The Media Research Center has been warning since 2006 that if liberals got enough power in Congress and the White House — backed by round-the-clock support from their allies in the media — they would try to shut down conservative talk radio.

That time has come: The White House and the liberal media have declared war on Rush Limbaugh in particular and conservative talk radio in general. President Obama himself gave the signal to attack when he scolded GOP leaders in a White House meeting in January, declaring, “You can’t just listen to Rush Limbaugh and get things done.”

The goal is to marginalize conservative opposition — and to be rid of it completely if possible. This can be accomplished by re-instating the so-called Fairness Doctrine, which liberal Democrats in Congress say they intend to do (but which Obama said in February he opposes). Or it can be done by regulating the ownership and broadcast licenses of radio stations in the name of “diversity” and the “public interest,” which Obama supports and details as part of his agenda on the White House’s Web site.

Liberal groups such as MoveOn.org, ACORN, the Center for American Progress, and Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), among others, have expressed their intention to silence talk radio by these alternative regulatory means.

The goal is to stifle conservative opinion — this makes it the single greatest threat in the history of our Republic to our sacred freedom of speech.

The Left has every reason to hate — and fear — the conservative media. If the right ideas don’t get out to the public, and the liberal mischief on Capitol Hill is not exposed daily by Rush, Hannity, Mark Levin, Laura Ingraham and so many other good folks — including the MRC — then the liberals can put a lock on power and the liberal media will recapture their news monopoly. Thus it is their goal for conservative voices to be muzzled.

That’s what the MRC has been warning about and leading the fight against. Through press releases, conferences on Capitol Hill, national advertising, our various divisions and Web sites, and our expert staff on talk radio, on TV, and in print, the MRC is using everything in its arsenal to stop the Fairness Doctrine and its regulatory counterparts and rebuff the attacks against conservative talk radio.

It is why the MRC has launched the Free Speech Alliance, a broad coalition that now includes 60 separate organizations all committed to fighting and defeating this attempt at government censorship.

First, the Left has to “demonize” conservative public opinion. They are trying to do this by ruining the reputation of the Right’s most prominent spokesman, Rush Limbaugh.

When the president of the United States attacked Rush Limbaugh by name
on Jan. 23, the liberal media in lock-step went on an orgy of Rush-bashing, and, curiously, it all seemed coordinated. The MRC documented it all.

For instance, one day before Obama’s attack on Rush, MSNBC’s Chris Matthews asked his audience, “Does Rush Limbaugh hate this country? Wait till you here what he said about the new president. He wants him to fail.”

That was false, of course, for Rush had said that he hoped Obama’s liberal policies failed — not that Obama as America’s president failed.

After Obama’s attack on Rush hit the news, MSNBC’s Norah O’Donnell praised the president for his “cojones” in maligning Rush and then asked a GOP panelist, “What out does it give the Republican Party to have Rush Limbaugh out there saying, who is the voice of many conservatives, that he hopes the president fails. I mean, that’s kind of lame, isn’t it?”

The game here, as the White House crafted it, is to drive a wedge between the Republican Party and Rush, and the other conservative talk radio leaders. Demonize Rush as bad guy, unpatriotic — whatever sticks — and get the GOP to stop listening to him. For if they can kill the sway of conservative ideas, on the air and in the halls of Congress, then more liberal ideas will prevail.

That same day, Jan. 26, MSNBC’s Keith Olbermann let the cat out of the bag, saying that Obama’s overtures to Muslims in the Middle East was “to create a wedge between those who are reasonable and those who are not” and “is it possible in this different context that he’s trying to do the same as he seeks bipartisanship with the Republicans, sort of, you know, separate, Mullah Limbaugh from the herd?”

Yes, it is possible — in fact, it’s deliberate! And the liberal media are part of the game plan.

The day after Olbermann’s comment, CNN’s Jack Cafferty smeared Rush as a “corpulent OxyContin aficionado.” A few days later, on CNN’s The Situation Room, Democrat Paul Begala — who conference calls near-daily with White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, strategist James Carville, and ABC’s George Stephanopoulos — said: “The real leader of the Republican Party in America today is a corpulent drug addict with an AM radio talk show, Rush Limbaugh. He’s the real power in the Republican Party. And so Michael Steele is going to need to stand up to Limbaugh if he wants to actually lead the party of Lincoln.”

Now, why would Democratic activist Begala want to help the new RNC Chairman Michael Steele? Answer:

He doesn’t. Nor does MSNBC’s Norah O’Donnell who, for instance, after suggesting Rush is a racist, practically begged Rep. Mike Pence (R-Ind.) to denounce Rush on-air on Jan. 28.

Begala, along with O’Donnell and the rest of the liberal media, wants to stop conservative ideas from being broadcast to millions of Americans and he wants a permanent Democrat majority in Congress and the White House. For when conservative ideas are broadcast and widespread, Republicans win. This happened, for example, in the House, where on Feb. 13 all 176 Republicans joined by 7 Democrats, voted against the $787 billion economic “stimulus” bill.

This was Obama’s first big attempt at “bipartisanship” and it fell flat on its face, proving that 1) when the GOP stick to conservative principles, they do the right thing, and 2) Obama’s idea of “bipartisanship” is a crock. Obama defines “bipartisan” as agreeing with the liberals.

“Bipartisan” means it’s his far left way and no other way. He knows his only opposition to enacting a radical left-wing agenda is conservative talk radio. Thus, the war on Rush and the drive to separate Republicans from conservative ideas.

The war on conservative talk radio has officially begun. The MRC is sounding the alarm every day. For example: On Feb. 19, one day after Obama said he opposed the Fairness Doctrine, the MRC issued a press release, calling on him to oppose all forms of government censorship on the radio, particularly new “diversity” and “public interest” regulations of talk radio.

The MRC also called on Obama to guarantee to the American people that he will veto any bill that would silence free speech on the airwaves. Only then will we know that the president is serious about protecting free speech.

We are keeping watch, and you can help us in this battle by telling your friends — give them this newsletter! - and by calling on lawmakers and public leaders to fight against any attempt to limit free speech on the radio. You can also help by supporting the MRC in its mission. Onward we march!

Sincerely,

L. Brent Bozell III
Founder and President
ABC Puts Up Smokescreen

... After the MRC Exposes Anchor George Stephanopoulos’s Conflict of Interest in Covering White House

The Media Research Center exposed in late January a major conflict of interest concerning ABC’s George Stephanopoulos and the White House and called for him to recuse himself from further reporting on the Obama administration. This MRC action resulted in more than 100,000 Americans contacting ABC headquarters, which compelled the network to publicly respond.

On Jan. 27, the Politico reported that Stephanopoulos has daily phone conversations with White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, along with Democratic strategists Paul Begala and James Carville. All four of these hardcore liberals ran the 1992 Clinton campaign, and Emanuel went on to become a congressman in 2002 and head of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in 2005-06. Today, he is Obama’s chief of staff. Stephanopoulos, who was a senior adviser to President Bill Clinton, is ABC’s chief Washington correspondent and the anchor of This Week.

As Politico reported about the phone calls, “In any given news cycle, it is quite likely that Washington’s prevailing political and media interpretation — at least on the Democratic side — is being hatched on these calls.”

Begala was also quoted as saying, “We talk so much — was this my idea that James changed, or was this George’s observation that Rahm tweaked?”

Precisely. The calls are daily strategy sessions where the “prevailing political and media interpretation … is being hatched.”

That’s what Politico reported and it's what the MRC acted upon. Our office issued a press release on Jan. 29 calling on Stephanopoulos to recuse himself from any reporting involving the Obama administration.

MRC President Brent Bozell said in the release, “What’s worse than the liberal media’s sycophantic coverage of President Barack Obama? ABC’s George Stephanopoulos actively helping design and deliver the administration’s strategy and message — which he is then charged with reporting. Will Stephanopoulos be critical of the White House’s plans when he spends every morning helping to craft them? Not likely.”

With that, the story took off. Over 101,000 e-mails were sent and thousands of people called ABC News. Their telephone operators, as we subsequently learned, definitely felt the pressure.

When neither Stephanopoulos nor ABC responded, the MRC sent a letter on Feb. 4 to ABC News President David Westin. It noted Stephanopoulos’s clear “conflict of interest” in his daily strategy calls with Emanuel and that such action “is a clear violation of journalistic ethics.” It also noted that if the Politico story was false, then surely Stephanopoulos or ABC would have demanded that Politico run a correction.

But Stephanopoulos and ABC kept silent for awhile. Finally, ABC’s Kerry Smith, senior vice president of editorial quality, released a public letter stating that Stephanopoulos does not advise Emanuel: “He reports on the Obama Administration. He speaks to Mr. Emanuel, a friend he has known for nearly two decades, as a source ....”

Then Smith went on to blame the MRC for supposedly misrepresenting what was on the record. Smith never said the Politico story was false and Stephanopoulos, of course, never said it was false — and has in fact stayed mum this whole time.

MRC President Bozell responded to Smith’s letter with a Feb. 9 press release, pointing out that Stephanopoulos, Begala, Emanuel and Carville all labored together as Democratic strategists and message makers, and for ABC “to not even address this fact, and how there just might be even an appearance of impropriety, suggests” that ABC suffers from “collective amnesia.”

Does anyone doubt that if Karl Rove had been hired as an anchor at Fox News and it was revealed he was having daily strategy phone calls with a Republican White House that it would not be the lead story across the country? Yet when liberal Democrats do this stuff, it’s business as usual.
No D’s Here

Rod Blagojevich, the Democratic governor of Illinois who allegedly try to sell Barack Obama’s Senate seat to the highest bidder was impeached and barred from ever serving in public office in Illinois. Yet in their Jan. 29 coverage of the news, the networks — ABC, CBS, and NBC — somehow forgot to report that Blagojevich is a Democrat. Not one mention, not even a (D) in the on-screen graphic.

Similarly, on Jan. 26, ABC’s Good Morning America ran four segments — nearly 18 minutes — of an interview with Blagojevich yet, in all that time, probing co-host Diane Sawyer somehow forgot to mention that the politician she was talking with is a Democrat. Sawyer just called him “Governor” and “Governor Blagojevich.” In 1 million years would they forget to use the label “Republican” if it were a GOP scandal?

GOP!

CBS and ABC whined and moaned on Jan. 28 because not one House Republican was “bipartisan” enough to vote for the Democrats’ $820 billion deal to supposedly stimulate the economy. ABC anchor Charles Gibson, with a “Rescue Plan” graphic over his shoulder, complained that Republicans had turned “a cold shoulder to the president’s appeal for bipartisan support.” Then, ABC’s Jonathan Karl fretted: “So much for the president’s charm offensive. Today it was all partisan rancor and name-calling.”

Over at CBS, reporter Chip Reid chafed that “Republicans relentlessly attacked the bill despite the president’s extraordinary efforts to get bipartisan support.” And anchor Katie Couric whined that “the president went up to the Hill to personally appeal to Republicans already,” so, “what more can he do?” ... Here’s one answer: Stop the biggest exercise in socialism in our nation’s history.

Pre-Obama ‘Evil’

All the presidents — or at least the Republican ones — prior to Barack Obama were little more than the choices of two degrees of evil, according to NBC anchor Brain Williams. Still giddy a week after the inauguration, Williams went on The Late Show with David Letterman on Jan. 26 and gushed that so many people had lined up to buy Obama merchandise. “To see people, whatever your politics, that excited about our new chief executive after a line of what the ordinary voter would maybe describe as bad choices or choices of evils, for years, generations — it is unbelievable to me,” trumpeted Williams. One wonders if Ronald Reagan was a “bad choice” or just “evil” in the mind of Williams.

The NBC “journalist” then let down what is left of his hair and crowed, “We have a dazzling family in the White House” now and “I don’t think they take a bad picture.” As for the president, he “has an enormous brain. He’s a hugely capable man,” said the ever-objective Williams.

‘Brutal’ Pro-Lifers

After President Obama quietly reversed a policy launched by President Reagan to prevent taxpayer money from going to groups overseas that provide abortions — the Mexico City Policy — CBS and NBC barely mentioned the news on Jan. 23 while ABC totally ignored it. Then, apparently to make up for its negligence, ABC aired a segment on Jan. 25 highlighting the “brutal” reaction of conservatives to Obama’s action.

Reporter Dan Harris lectured: “At churches across the country, the good will coming from the pulpit to
the president seems to be wavering. On Friday, the President signed an executive order, reversing the ban on federal funding for international organizations that facilitate abortions in other countries. The president didn’t allow cameras to film the signing, hoping not to provoke anti-abortion groups. It didn’t work. Reaction was fast and brutal. Family groups accused Obama of plotting the infanticide of African children — and the Christian faithful say they’re now losing faith in Obama.”

Now losing faith?

Super Obama

ABC just can’t seem to stop praising President Obama. Three days after the inauguration, correspondent George Stephanopoulos — who repeatedly strategizes with Obama Chief-of-Staff Rahm Emanuel — cheerily intoned that “this first week was disciplined and strategic,” showing that the new Democratic messiah is “moving on all fronts to bring change.” This includes “sweeping change to open government,” “sweeping change in foreign policy,” and “then day three, today, two promises kept,” declared Stephanopoulos.

His ABC colleagues were equally enthusiastic. Diane Sawyer pronounced, “Change the tone and change it at warp speed.” While Bob Schieffer bellowed: “With the severity of the problems he faced, no human, no matter how confident, it seems to me, could look out on that crowd and not wonder: ‘Can I live up to the expectations of all those people?’… He will close Guantanamo prison and outlaw torture. He has told the world that we will practice what we preach.”

Go Joe!

In a strong display of conservative backbone, MSNBC’s Joe Scarborough took his liberal co-host Mika Brzezinski and Washington Post editorial writer Jonathan Capehart to task on Jan. 22 over their vapid complaints about Gitmo. After listening to Brzezinski and Capehart carp about how terrible Gitmo is, Joe fired back: “What you are doing and, Mika, what you are doing and the rabid left, not you all, but the rabid left has done for the past seven years, is just say, ‘We are going to apply new standards to the Geneva Convention.’”

“Oh, guess what, Jonathan? We are!” following the Geneva Convention, said Scarborough. “Al Qaeda terrorists that don’t wear uniforms. How about reading the Geneva Convention! Because, terrorists that try and blow up civilians are not protected under the Geneva Convention. … I want you to find me the Nazi prisoner that was read the Miranda rights on the beaches of Normandy! This is lunacy! … Terrorists who blow up civilians do not get habeas corpus!” Amen.

Minibits

A pro-Obama press? You decide. ABC’s Bill Weir gets misty at inauguration, “Never have so many people shivered so long with such joy. From above, even the seagulls must have been awed by the blanket of humanity.” ■ NBC’s Andrea Mitchell goes ’poetic’ at the inauguration, “The mass flickering of cell phone cameras on the mall seemed like stars shining back at him.” ■ TIME’s David von Drehle riffs on Obama that “we are all accustomed to that Obi-Wahn Kenobi calm. … He gets things done. He is a man about his business, a Mr. Fix-It going to Washington.” ■ CBS’s Tracy Smith cheers “about how a lot of people think that President-elect Barack Obama is the epitome of cool. Look at that guy. Everything, I mean, even in a baseball cap.” ■ MSNBC’s Chris Matthews wants radical change: “Why do we have no lefties in this cabinet? Why no lefties? Why nobody that talks like Barack Obama talked when he got elected? I’m waiting for change.” ■ The Boston Globe’s James Carroll believes Obama is like that other “messiah,” Mikhail Gorbachev: “Is it too much to expect Barack Obama to change history? Make peace? Transform an economic system? Rescue the Earth? Build a political program around the truth? Restore a great nation’s decency? … By the grace of God, it is not too late to match the greatness with which Gorbachev acted 20 years ago.” ■ CBS’s Harry Smith chastises Ann Coulter, “The more I listen to your complaints, the more I kept thinking, well, you’re the whiner. You’re the one who’s claiming victimhood here. That you’re the victim of this great left-wing conspiracy. You should put yourself up on a Cross.” ■ Newsweek’s “Conventional Wisdom” page sizes up conservative Sarah Palin: “ill-informed, inarticulate shopaholic has ego bigger than Alaska — and she’s still the darling of the GOP.” ■ Hollywood’s Renee Zellweger reveals her genius, “I have a crush on Jimmy Carter. I admit it. He has an extraordinary mind. He’s an exceptional human being. And he writes poetry, for crying out loud. He’s all good things.”
Inauguration: Joy or Pain?

Walking the freezing streets of Washington D.C. at 5:00 on the morning of the Inauguration, you could already feel the excitement. In a sense, it’s understandable that so many in the press went overboard in their coverage Tuesday: history was made before our eyes. I didn’t mind it, really. But what is offensive was the constant refrain that “America comes together” during Inaugurations. This is a line applied to Democrats. Republicans are not awarded that courtesy by the press.

The most obvious contrast comes from the Associated Press. On January 12, 2001, the AP headline was “Texas’ inaugural ball will be definitive Texas excess.” Reporter Suzanne Gamboa asserted: “It would be redundant to say this party put on by Texans is big, but is it big enough to meet the definition of Texas excess? You bet.” The AP noted $1.75 million in corporate sponsorships, and trotted out the usual “watchdog groups” to lament the lobbyist access through excess.

On January 13, 2005, AP’s Will Lester disparaged the “lavish” Bush inauguration, creatively listing how much could be purchased with the millions wasted on the ceremonies: 200 armored Humvees with the best armor for troops in Iraq, vaccinations and preventive health care for 22 million children in regions devastated by the tsunami, even a down payment on the nation’s deficit, “which hit a record-breaking $412 billion last year.”

Lester added that Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban (the man who would soon hire disgraced Dan Rather for his HDNet channel) insisted President Bush should cancel all his parties and festivities to set an example. Democratic congressmen Anthony Weiner and Jim McDermott were highlighted for urging Bush in a letter that he imitate FDR’s 1945 inaugural, where he served guests “cold chicken salad and plain pound cake.”

But on January 13, 2009, with deficit estimates passing over the trillion-dollar mark, the AP urged that “excess” was mandatory for an inauguration they finally felt was worth celebrating. They wrote of no attempts to ask liberal Democrats if they would now urge Obama to stick to cold chicken salad and pound cake.

AP’s Laurie Kellman was aware that the economy was in crisis, but breezily suggested “glitzing it up” was a must. “So you’re attending an inaugural ball saluting the historic election of Barack Obama in the worst economic climate in three generations. Can you get away with glitzing it up and still be appropriate, not to mention comfortable and financially viable? To quote the man of the hour: Yes, you can. Veteran ballgoers say you should. And fashionistas insist that you must.”

A few days after the Media Research Center marked this incredibly stark contrast in AP attitudes in defining what is “news,” AP issued a new story by Matt Apuzzo which acknowledged the contrast between Obama’s parties and the economic gloom. Apuzzo reprised the 2005 comments of Reps. Weiner and McDermott, and then passed along that Obama’s inauguration committee says it is mindful of the times and is not worried people will see the four days of festivities as excessive.

Former ABC reporter Linda Douglass, the Obama transition spokeswoman, elaborated that Team Obama would “keep costs down by having the same decorations at each of the 10 balls, eliminating floral arrangements and negotiating prices on food.” A spokesman for Rep. McDermott saluted Obama’s team for “trying to be reflective of the climate.”

This time, the Politico newspaper reported that former Congressman Tom DeLay suggested Obama could have the simple chicken dinner, but he didn’t make this AP story. There were no critical conservatives or Republicans or even Naderite “watchdog groups” to add any vinegar to this attempt by the nation’s preeminent wire service to temper their biases.

A few reporters eventually offered a traditional “watchdog group” story. On the morning of January 20, ABC’s Brian Ross found the Naderites at Public Citizen and declared that “even in the middle of a brutal recession, there’s been no shortage of wealthy Americans ready to pay for the most expensive inaugural ever.” (This is hardly as sour a report as ABC’s successful search in 2005 for a Iraq-related military funeral that the late Peter Jennings could highlight on the Inauguration Day evening news.)

Aside from the cost, the media treated the Obama inauguration as a historic and inspiring occasion in a president of a different color, a ceiling broken, and the arrival of a new role model for black youth. It certainly was. But once the pomp and parades are over, the media’s dramatic double standard in reporting these events — depending on which party’s taking power — cannot be forgotten.

For the record, the “lavish” Bush inaugural cost $43 million. Final tallies are not complete, but according to some sources, like the Guardian newspaper, the Obama inaugural will cost more than $150 million.
The experts at the Media Research Center are interviewed almost every day on stories of national importance, often reaching millions of Americans daily. They provide analysis and commentary on radio, TV, the Internet, in magazines, books and in newspapers, always striving to help restore political balance to the major media. Some of the MRC’s latest media appearances include the following:

Television

CBN:  *Newswatch*, Jan. 24, Feb. 5
CNBC:  *The Situation Room*, Jan. 5, 8
Sunday News w/ John King, Feb. 1
Newsroom, Feb. 2
FBN:  *Your World w/ Neil Cavuto*, Feb. 8
FNC:  *Hannity & Colmes*, Jan. 20, 22, 26
*The O’Reilly Factor*, Jan. 8
*America’s HQ*, Jan. 18
*Strategy Room*, Feb. 4
Pittsburgh Cable News: Jan. 26

Radio

G. Gordon Liddy Show, Jan. 27
Thom Hartmann Show, Feb. 3
American Family Radio, Jan. 27, 30
Source with Paul Anderson, Jan. 31
Joe Scarborough Show, Feb. 2
Faith2Action, Jan. 21, 29
Bill Cunningham Show, Jan. 25
American Family Radio, Jan. 21
Financial Lifeline Radio, Feb. 2
Family News in Focus, Jan. 27
NRA News, Jan. 23, 30
Ringside Politics, Jan. 21
WIBA, Madison, WI, Jan. 19, 22
WTOK, Boston, MA, Jan. 19
WOR, New York, NY, Jan. 20
WAMT, Orlando, FL, Jan. 20
WRVA, Richmond, VA, Jan. 21
WTOK, Greenville, NC, Jan. 19, 22, 23
WMUZ, Detroit, MI, Jan. 19, 28
WIBC, Indianapolis, IN, Jan. 22, 29
KXYL, Brownwood, TX, Jan. 26, 27
KKTX, Corpus Christi, TX, Jan. 19, 21, 26, 28
KAAV, Little Rock, AR, Jan. 19, 26
WCHS, Charleston, WV, Jan. 21, 27

Internet

Drudge Report, Jan. 21
Townhall.com, Jan. 5, 18, 23, Jan. 23
American Thinker, Jan. 20
WashingtonPost.com, Jan. 21
New York magazine online, Jan. 21
OneNewsNow.com, Jan. 5, 6, 22, 30
American Spectator blog, Jan. 22
FoxNews.com, Jan. 2, 17, 21, 27
Red State blog, Jan. 3
Bizzy blog, Jan. 2
CBN.com, Jan. 1
LifeNews.com, Jan. 7
ABCNews.com, Jan. 7
WSJ.com, Jan. 6
Minority Report, Jan. 9
ExileStreet.com, Jan. 7
Michelle Malkin blog, Jan. 23
NewsMax.com, Jan. 27
Dallas Morning News blog, Jan. 28
NPR blog, Jan. 30
Salon.com, Jan. 27
The Hotline, Jan. 9

Print

Chicago Tribune, Jan. 17
Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, Jan. 18
Washington Times, Jan. 1, 5, 21, 23
Village Voice, Jan. 23
Bloomberg News, Jan. 21
Baltimore Examiner, Jan. 2, 8, 22, 29
Las Vegas Review-Journal, Jan. 4
Jerusalem Post, Jan. 2
Washington Independent, Jan. 5
Chattanooga Times-Free Press, Jan. 21
Fintel Journal, Jan. 7
The Politico, Jan. 29
Philadelphia City Paper, Jan. 23
The Evening Bulletin, Jan. 29
Green Valley News, Jan. 29
Florida Sun-Sentinel, Jan. 30

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