

## THE MEDIA ARE NOT LIBERAL, AND THEY DO NOT TELL YOU THE TRUTH!

*For the last 30 years, right-wing millionaires have funded and led an organized rout of liberal political expression while convincing us that the media are too liberal. In fact, they've tried to convince us that liberal is a dirty word.*

Once upon a time “liberal” was not a naughty word; it was not a label to be avoided at all costs; in fact, it was a badge of honor. It did not denote cowardice; it was used to describe fighters. Liberals cared about you, your family, your community and your nation.<sup>724</sup> The 20<sup>th</sup> Century even started out with a liberal Republican president, Theodore Roosevelt, and he was followed throughout the century by other liberal presidents, no less effective and no less brave, but all were Democrats.

When Theodore Roosevelt became president in 1901, following the assassination of President McKinley, he brought energy and excitement to the office and led the government and the people towards progressive reforms. He believed that the president should be the “steward of the people,” and to ensure their protection, he greatly expanded the power of the presidency. Roosevelt believed that government should arbitrate between the competing economic forces of business and labor, favoring neither and guaranteeing justice to both. He supported miners in their strike against the coal barons and convinced the owners to accept arbitration.

Roosevelt became known as the “trust buster” as he broke up the great railroad combinations and effectively made use of the Sherman Antitrust Act against businesses, when it had only been used to break up labor unions before. In pursuit of a “Square Deal” for Americans, T.R. succeeded in getting the Pure Food & Drug Act, a meat inspection bill, and an employer’s liability law passed. He was one of the first conservationists, setting aside national forests and parks for public use and enjoyment.

Roosevelt was no coward; he served as the Secretary of Navy in preparing for the war against Spain, and he personally led the charge of his "Rough Riders" up Kettle Hill in the battle for San Juan<sup>725</sup>.

Woodrow Wilson was elected president in 1912 in a three-way race against William Howard Taft, the Republican nominee, and Theodore Roosevelt, running as an independent. Wilson called for a "New Freedom" to energize the economy by reducing tariffs, reorganizing the banking and credit industries, and strengthening and enforcing anti-trust laws.<sup>726</sup>

Breaking with tradition, Wilson appeared personally in Congress and advocated his legislative agenda. He succeeded in pushing through the Underwood Act, which reduced tariffs generally and greatly increased the free list, against the opposition of manufacturing interests; the Federal Reserve Act, which established Federal Reserve Banks and the issuance of Federal Reserve notes and was opposed by banking interests; and the Federal Trade Commission Act, which outlawed unfair trade practices and empowered the Federal Trade Commission to issue "cease and desist" orders to prevent unfair competition. Wilson obtained legislation to outlaw child labor, and achieved an eight-hour workday for railroad workers.<sup>727</sup>

Wilson was no coward, and in 1917, when Germany declared unrestricted submarine warfare against all maritime commerce, including that of the nominally neutral United States, he asked for and Congress granted a declaration of war against Germany. Following the war, Wilson helped establish the League of Nations; however, the opposition of isolationist Republicans, led by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, delayed its Senate ratification as Wilson became gravely ill. The opposition thereafter blocked ratification by adding amendments that essentially nullified the treaty, resulting in its defeat.<sup>728</sup>

Following 12 years of Republican administration, Franklin Roosevelt was elected president in 1932 in the depths of the Great Depression. Thirteen million Americans were unemployed, and virtually every bank was closed. In the first "hundred days" of his administration, Roosevelt proposed, and a Democratic-controlled Congress passed, a broad-based "New

Deal" to assist businesses and agriculture to recover and help the unemployed keep their homes. With the establishment of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to guarantee bank deposits and the Security and Exchange Commission to regulate stock exchanges, a limited degree of recovery was achieved. In 1935, over the objection of business and banking interests, Roosevelt proposed and Congress passed legislation establishing Social Security, increasing taxes on the wealthy and large-scale work relief programs.<sup>729</sup>

This Roosevelt was no coward either. A former secretary of the Navy, he conceived of the Lend Lease Plan to assist England and Russia in holding out against German aggression, and following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he asked for and received a declaration of war against the Axis powers. In cooperation with the Allies, Roosevelt successfully worked until his death to prosecute the war almost until its conclusion.<sup>730</sup>

After Roosevelt's sudden death on April 12, 1945, Harry Truman became president. He, too, was no coward. He had fought in Europe during World War I as an artillery captain, and he was quickly required, as president, to make courageous decisions. The first was his decision to deploy atomic weapons against Japan after the nation refused to surrender. The second was his decision to deploy American forces in support of the United Nations' defense of South Korea after it was invaded by North Korea and later by China. He obtained aid for Greece and Turkey to avoid a Soviet takeover, and he arranged a massive airlift to supply Berlin when it was blockaded by Russian troops. Truman witnessed the signing of the United Nations Charter in June 1945, and he negotiated the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949. Domestically, Truman introduced his own "Fair Deal" to expand Social Security, achieve full employment, establish a permanent Fair Employment Act, and engage in the building of public housing and slum clearance. By executive order, he desegregated the armed forces and he fought to maintain the bargaining power of unions.<sup>731</sup>

Following eight years of the Eisenhower administration, John Kennedy was elected president in 1960, the youngest ever to be elected, and when he died in 1963, he was the youngest to die in

office. Kennedy was no coward. As a naval officer, when his PT boat was rammed and sunk by a Japanese destroyer, he repeatedly swam out in the surrounding dangerous waters to secure the rescue of his crew, despite serious injuries. During the Cuban missile crisis, he faced down Russia, securing the removal of nuclear missiles from the island and eliminating that threat of nuclear blackmail. Thereafter he achieved an agreement with Russia to ban above-ground testing of nuclear weapons.

Although President Kennedy sent measures to Congress to cut taxes to stimulate the economy and to protect civil rights, they were not enacted until after his assassination. Nonetheless, the programs he initiated commenced the longest period of sustained economic expansion since World War II.<sup>732</sup>

Lyndon Johnson succeeded to the presidency in 1963 and quickly moved to obtain passage of Kennedy's tax cut and civil rights plans. Reelected in 1964 by the largest margin in history, Johnson pushed his "Great Society" agenda through a Democrat-controlled Congress. Among the highlights were Medicare, urban renewal, aid to education, voting rights, conservation and the war against poverty. He fulfilled Kennedy's promise to put man on the moon, and he effectively ended hunger in the United States through a food-stamp program.<sup>733</sup>

Johnson was no coward. He fought in World War II and won a Silver Star for bravery, and he carried out the Vietnam War to support the commitments made by the United States, even though his efforts were unsuccessful.<sup>734</sup>

After eight years of Republican administration by Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter was elected in 1976. Carter was a Naval Academy graduate who served on nuclear submarines. During his four years in office, in spite of high inflation and energy costs, eight million new jobs were created, and the budget deficit, as a percentage of the gross national product, was reduced. He commenced deregulation of the trucking and airline industries, expanded the national park system, and created the Department of Education. He was defeated for reelection by Ronald Reagan.<sup>735</sup>

When President Clinton took office in 1994, the national debt had quadrupled over the past 12 years of Republican administration. While the income of America's wealthiest families had increased by 67.3 percent thanks to Reagan's tax cuts for the wealthy, the average middle-class family's income had been reduced by 17 percent. President Clinton discovered that Bush Sr. had left him a government that was running an annual deficit estimated at \$300 billion.

As a matter of fiscal urgency, Clinton managed to obtain a modest increase in the tax rate for the top 1.2 percent of the richest taxpayers. Senator Phil Gramm predicted that with adoption of the increase, "the economy is going to get weaker and not stronger, the deficit four years from today will be higher." What actually happened is that President Clinton presided over eight years of economic expansion, the longest in history. During his term, 22 million new jobs were created, the unemployment rate dropped to 4 percent, the median family income increased by almost \$6,500, the poverty rate decreased, and between 1998 and 2000, the government paid off more than \$360 billion of the national debt.<sup>736</sup>

Although the received wisdom is that Republicans are better at business, which may be true (for many of them seem to be living quite well), they do not appear to be better at running the federal government. Over the past century and using a variety of business measures, we find: (1) Democratic presidencies produced an average return of 12.3 percent on the Standard & Poor's 500 stock index, while Republican presidencies only produced 8 percent; (2) Democratic control over Congress produced stock returns of 10.7 percent, while Republican control only produced 8.7 percent; and (3) Democratic presidencies produced price gains of 13.4 percent on Dow Jones stocks, while Republican ones only produced increases of 8.1 percent.<sup>737</sup>

Overall, on average and by every measure, including economic growth, reduced inflation, increased wages, and lower government spending, Democratic presidents have done a better job of managing the economy than have Republican presidents.<sup>738</sup>

Thus, it appears that in the last century it has largely fallen upon the Democratic presidents to fight the wars, straighten out the economy, defend individual rights, and protect the environment. So, if all this is true, why have the liberals gained such a bad reputation? Why do the Republicans use "liberal" as a dirty name? Why are the Democrats afraid to identify themselves as liberals?

### **The Attack of the Killer Neocons**

The modern political conservative movement may have begun with the *National Review* in the late 1950's and William F. Buckley Jr.'s editorializing about the civil rights movement. He opposed the Voting Rights Act and called for the maintenance of "states' rights" and Southern "civilized standards." In 1961, he stated, "I am not ready to abandon the ideal of local government in order to kill Jim Crow." He blamed the non-violent civil rights marchers for their own beatings and the 1965 Watts riots on Martin Luther King Jr.'s "anarchic teachings."<sup>739</sup>

During the 1960's, whenever journalists needed expert comment regarding political or foreign policy, they would contact members of academia or one of several research institutes such as the Council on Foreign Relations, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, or the Brookings Institution. Scholars and staff members of these organizations were, on average, probably a little left of center on most political and economic questions, and, collectively, their research and thoughts resulted in the "Establishment" opinion on most issues.<sup>740</sup>

The neo-conservative, or "neocon" movement arose in the mid-1970s in reaction to the Establishment's influence on political opinion. Irving Kristol, in cooperation with Robert Bartley of the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, and a few others, set about creating a highly effective alternative to the Establishment. All it took was a little money; actually, it took a lot of money, but it was well targeted. Their success has been overwhelming.<sup>741</sup>

Much of the money came from family foundations, such as those established by Lynde and Harry Bradley, John Olin, Sarah

Scaife, and Smith Richardson.<sup>742</sup> Individual supporters included Bunker and Nelson Hunt, Joseph Coors, Richard Mellon Scaife,\* and Korean minister Sun Myung Moon. Hundreds of new think tanks sprang up overnight, including The American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Between 1992 and 1994, twelve foundations gave \$210 million to these institutions to fund conservative agenda building. That is, the money was spent to formulate and market conservative opinions.<sup>743</sup>

These new organizations are far more proactive than the Establishment ever was, and the emphasis is more on marketing opinions than upon research. William Baroody, the former president of the American Enterprise Institute, said, "I make no bones about marketing. ... We pay as much attention to the dissemination of the product as we do the content. We're probably the first major think tank to get into the electronic media. We hire ghost writers for scholars to produce op-ed articles that are sent to the one hundred and one cooperating newspapers—three pieces every two weeks."<sup>744</sup>

In 1995, the Heritage Foundation's president, Edwin Feulner, stated, "We don't just stress credibility. We stress timeliness. We stress an efficient, effective delivery system. Production is one side; marketing is equally important." Heritage vice president Burton Pines states, "We're not here to be some kind of Ph.D. committee giving equal time. Our role is to provide conservative public-policy makers with arguments to bolster our side." He adds, "Our targets are the policymakers and the opinion-making elite. Not the public. The public gets it from them."<sup>745</sup> Ronald Reagan bought the Heritage Foundation's product wholeheartedly. At the Foundation's tenth-anniversary banquet, Reagan stated, "Historians who seek the real meaning

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\* In 1981, Karen Rothmyer of the *Columbia Journalism Review* asked Scaife about his financial backing of conservative groups. He answered, "You f\*\*\*ing Communist c\*\*t, get out of here." He warned her, "Don't look behind you." (Alterman Eric, *What Liberal Media?* page 245.)

of events in the latter part of the twentieth century must look back on gatherings such as this.”

The Heritage Foundation’s influence continues unabated under George W. Bush. The Foundation provided him with between 1,200 and 1,300 names and resumes, including the Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao, a former Heritage Distinguished Fellow.<sup>746</sup> And if you recall, Bush addressed a gathering of the American Enterprise Institute on February 26, 2003, and told them that his administration had “borrowed” 20 of its members.

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting conducted a study to determine the number of “expert” quotes found in the media from the various foundations, which were then ranked from conservative to centrist to progressive (liberal). Of 25,823 citations identified through Lexis, 48 percent of all mentions came from conservatives, 36 from centrists, and only 16 percent from progressives.

One of the most influential organizations funded by Richard Scaife is the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, whose membership has grown to over 25,000. A legal society, the Federalist acts as a watchdog on the American Bar Association, publishing the *ABA Watch* to document the Association’s allegedly liberal stands on abortion, the death penalty and gun control. The Federalists attack “judicial activism” and praise “strict construction.”<sup>747</sup> The society includes some of the most influential judges in America, including four close affiliates\* who sit on the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>748</sup>

Justice Antonin Scalia, considered one of the founders of the society, declared in 2002 that “government ... derives its moral authority from God” and acts as the “minister of God.” Scalia

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\* Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Antonin Scalia, Anthony M. Kennedy, and Clarence Thomas. The Society was also instrumental in the selection and confirmation of Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. (Remember, these are the same five who gave the 2000 presidential election to Bush.) Other Federalist Society members are Attorney General John Ashcroft, Solicitor General Ted Olson, Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and Senator Orrin Hatch.

aggressively states, "The reaction of people of faith to this tendency of democracy to obscure the divine authority behind government should not be resignation to it, but the resolution to combat it as effectively as possible."<sup>749</sup> What! Believers should defeat democracy if necessary to avoid a separation of church and state? On March 18, 2003, Justice Scalia said, "The Constitution just sets minimums. Most of the rights that you enjoy go way beyond the Constitution."<sup>750</sup> Says who?

The primary target of the conservative opinion mills is the liberal enemy. Liberalism is painted as being illegitimate. The attack is unrelenting and it is dirty. The object is to associate liberalism with Democrats with socialism. Every opportunity is taken to disparage liberals and progressives. Taking a clue from Gingrich's game book, liberals are referred to as "elitist," "limousine liberals," "upper-class liberals," "Hollywood liberals," "liberal snobs," and "liberal eggheads."<sup>751</sup> Ann Coulter threatens them with execution to keep them from becoming "outright traitors." Andrew Sullivan warns of liberals "mounting a fifth column" against the war on terrorism. Steve Dunleavy denounces "liberals, whom I regard as traitors" for daring to quote the Constitution.<sup>752</sup>

Do you believe the neocons represent your point of view? Do you think they represent your best interests? You're not stupid! Get the truth.

### **Creating the Myth of the Liberal Media**

Not only have the neocons spent millions to establish their superior position in rendering and controlling media opinions, they have worked equally hard to convey the false impression that liberals control the media. As far back as 1992, a former chairman of the Republican National Committee, Rich Bond, conceded that bashing the liberal media was just part of the game. He explained, "There is some strategy to it. I'm a coach of kids' basketball and Little League teams. If you watch any great coach, what they try to do is 'work the refs.'" Working "the ref" means to raise a stink about *every* adverse call the referee makes so that "Maybe the ref will cut you a little slack on the next one."<sup>753</sup>

Accusations that liberals control the media are both unfair and unfounded. In a moment of candor, the editor of the *Weekly Standard*, William Kristol, stated, "I admit it. The liberal media were never that powerful, and the whole thing was often used as an excuse by conservatives for conservative failures." Nevertheless, the truth doesn't stop him from complaining in print, "The trouble with politics and political coverage today is that there's too much liberal bias. ... There's too much tilt toward the left-wing agenda. Too much apology for liberal policy failures. Too much pandering to liberal candidates and causes."<sup>754</sup> It is doubtful that the neocons would be satisfied with the death of liberal thought; it's far more fun to kick the whimpering dog.

Even Patrick Buchanan, who ran for president as a reform candidate in the 2000 election, stated, "I've gotten balanced coverage, and broad coverage—all we could have asked. For heaven's sake, we kid about the 'liberal media,' but every Republican on earth does that."<sup>755</sup>

Nonetheless, the neo-conservative movement spends millions to ensure that the public continues to believe that the liberals have control of the media. Among the organizations funded to monitor radio and television broadcasting is the Media Research Center (MRC) chaired by William F. Buckley, Jr.'s nephew, L. Brent Bozell III. Operating with a \$7.8 million annual budget, the MRC openly supports Republican and conservative campaigns and causes.<sup>756</sup>

MRC uses e-mail to alert its 11,000 followers on a daily basis to any liberal leanings it may detect in the media and encourages its members to send complaints.<sup>757</sup> Following 9/11, MRC appointed itself as America's "Patriotism Police" and sent out an e-mail threatening anyone who dared to oppose the Bush administration's policies. MRC promised to attack any journalist or media outlet that failed to support Bush.<sup>758</sup>

All this money is not wasted. In September 2002, a Gallup poll revealed that 47 percent of Americans believe the news media is "too liberal," while only 13 percent believe the media is biased toward conservatives.

How have we, average, hard-working people, allowed ourselves to believe that “liberal” is a bad word, when it stands for the social and economic progress that “We The People” have made under the Roosevelts, Wilson, Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, Carter and Clinton? Have you bought into the conservative agenda? Have you been manipulated by right-wing propaganda? You’re not stupid! Get the truth.

### **In Fear of the Conservative Media**

By every objective measure, the message one hears and reads in America’s news media is conservative, unrelentingly conservative. One of the main reasons is that while most individual journalists would define their personal politics as centrists, their employers and managers (and advertisers) are conservative, and the managers are the ones who control content.

In the week before the 2000 election, *Editor & Publisher* commissioned a poll of newspaper executives. The magazine found that, by a wide margin, the executives were personally going to vote for Bush and that their newspapers had endorsed him by a 2-1 margin. The largest margin was with the smallest newspapers (3-1), but even the largest newspapers supported Bush by a 5-4 margin. Overall, 58 percent of the population read that Bush was the favored candidate of their local newspaper. *Editor & Publisher* wondered, “what ever happened to the so-called ‘liberal press?’”<sup>759</sup>

Since these same newspaper executives decide who writes what and how it is presented in their papers, it shouldn’t be a surprise to learn that conservatives control the op-ed pages. A 1990 independent study reviewed the writing of seven syndicated columnists who regularly appeared in more than a hundred newspapers with over ten million readers. Four were conservative and only one might be called liberal.<sup>760</sup>

Even the Heritage Foundation admits the shift to the right on newspaper opinion pages. According to Adam Meyerson, “Journalism today is very different from what it was ten or twenty years ago. Today, op-ed pages are dominated by conservatives.” In 1999, *Editor & Publisher* found that the top

four columnists were all on the right or extreme right and that they appeared in approximately 500 newspapers.

The choices made by newspaper executives on the op-ed pages are also displayed on the front pages. A survey by the Project for Excellence in Journalism of newspaper stories during the critical month between late September and October 2000, when Gore's solid lead in the polls dissolved, found twice as many stories favoring Bush as Gore.<sup>761</sup> Where did the stories appear in your local newspaper?

The Pew Charitable Trust's Project for Excellence in Journalism at the Columbia School of Journalism reviewed 1,149 stories from 17 leading news sources published during the 2000 presidential election. It found 24 percent of the stories were positive for Bush, while only 13 were positive for Gore; and that 56 percent of the stories were negative for Gore and 49 percent were negative for Bush. The remaining stories were neutral.

In one area of the media—AM talk radio—the love for Bush is never ending. Featuring personalities such as Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Dr. Laura Schlessinger, Michael Savage, Bob Grant, Howard Stern, G. Gordon Liddy and, more recently, Bill O'Reilly, AM talk radio reaches millions of Americans each day with a message that is exclusively right wing. Almost exclusively. Since the murder of Alan Berg by white supremacists in 1984, there has not been a single liberal AM radio talk show, until the recent advent of Air America Radio.<sup>762</sup>

Talk radio is an angry medium. The hosts yell at callers and cut them off. They loudly express their personal opinions and deride any opposition. Talk radio feeds upon the displaced anger in our society: anger over loss of employment or business opportunities, over our increasingly multi-cultural society, over changes in the role of women, over illegal immigration, and over perceived defeats or slights in daily life. Talk radio taps into the residual paranoia and anxiety left over from the Cold War and the threats posed by terrorism. It is a place where one can vicariously punch the boss or kick the dog, but it is not a very good place to obtain unbiased news or political opinion. It also functions to make liberal listeners feel they are a marginalized, small minority.

Clear Channel Communications (CCC) owns half of the radio outlets in America, more than 12,000 local stations. CCC exercises almost total control over local programming, including a ban on the Dixie Chicks band after one of its members (from Lubbock, Texas) told fans in England they were ashamed to be from the same state as Bush. CCC also provided financial sponsorship and aired promotions for pro-war "Rallies for America."<sup>763</sup>

One of America's most popular commentators, Howard Stern, has been suspended from appearing on CCC stations because he began to deviate from the company's pro-Bush line. Stern says, "I gotta tell you something, there's a lot of people saying that the second that I started saying 'I think we gotta get Bush out of the presidency,' that's when Clear Channel banged my a\*\* outta here. Then I find out that Clear Channel is such a big contributor to President Bush, and in bed with the whole Bush administration, I'm going, 'Maybe that's why I was thrown off, because I don't like the way the country is leaning too much to the religious right.'"

CCC also fired two other commentators for their anti-war views. Roxanne Walker was discharged when she began to charge that Bush's War was not justified, "I was reprimanded by [Clear Channel] management that I need to tone that down. Basically I was told to shut up." Phoenix talk show host Charles Goyette was kicked off for "inviting administration critics like former weapons inspector Scott Ritter on his show, and discussing complaints from the intelligence community that the analysis on Iraq was being cooked to support the White House's pro-war agenda."<sup>764</sup>

Surveys establish that 22 percent of Americans listen to talk radio, up to as many as 40 percent in the major cities.<sup>765</sup> AM talk radio is not only conservative, it is hard-hitting, take-no-prisoners conservative. It is here, and not on the op-ed pages, that the opinion of working Americans is most influenced. There is no denial. Rush Limbaugh gloats, "There's been a massive change in media in this country over the last 15 years. ... Now it's 2002 and the traditional liberal media monopoly doesn't exist anymore."

Limbaugh has been credited with Bush's defeat of McCain in the 1999 presidential primaries and of Gore in the general election. William Kristol says that Limbaugh "helped make it the orthodox conservative position that McCain was utterly unacceptable and also that Bush was fine, neither of which were intuitively obvious if you're a conservative." Newt Gingrich's former press secretary Tom Blankley stated, "Given the closeness of the election, but for Rush Limbaugh's broadcasts, we would now be led by President Al Gore."<sup>766</sup>

Once upon a time, the Federal Communication Commission's Fairness Doctrine required broadcasters to provide a balance of political opinion in their programming, and the FCC would not have allowed the present monopoly of conservative opinion. However, the Reagan-appointed FCC repealed the doctrine in 1987, and Reagan vetoed attempts by Congress to reinstate it.

Now that they are in control, the same neocons who once relied upon the access doctrine believe that it would be an unwarranted imposition on the First Amendment to allow today's dissenters an equal opportunity to exercise *their* freedom of speech.<sup>767</sup> Given the power of the media to shape opinion, do you think we should allow it to be biased, without any opportunity for the other side to provide balance?

Following his election, Bush enjoyed an extraordinarily long honeymoon with the news media. On May 6, 2002, John Harris wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Are the national news media soft on Bush? ... The truth is, this new president has done things with relative impunity that would have been huge uproars if they had occurred under Clinton. Take it from someone who made a living writing about those uproars."<sup>768</sup>

The mainstream press is clearly intimidated by the conservative media. For example, following Bush's State of the Union address in January 2003, in which he repeatedly and demonstrably lied, the *New York Times* "found little that could lead to a conclusion that the president actually lied." Instead, it was possible that Bush may have been guilty of having "stepped over the line." Even the *Washington Post*, in a story entitled "Presidential Tradition of Embroidering Key Assertions

Continues,” only found Bush’s statements to be “dubious, if not wrong” and that they “outpaced the facts.”<sup>769</sup>

Bush told a bald-faced lie in Africa on July 14, 2003, regarding Saddam: “We gave him a chance to allow the inspectors in, and he wouldn’t let them in. And, therefore, after a reasonable request, we decided to remove him from power.” In fact, the inspectors returned to Iraq and essentially determined that there was no current evidence of weapons of mass destruction, before they had to leave so Bush could start bombing Iraq. The *Washington Post* could only say that Bush’s lie “appeared to contradict the events leading up to war this spring.”<sup>770</sup> A lie is a lie, except when one has newspapers to sell and one has come to live in fear of the truth.

The news media is big business, and journalists who rock the boat really don’t get ahead, *All the President’s Men* to the contrary notwithstanding. To get along, many journalists go along with self-censorship. Dan Rather, who has been labeled a liberal by the neocons, confesses, “There was a time in South Africa that people would put flaming tires around people’s necks if they dissented. And in some ways the fear is that you will be ‘necklaced’ here, you will have a flaming tire of lack of patriotism put around your neck. Now it is the fear that keeps journalists from asking the toughest of the tough questions. ... I do not except myself from this criticism. What we are talking about here—whether one wants to recognize it or not, or call it by its proper name or not—is a form of self-censorship. I worry that patriotism run amok will trample the very values the country seeks to defend.”<sup>771</sup>

In *The Note*, ABC’s Internet publication, journalists are warned, “Since the Republican party is the only one of our two major political parties in America who believes the press is routinely biased against them ... the press needs to be extra careful in making sure that perspective and fairness are maintained.” In *What Liberal Media?*, Eric Alterman comments on ABC’s warning: “Talk about ‘working the refs.’ Between the fear of appearing to tear down a national icon during wartime and the effect of decades of fielding attacks by politically minded conservatives drumming to a beat of their own invention, the

elite media has so internalized the false message of their own 'liberalism' that they were openly holding back on the Republicans, as if in fear of where the truth might lead. The media's gentle treatment of George W. Bush and his administration was, in many ways, a tribute to decades of hard spadework by conservative activities undertaken specifically for this purpose. And given its effect across the broad swath of American politics in the late 1990's and early 2000's, they had every right to take pride in their work."<sup>772</sup>

Joe Conason concurs in *Big Lies*: "Conservatives enjoy their virtual monopoly over the nation's political conversation, of course. They paid a lot of money for it and they intend to keep it. They dominate the national debate not because their ideas are better (or more popular), but because they have more resources and a vast, coordinated infrastructure that has been built up during three decades. They also tend to dominate because—unlike the supposedly liberal mainstream media—conservatives are perfectly willing to stifle opposition. Liberal opinion is hard to find in conservative newspapers and liberal voices are rarely heard on conservative talk radio."<sup>773</sup>

Bush of course would not agree. He complains that the media "are biased against conservative thought." Yet another lie?

We all want an honest and truthful parent figure to lead us in times of adversity; however, when it turns out that our parent is repeatedly lying to us and deceiving us about the dangers we face, we must intervene and avoid becoming co-dependent enablers. The President desperately needs to be helped "out."

Do you want the truth? Do you want to hear both sides of a story, an issue, so you can make up your own mind and form your own opinion? Are you concerned that the conservative media is so willing to smother liberal thought? Is the conservative media treating you like you are stupid? You're not stupid! Get the truth.

724. Conason, op. cit., p. 3.

725. [gi.grolier.com/presidents/ea/bios](http://gi.grolier.com/presidents/ea/bios); see also [www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents](http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents).

726. Ibid.

727. Ibid.

728. Ibid.

729. Ibid.

730. Ibid.

731. Ibid.

732. Ibid.

733. Ibid.

734. Ibid.

735. Ibid.

736. Ibid.; see also Conason, op. cit., pp. 77-80.

737. Conason, op. cit., pp. 85, 86.

738. Ibid., p. 86.

739. Ibid., p. 135.

740. Alterman, Eric, *What Liberal Media? The Truth About Bias and the News*, (New York: Basic Books, 2003), p. 81.

741. Ibid., p. 81, 82.

742. Conason, op. cit., p. 35.

743. Alterman, op. cit., p. 82.

744. Ibid., p. 82.

745. Ibid., p. 83.

746. Ibid.

747. Ibid., pp. 249, 250.

748. "The Federalist Society: From Obscurity to Power," People For The American Way Foundation, August 2001, ([www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?oid=652](http://www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?oid=652)); see also Swomley, John M., "The Network of Righteousness. (The Federalist Society)," *Humanist*, November 2000, ([www.findarticles.com/cf\\_0/PI/search.jhtml?key=%john%20m.%20swomley%20](http://www.findarticles.com/cf_0/PI/search.jhtml?key=%john%20m.%20swomley%20)).

749. Conason, op. cit., p. 99.

750. Ivins, op. cit., pp. 278, 279.

751. Conason, op. cit., p. 19.

752. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
753. *Ibid.*, p. 34, 35; see also Alterman, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
754. *Ibid.*; see also Alterman, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
755. Alterman, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
756. Conason, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
757. Rampton, *op. cit.*, pp. 166, 167.
758. Kellner, *op. cit.*, p. 167.
759. Conason, *op. cit.*, pp. 39, 40.
760. *Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42.
761. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
762. *Ibid.*, p. 47; see also Alterman, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
763. Rampton, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
764. Boehlert, Eric, "The passion of Howard Stern," *Salon*, March 4, 2004, [www.salon.com/news/feature/2004/03/04/stern/pring.html](http://www.salon.com/news/feature/2004/03/04/stern/pring.html).
765. Alterman, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
766. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
767. *Ibid.*, p. 71; see also Conason, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
768. Conason, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
769. Alterman, *op. cit.*, pp. 198, 199.
770. Corn, *op. cit.*, p. 292.
771. Solomon, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
772. Alterman, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
773. Conason, *op. cit.*, p. 1.