

LIBERAL CATERWAULING ABOUT CONSERVATIVE MEDIA MONOPOLY -- by Don Feder

As the election approaches, expect prodigious liberal whining and caterwauling about an alleged conservative media monopoly.

This ploy serves a dual purpose: 1) To disguise the real media monopoly of the left and 2) To explain why liberals have such a hard time selling their schlock to the American people.

Typical of the oh-poor-us strain of liberal rhetoric is the latest screed by David Brock, “The Republican Noise Machine: Right-Wing Media and How it Corrupts Democracy,” published last month.

Aside: From the left’s perspective, for conservatives to be heard at all is ipso facto a danger to democracy. By the “free exchange of ideas,” liberals mean a monologue – they talk, you listen.

Brock’s preposterous premise: a right-wing media juggernaut – consisting of think tanks, talk shows and foundations – controls news coverage. Rush Limbaugh, Bill O’Reilly, the Heritage Foundation, the editorial pages of the Wall Street Journal, etc. have brainwashed the American people. Liberals (purveyors of truth, objectivity and fairness -- needless to say) simply can’t compete with this well-oiled propaganda engine.

The notion is so disconnected from reality that only a liberal would be deluded enough to believe it.

Point of information:

*Liberals have The New York Times; conservatives have The Washington Times.

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*Liberals have ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN and NPR; conservatives have FOX News.

- Liberals have Harvard, Yale and the rest of the Ivy League (not to mention 95% of America’s colleges and universities; conservatives have Hillsdale College and Bob Jones University.

- Liberals have the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations; conservatives have the Heritage Foundation and American Enterprise Institute.
- Liberals have Random House and Simon and Schuster; conservatives have Regnery.
- Liberals have Time and Newsweek; conservatives have Human Events and National Review.
- Liberals have Hollywood (cranking out PC message movies like “The Day After Tomorrow” and “Saved”); conservatives have “The 700 Club.”

In terms of media firepower, liberals have ICBMs, nuclear warheads, and Apache attack helicopters. That conservatives are heard at all is a testament to the potency of their views.

On the heels of Brock’s *J’accuse* came the latest survey of the media elite by the Pew Research Study. Guess what? The typical journalist isn’t a member of the John Birch Society!

Of 547 media professionals (reporters and editors) surveyed, 34% called themselves liberals, compared to a measly 7% who said they were conservatives. Among the general public, 33% embrace conservatism, while 20% espouse liberalism.

The Pew Study understates the case. After working in a newsroom for almost 20 years, I can tell you for a fact that most media liberals think they’re moderates.

The Pew Study also discloses that while 34% of Americans think the media has been too critical of Bush, only 8% of the national media agree. A landslide 55% of the national press thinks the media has not been critical enough of the president! Instead of a daily drubbing, they would prefer what – hourly disembowelment?

Liberals like Brock counter that liberals in the media are scrupulously fair and unbiased, so their personal beliefs are irrelevant.

Which is why The New York Times et al. invariably described Jesse Helms as an ultra-conservative, but Ted Kennedy is never labeled an ultra-liberal. Which is why pro-abortion demonstrations are always covered to the hilt, while pro-life marches usually rate the proverbial dog’s obituary. Which

is why Haiti's former military regime was a "junta," but Fidel Castro is Cuba's "president." Which is why partial-birth-abortion is designated a "late-term abortion procedure," murders committed with a handgun are "handgun homicides" (stop that gun, before it kills again!), and pornography is "adult entertainment." Oh, and Bill Clinton's sex life was no one's business but his own, but Anita Hill's charges against Clarence Thomas deserved a thorough airing.

In coverage of Ronald Reagan's passing, a network anchorman noted that the ex-president "gave conservatism a *human face*." As opposed to what -- the Frankenstein mask it usually wears? Now, try to imagine a newscaster speaking of someone who "gave liberalism a human face."

Yes indeed, here is objectivity and balance worthy of *Pravda* and *Der Sturmer*.

Loosely defined, the media consists of various mechanisms for disseminating information and opinions, and thus includes academia, public education and book publishing, as well as standard news outlets.

A visit to my local Barnes and Noble, where I spotted the Brock tract, provides irrefutable evidence of liberal dominance in the book-publishing field.

Among those books prominently displayed, I counted no fewer than 45 anti-Bush, anti-GOP, anti-conservative titles.

In an election year, literary Bush-bashing is a growth industry. These works fall into roughly four categories – 1) Bush is evil. 2) Bush is stupid and/or incompetent. 3) Bush is a liar (or, a warmongering liar, if you prefer) and 4) Republicans control the world. Here are a few examples of each, on display at the Barnes and Noble I surveyed.

Bush is a Liar – "The Lies of George Bush," "Casualty of War: The Bush Administration's Assault on a Free Press," "Pretext for War: 9/11, Iraq and the Abuse of America's Intelligence Agencies," "The Book On Bush: How George W. (Mis)leads America," "The Five Biggest Lies Bush Told Us About Iraq," "Fraud: The Strategy Behind Bush's Lies and Why The Media Didn't Tell You," and "The Politics of Truth: Inside the Lies that Led to War and Betrayed My Wife's CIA Identity" (by ex-diplomat Joseph Wilson).

Bush is Evil – “Bushwacked” (by Molly Ivins), “The W Effect: Bush’s War on Women,” “Bush Versus the Environment,” “Bush’s War for Reelection: Iraq, the White House And the People.”

Coming soon to a bookstore near you: “Bush Versus America’s Pets” and “Bush’s War on Oral Hygiene.”

Bush is Stupid And/Or Incompetent – “The Deluxe, Election Edition of Bushisms” (forward by Molly Ivins), “Global Village Idiot: Dubya, Dumb Jokes and One Last Word Before You Vote,” “The Bush Dyslexicon,” “Against All Enemies” (ex-terrorism czar Richard A. Clarke’s argues that, pre-9/11, Bush was asleep at the switch), “Stupid White Men” (by intellectual heavyweight Michael Moore) and (*this is no joke*) “The I Hate George W. Bush Reader: Why W. Is Wrong About Absolutely Everything.”

It’s All a Republican Conspiracy – “Banana Republicans: How the Right Wing is Turning America into a One-party State,” “Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell them – a Fair and Balanced Look At the Right (by global village idiot seriously in need of dental work, Al Franken), “Big Lies: The Right Wing Propaganda Machine and How It Distorts the Truth,” “Bush League Diplomacy: How the Neoconservatives Are Putting The World At Risk,” and “Right Wing Justice: The Conservative Campaign to take Over the Courts.”

Along with this library of hate-Bush titles, I found (prominently displayed) exactly six books that might remotely be considered supportive of Bush or Republicans – “The Savage Nation” (by talk show host Mike Savage), “Re-Writing History” (by sometimes Republican Dick Morris), “Peace Kills” (by conservative humorist P.J. O’Rourke), “Misunderstood; The President Battles Terror, John Kerry and the Bush Haters,” “Give me a Break” (by iconoclastic journalist John Stossel) and “Madame Hillary.”

In other words, liberal books outnumbered their conservative counterparts by 7-to-1. Unless a conservative author is well-known (Sean Hannity, Savage), or excruciatingly clever (Ann Coulter, P.J. O’Rourke), he stands the same chance of hooking up with a major publisher that Janice Jackson has of being elected the president of the Legion of Decency.

When conservative works do make it between hard covers, bookstore employees tend to hide them. The late editor of Basic Books (a conservative imprint) was in a Harvard Square bookstore a few years back. He asked a salesperson for Brock's "The Real Anita Hill" (penned when the author was a conservative). The employee muttered something about "right-wing smears," and reluctantly fetched a copy from the bowels of the building.

Against all reason, liberals believe in the theory of a conservative media monopoly, because they must. How else to explain public receptiveness to conservative ideas and aversion to liberalism?

By and large, the American people find the liberal agenda: 1) ludicrous 2) dangerous 3) repulsive and 4) unreal.

Since the left can't accept these judgments, it is compelled to postulate a vast right-wing media conspiracy that successfully indoctrinates an unwary public while it hides the truth.

It's well that liberals keep carping about the conservative media monopoly – otherwise, we might forget.