

Media Research Center's Monthly Members' Report

No more denials about liberal media bias. Please.

DEAR MRC MEMBER,

What the media have unequivocally demonstrated with words for the last several decades they have now backed with money. According to *National Review Online*, several major media outlets are financially supporting People for the American Way, the fiercely liberal special-interest group. Donors include the *New York Times* Company, CBS, NBC, Disney (the parent company of ABC), and America Online.

Annual reports filed by People for the American Way indicate the media corporations don't make direct contributions, but they do buy tables — single seats cost \$500 to \$600 a pop — at the group's annual fundraising dinners in New York City. This money, of course, goes directly into a war chest that is primarily spent fighting conservative nominees to the federal courts. Funny thing, but none of these media groups has ever bought tables at Media Research Center events!

Logic would seem to dictate that objective news organizations would refuse to contribute money to any group that they might have to cover, regardless of their political philosophy. It would also seem logical that journalists would be eager to

avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest, since the media constantly condemn similar conflicts when they involve government officials, doctors, lawyers, bankers, insurance salesmen, and just about everyone else.

Apparently, journalists think the rules just don't apply to them. They can donate money to a cause — they can even raise money for a cause — and then act shocked — shocked! — when others suggest that this might influence their coverage.

Robin Roberts, the newly appointed newsreader for ABC's *Good Morning America*, is a perfect and timely example. In 1999, Roberts, then an ESPN *SportsCenter* anchor and an occasional host on *GMA*, emceed a fundraiser for Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley that raised more than \$1 million.

When the inevitable criticism poured in, Roberts acted surprised, telling the *Columbia Journalism Review* that if she knew the reaction would be so hostile, she never would have gotten involved. An intelligent woman who has made it to the top of her profession can't see the obvious controversy in hosting a political fundraiser? That, to say the least, stretches belief.

Roberts is hardly alone, however. CBS's Dan

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Of course, one of the liberal media's charitable and P.R. causes is People for the American Way — which touts its “exhaustive records on ultraconservative groups” and its ability to “organize other groups and communities to defeat the Religious Right.”

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DEAR MEMBER

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Rather, an evening news anchor for almost 20 years and a journalist for close to 50, hosted a Democratic fundraiser in Austin, Texas in April of last year. When the *Washington Post* reported that donors paid up to \$1,000 “for a private evening...with the CBS newsmen,” the MRC confronted Rather and CBS, and pointed out the breach of public confidence required an apology. This MRC effort resulted in a rash of other news stories from Rush Limbaugh to Matt Drudge, and it forced Rather to make an on-air public apology.

We took a similar tack with the People for the American Way story, quickly issuing a national press release condemning the media organizations that participated in the fundraisers. To us, and millions of other Americans of all political stripes, any news organization that contributes money to a group or an individual it covers in news stories forfeits any claim of objectivity. Period.

And it's not like the media don't know this. At least one media outlet was so uncomfortable with participating in the fundraisers that it ceased supporting them. *Time*, according to a spokesman quoted in the *National Review* story, contributed to People for the American Way in

2000 but realized it was wrong. “We determined that for a news organization such as ours, it would not be appropriate for us to do that, so we stopped doing it,” the spokesman said.

Our job at the MRC, with your help, is to continue to apply pressure to the media, to force them to re-examine both their financial contributions and their coverage of issues. The American public deserves to hear both sides of all issues and deserves to have it delivered in as objective a manner as possible by reporters and outlets that do not have hidden agendas and entangling financial relationships.

While the battle is constant, we are making strides. We've had a major effect on news organizations over the last few years and some of them even have called to tell us that they're making specific efforts to include more conservative voices.

It's never easy, but it's something that is absolutely necessary. And, with your support, we'll continue to do it.

Until next time,



L. Brent Bozell III

Networks Trumpet Liberal Democrat's Big Oil Report

When a liberal Democrat issues a press release on a basic subcommittee report, the networks not only jump, they disguise the political agenda behind it by pumping up its credibility. A subcommittee report from a liberal thus becomes a “government report,” a “congressional report,” or a “Senate investigation.”

A classic example was an April 29 report by Democratic Senator Carl Levin, Chairman of the Senate Permanent Investigations Subcommittee. The report claimed that oil companies — surprise, surprise — want to maximize the price of their products. None of the networks bothered to mention the name of the subcommittee or how the majority side released the report, but they all covered it.

On ABC's *World News Tonight*, Peter Jennings cited how “government investigators reported today that the oil industry caused some of the recent increases.” Correspondent Linda Douglass subsequently explained:

“Congressional investigators say they have found evidence oil companies have been intentionally holding down oil and gas supplies to drive gasoline prices up.”



To drain support from “big oil,” ABC and Peter Jennings present a simple subcommittee report as coming from “government investigators.”

Over on the *CBS Evening News*, Dan Rather flashed back to the 1970s in an introduction about “Big Oil” and claimed, “Developments in the Middle East can have an impact on the price of gasoline. A U.S. congressional report out today says that there was something else behind some

of the recent increases for consumers at the pump. Bob Orr has more about questions concerning Big Oil and the manipulation of prices.”

Orr cited only “a Senate investigation.”

Tom Brokaw's NBC *Nightly News* item: “America's major oil companies are accused tonight of taking deliberate steps to keep supplies tight and raise prices. A congressional report released today also blamed recent industry mergers for the high cost of gasoline, especially in the Midwest. Not surprisingly, an industry spokesman disputes that, saying market shortages are the real culprit. All of this will take center stage tomorrow at congressional hearings.”

Once again, the networks latched onto an old standby — the evil corporations in this case — and provided full spin. A simple subcommittee report from a conservative would never receive this kind of coverage.



Goodbye Gumbel..Again!

Bryant Gumbel departed CBS on May 17 and while he will remain on television as host of HBO's *Real Sports*, his days as a network anchor are most likely over for good.

And are we glad!

During his years at NBC and CBS, Gumbel was a one-man conservative-bashing gang. Never shy about taking sides or sharing his opinion, he openly questioned what he called the country's preoccupation with morality and, on one occasion, was caught on-camera calling a Christian conservative a "f!%*ing idiot." In celebration of Gumbel's departure, we've chosen to highlight five of the many prominent outrages he has committed since joining *The Early Show* in November 1999 to share with you.

November 1, 1999.

On Gumbel's very first Early Show, he immediately shows his leftist bias, conducting a fawning interview of then-President Clinton. His only follow-up question concerns rumors about George W. Bush's cocaine use and the interview ended with Gumbel trying to set up a golf game with Clinton.

May 12, 2000. Interviewing participants in the Million Mom March, Gumbel showed a radical anti-gun side. "Why are you only focusing on licensing and registration?" he asked an organizer. "Why aren't you going, for example, for a total ban?"

June 29, 2000. The famous "f!%*ing idiot" incident. After a hostile interview with the Family Research Council's Robert Knight about the Boy Scouts' policy on gays, Gumbel was caught muttering his famous line. Gumbel refused to issue an apology. CBS claimed it was unclear to whom Gumbel was referring and, in an official statement, said the comment bore "no relevance to the content of *The Early Show*."

August 15, 2000. On location at the Playboy Mansion with the father-daughter publishing team of Hugh and Christie Hefner, Gumbel wondered aloud about the pro-family-values stance of Democratic nominees Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. "In a macro-politi-

cal sense, do you think the Gore preoccupation with morality is a frightening turn for the party?" Gumbel asked the two pornography peddlers.

January 16, 2001. In a running argument of an interview with a supporter of then-Attorney General nominee John Ashcroft, Gumbel pulled out all the stops. "Can you deny that he...basically engaged in what some would kindly call character assassination?" Then, hitting that troubling morality topic again, Gumbel asked a question as only he can: "Is it realistic to think he can ignore his own moral code?"

Goodbye, Bryant. And good riddance.

To see and hear videos of some of Gumbel's most outrageous moments, visit this page on our website:

www.mrc.org/mrcspotlight/gumbelstumbles.asp

Warning: Viewing the clips may cause severe agitation.

Get the CyberAlert!

How do Brit Hume, Bill O'Reilly, Rush Limbaugh, Michael Reagan, Janet Parshall, Matt Drudge, *National Review*, the *Washington Times*, *World* magazine, and thousands of others stay on top of the latest liberal media bias? They read the MRC's *CyberAlert*. And you can too...for FREE! As a member of the MRC, you can sign up to receive the MRC's near-daily e-mail report *CyberAlert*!

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Post to Reporters: Bush Bashing Is OK But Don't Criticize Gore

The *Washington Post* has disciplined reporter Ceci Connolly for comments she made on a recent *Fox News Sunday* about Al Gore's "comeback" speech in Florida.



Washington Post reprimands Ceci Connolly for a trivial comment about Gore on FNC.

Connolly wasn't nasty. She didn't deliver any stinging barbs, criticisms, or personal attacks. She merely noted that the speech "in the current environment — terrorism, war overseas — it just doesn't seem quite appropriate right now."

These mildest of comments set off alarm bells at the *Post* and prompted the paper's ombudsman, Michael Getler, to flex some disciplinarian muscle. In an April 21 column, the ombudsman told readers that Connolly had been censured for her remarks. The reporter's assessment was "not appropriate," according to Getler, "and she has been reminded by a top editor that commentary by reporters is against *Post* policy."

It's cases like this that make us wonder what world editors and media executives are living in. Connolly has been a frequent contributor on the Fox News Channel and has provided commentary on numerous occasions, including some liberal-oriented criticism of the Bush State of the Union address in February.

The *Post* didn't see the need to reprimand Connolly or enforce the "no commentary" rule when she was criticizing a Republican President. Say something about a Democrat, no matter how mild, and the knives suddenly come out. While the action against Connolly is unfair, arbitrary, and hypocritical, it's certainly not surprising.

ABC: Bush Embraces "Scandalous Fundraising" Efforts

Need another example of the network worldview that sees all sides as moral equivalents? Check this out. ABC News has noted that President Bush has enthusiastically raised money for Republicans across the country in conjunction with his official visits.

Reporting on one such trip to South Dakota on the April 24 *World News Tonight*, correspondent Terry Moran said after spending "a lot of time during the 2000



Terry Moran tries to build a link between recent Bush fundraising trips and misdeeds of the Clinton-Gore administration.

campaign blasting the Clinton-Gore administration for what he called its 'scandalous fundraising.' President Bush has embraced the practice with relish. There was an official reason for this presidential trip and thus

for taxpayers picking up most of the tab for the visit..."

Bush's fundraising complaints during the 2000 election were aimed at outrages like the infamous Clinton White House sleepovers and Al Gore's Buddhist monastery shake-downs. Right or wrong, combining fundraising events with official trips is an advantage incumbent Presidents have long enjoyed and comparing this activity with the misdeeds of Clinton-Gore is comparing oranges and rotten apples.

And ABC knows it.



Future news anchor in training? Terry Moran tries to equate Dick Arney with a murderous dictator.

"Find a Home" and "Ethnic Cleansing"? Same Thing!

Speaking of comparisons, was that a Palestinian activist or a network correspondent equating Texas Representative Dick Arney with Slobodan Milosevic in a recent White House press conference?

On May 1, Arney, the House Majority Leader, appeared on MSNBC's *Hardball* and said he favored allowing Israel to remain on the land they currently occupy. Arney added that he would "be happy to have all these Arab nations that have been so hellbent to drive Israel out of the Middle East, to get together, find some land, and make a home for the Palestinians. I think it can be done."

The next day, in a question to White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, ABC's Terry Moran characterized Arney's comments as a call for "ethnic cleansing." Then it got worse.

When Fleischer questioned the charge — even Moran admitted that Arney "didn't use

those words” — the ABC correspondent compared the House Majority Leader to a former dictator. “That’s the way Milosevic said it,” Moran claimed. “He never said ethnic cleansing, either.”

What is going on at ABC? Armev’s idea was clearly stated. Characterizing his comments as a call for “ethnic cleansing” is dishonest and comparing him to a murdering dictator is an insult. Can anyone imagine a Democrat who supports Israel being characterized in the same manner?

Brock Plays Loose With the Truth on Crossfire

James Carville, the Democratic consultant turned television personality, recently interviewed conservative-author-turned-conservative-basher David Brock on CNN’s *Crossfire*.

The exchange centered on how the conservative press, especially the supposedly conservative Fox News Channel, had responded to Brock’s latest book, *Blinded By the Right: The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative*.

In response to a Carville question about how many times he had been on FNC, Brock responded that he had not been on “Fox prime time at all.” His response was barely caught because, as hard as it is to believe, Carville was talking at the same time, asking the same question with different words.

“But, I mean they haven’t even invited you on?” Carville said.

“No,” Brock plainly stated. The two then mocked Fox’s “we report, you decide” motto. “It’s ‘they decide,’” Brock claimed.



James Carville and David Brock tag team against the Fox News Channel.

For the record, Brock was on FNC at midday on March 18. Brock didn’t disclose this to the CNN audience, but by slipping “prime time” into the conversation he used a Clintonesque maneuver to mislead viewers.

What a shock.

Goldberg on Today (Finally) But There’s No Discussion of Bias

While Brock was doing his Slick Willie impersonation on CNN, Bernard Goldberg was getting network coverage for the first time.

The author of *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*, Goldberg had been a guest on numerous cable networks and radio programs over the last four months but seemed to be barred by the Big Three networks. Finally, after his

book had spent 19 consecutive weeks on the *New York Times* Best Seller list, Goldberg appeared with Matt Lauer on the April 25 *Today*.

But there was a catch. Rather than a one-on-one interview that would examine Goldberg’s claims of bias in network news coverage, Goldberg was paired with left-wing author Michael Moore, whose book *Stupid White Men* is also on the best-sellers list.

The theme of Lauer’s interview? It centered on how the two books, written from opposite sides of the political spectrum, could be best-sellers at the same time and what it says about the country.



Bernie Goldberg finally gets a shot on network television...but his book was hardly the real subject.

What it says about the country is debatable. What it says about the networks is that even when they bow to public pressure and decide to examine liberal bias, they combine it with left-wing complaints about the country and treat it like a carnival sideshow.

MRC’s Mini-Bits

Helen Thomas at a White House press conference: “Does the President think that the Palestinians have a right to resist 35 years of brutal military occupation and suppression?”... Former Clinton aide turned *Crossfire* host Paul Begala won’t leave Florida alone: “When is Congress going to stand up to these authoritarian acts from a right-wing unelected President?”...Another *Crossfire* cheap shot from Begala: “[Bush] didn’t win anything more than a five-to-four vote on a Supreme Court his daddy helped pick”...Former President Bill Clinton says journalism was his second career choice: “My hero was Walter Cronkite. I believed every word he said”...CNN anchor Carol Lin wonders how President Bush can say he’s pro-environment “when what he wants to do is dig it up for natural resources”...Peter Jennings drops a stunner: “...On occasion, there is a liberal instinct in the media which we need to keep our eye on, if you will.”

Staying True to Our Mission — And You

By Scott Hogenson
CNSNews.com
Executive Editor



One of the hardest things about managing any organization is staying the course. The core mission of CNSNews.com, the Internet newswire of the Media Research Center, has remained unchanged since our launch almost four years ago.

L. Brent Bozell III founded CNSNews.com "in an effort to provide an alternative news source that would look for the stories that are too often ignored or under-reported."

We also promised that we would propel this under-reported and ignored news into the national arena by producing a product so compelling, national newspapers and networks would want it and use it.

It's easy to say an organization is true to its mission, but it's more difficult to demonstrate that dedication to duty. I'm happy to report that CNSNews.com does not face that difficulty and has, in fact, become the success it is today as a result of not wavering from our original, core mission.

This mission and our dedication to it was most recently illustrated during the week of May 6, when CNSNews.com Congressional Bureau Chief Jeff Johnson reported on some remarks by Sen. Ernest Hollings in which the gentleman from South Carolina accused Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of "acting like Saddam Hussein," the Iraqi dictator.

Not content with comparing Sharon with the thug who rules Iraq, Hollings repeated his characterization of Sharon as "the Bull Connor of Israel," invoking images of the former Birmingham, Alabama public safety commissioner who ordered police dogs loose to attack civil-rights demonstrators in the 1960s.

The establishment media ignored the story, but Johnson picked up on it and authored a May 7 report, part of it quoting Rep. Joe Wilson, one of Hollings' colleagues from South Carolina, who thought it might be wise for Hollings to

reconsider his characterization of Sharon as a murderous dictator and racial bigot.

Later that day, radio and Fox TV talk show host Sean Hannity was reading CNSNews.com and later relayed passages from Johnson's article to his radio audience, which listens to Sean on hundreds of stations nationwide.

That same evening, Rep. Wilson appeared on Fox's *Hannity and Colmes* program to discuss Hollings' remarks and the ramifications of them.

The CNSNews.com article also made a splash outside Washington, D.C., resulting in newspaper coverage in South Carolina and various radio appearances across the country for Wilson, according to the congressman's staff, which also told me the only reason the rest of America knows all this is because of CNSNews.com.

What began as an arguably minor story, ignored by all in the media save one, became a national news story via network TV and radio literally overnight. I'm hard pressed to think of a clearer example of mission success than this most recent example illustrates.

The global staff of CNSNews.com dedicates itself each day — individually and collectively — to accomplishing the mission we promised you; giving voice to a story that otherwise would have been ignored is the best way to show that we are keeping our promise to you and your fellow supporters.

There's an old, self-deprecating expression I learned as a kid growing up in the farm country of western Minnesota: "I may not be good for much, but I'm good for my word."

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The Beauty of Live Television...

We hope you caught President Bozell on *Crossfire* debating Paul Begala and Dee Dee Myers. Bozell dominated the discussion as he made several key points about liberal media bias and George Stephanopoulos' new role on *This Week*. To view a clip of the segment visit: www.media-research.org/vidobias/vidbias.asp



BOZELL: "Let me point this out. George Stephanopoulos, during the campaign in the year 2000, labeled the two Democrats running, Bill Bradley and Al Gore, as 'basically centrists.' To George Stephanopoulos, they are centrists. You know what he labeled George Bush? A 'kamikaze conservative.' And he called him 'far-right.' Now only a far-left person can say George Bush has been far-right." — CNN's *Crossfire*, May 6, 2002

Inside The MRC

John Corfield

John Corfield is the MRC's Director of Development and oversees the development and fundraising activities of the organization. John, who came to the MRC in July 2001, supervises the development staff of five.



"I feel like I am supposed to be here," John said. "There are two areas the liberals have taken over, higher education and the media. I have worked in counteracting their effect in education since 1980. Helping to neutralize their effect on the media is just as exciting to me, if not more."

Prior to joining the MRC, John had served as a development executive at three California colleges: Master's College, the Talbot School of Theology, and Vanguard University.

A Pennsylvania native, he attended high school in his hometown of Ben Avon and then played two years of college basketball at Indiana University of Pennsylvania before entering the U.S. Army in 1966. Assigned to Ft. Myer, Va., John served in the ceremonial Old Guard Rifle Drill Team.

At the end of his enlistment, John went back to school and graduated from St. Joseph's College in 1969. He taught school for several years and worked in educational sales before joining a church bond securities firm. While working at the securities firm, he learned capital fundraising and began structuring programs for Christian schools and churches that would eventually lead to a career in development.

John and his wife, Sherri, live in Sterling, Va.

Notable Quotables

Below are two example quotes from the MRC's popular newsletter *Notable Quotables*, which exposes reporters' liberal worldview by using their own words against them. *NQ* has become a staple and a must read for conservative media personalities. The *2001 Best of Notable Quotables* was so popular, 16 newspapers ran it, in whole or part, reaching millions of Americans with the MRC's research. No other organization's publication receives that type of coverage! Get this great bi-weekly delivered to your door today at the member rate of just \$30 per year and receive our "Term Limits for TV News Anchors" bumper sticker for FREE! Just call Donna at (800) 672-1423 ext. 122 or use the enclosed business reply envelope.



It's Not That Stephanopoulos Is Too Liberal, He's Too White

"George Stephanopoulos' big tryout was this past Sunday. And by all accounts, it went just fine....Insiders at ABC News are predicting that the former Clinton White House aide will become anchor of *This Week* in the fall....If Stephanopoulos is tapped, every Sunday public-affairs show on network and cable will once again be hosted by white men, reinforcing what many women have complained about for years: Power in this country rests with white men."

— *USA Today's* television reporter Peter Johnson in an April 18 column

"Mammoth" & Costly Tax Cut

"President Bush began a campaign today to win permanent status for his mammoth tax cut, which is scheduled to expire in eight years and would cost hundreds of billions of dollars a year to preserve."

— Lead sentence of April 16 *Washington Post* story by Mike Allen about Bush's remarks the day before in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Editor's Corner

TIM JONES

A Media Massacre

What's in a word?
A lot if the word is "massacre."

On April 7, the *New York Times* and CBS News reported Palestinian claims that the Israeli Army had conducted a massacre in the West Bank town of Jenin. In a few days, Palestinian officials would claim 500 civilians had been murdered and almost every major media outlet in the world, without substantiation, would repeat the charge.

In less than a week, Katie Couric would sit across from Israeli adviser Dr. Dore Gold on the April 12 *Today* and make the Jenin massacre sound as real as Little Big Horn.

"Palestinian officials have described the refugee camp at — at Jenin as, quote, 'a massacre,'" Couric said. "Residents described the camp as being littered with mangled bodies in the streets. Are you concerned about what kind of message these pictures and this information sends to the world?"

Of course Gold was concerned, because Couric's description was wrong. But try telling that to the world when the networks have gone "massacre" crazy.

Toward the end of the month, it was becoming evident — even to the networks — that the Palestinian claims were suspect. That didn't matter, though. News reports still used the easy-stick, hard-to-get-off charge of massacre in relation to Jenin. Almost all the stories, in their journalistic manner, duly noted that the massacre was a Palestinian claim,



but the constant repetition of it put the Israelis in an unwinnable public relations battle and did almost terminal damage to the truth.

A quick Nexis search shows how many stories mentioned the "massacre." From April 11 through May 3, ABC ran 15 stories and CBS ran 22 from April 7 through May 7.

NBC, on the other hand, was a model of decorum, running eight segments from April 5 to

May 1 and one of those stories included a spokesman from a humanitarian group who said there was no evidence of a massacre.

When the real casualty figures did come out, they were nothing like the early claims. According to Palestinian officials quoted in the May 1 *Washington Times*, 56 Palestinians were killed in Jenin. Israel, for its part, said it lost 33 soldiers in two weeks of fighting in the city.

Not to be callous, but those are not the numbers associated with a massacre.

The next night, Peter Jennings reported on *World News Tonight* that a supposedly impartial, international group had made it official. Human Rights Watch, a human-rights organization, "found no evidence to support claims that the [Israeli] army massacred hundreds of Palestinians," Jennings said.

Well...glad that's finally cleared up. Wonder if we'll get a month's worth of stories suggesting that the Israeli Army did *not* commit a massacre?



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