Judge Rules For AP in Libel Suit

U.S. District Court Judge Thomas A. Flannery ruled yesterday in favor of the Associated Press in a libel suit filed against the news service by Bethesda accountant Henry M. Buchanan, a brother of former presidential assistant Patrick Buchanan.

Buchanan claimed he was libeled by an AP report of a U.S. District Court hearing two years ago during which he attempted to keep sealed a deposition he gave in a campaign financing lawsuit.

Judge Flannery found the report of the hearing "accurate and a fair abridgement of those proceedings." He also said even if the report had been false, Buchanan would have been unable to prove to a jury the AP had malice toward him, a requirement in such libel suit.