CBS News, Washington.

Rather: There will be more about this story, including more of the interview with the late Lieutenant Colonel Killian's secretary, tonight on *60 Minutes* at eight, seven Central, here on CBS.