Dear Member,

The liberal media are flailing away at President Bush in a blatant, deliberate, utterly partisan effort to destroy his credibility in advance of the 2004 election.

The flimsy hammer they’ve seized is a 16-word sentence that appeared in January’s State of the Union address. President Bush, citing British intelligence, claimed Saddam Hussein’s regime was attempting to buy uranium from Africa.

On July 8, the White House informed the media and the nation that this claim might have been based on faulty intelligence, although the British continue to stand by their report. It was the honest thing to do.

But instead of giving the Bush administration credit for admitting a potential error and telling the country about it – unlike the previous administration, there was no Congressional inquiry needed to drag an admission out of the Bush White House – the liberal media have wanted Bush’s head on a platter ever since he beat their guy Gore. They couldn’t stand the father and now they also hate the son. Their so-called “reporting” proves their animosity.

CNN’s Aaron Brown made the wildest accusation on his July 9 NewsNight. In an exchange with network correspondent David Ensor, the anchor asked Ensor what he knew about an Internet story that claimed a CIA consultant “directly told the President that this African uranium deal was bogus.” A visibly

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surprised Ensor said he had no way confirm the story. “It is somewhat suspect I would say,” the correspondent told Brown.

The story was more than suspect. It was absolutely false and Brown, or someone on his staff, should have known it. The CapitolHillBlue.com web site had broken the story earlier that day but by 6 p.m., four hours before Brown went on the air, the site’s publisher issued a lengthy retraction. The publisher had discovered that his source was a total fraud who had probably never even been in the White House, let alone ever briefed the President.

Aaron Brown has yet to correct (never mind apologize for) the story.

Brown was hardly alone when it came to reckless reporting. The day after Brown broadcast a known falsehood, CBS dramatically oversold another solid story by Martin, treating a cautious, well-grounded piece that noted the uranium claim was “technically correct” as if it were a smoking gun that proved the administration had intentionally used bad intelligence. “Bush Knew Iraq Info Was False,” the CBSNews.com web site screamed in a headline. Substitute anchor John Roberts opened his Evening News broadcast by flatly stating President Bush had made “a false claim about Iraqi weapons. He made it despite a CIA warning the intelligence was bad.” The facts, as the report bore out, didn’t jibe with the blatantly false web site headline or with Roberts’ partisan and untrue opening.

Roberts was at it again on Sunday, July 13, although this time he dialed back the Bush-bashing hyperbole. Did the Bush administration, he asked, “knowingly put dubious intelligence into this year’s State of the Union address?” The issue, according to the anchor, was one “that refuses to go away.”

The story “refuses to go away” only because the media refused to stop trying, trying, trying to create a scandal. This was an issue Roberts and his fellow journalists refused to let die. ABC News Political Director Mark Halperin cut to the heart of the matter on the Sunday World News Tonight. “Why are the Democrats now directly going after Mr. Bush in the very area where he has been so strong?” Halperin asked as the cover of a Time magazine with the headline “Untruth and Consequences” appeared on screen. “For one thing, there’s the daily drumbeat of media questions,” he said.

This media drumbeat was clearly aimed at hurting the President’s credibility and forwarding the arguments of his Democratic opponents. No one, either in the press or the opposition party, has produced a scrap of evidence that indicates the claim was malicious or deliberate and no one has disputed the numerous other reasons the President gave for war against Saddam in his State of the Union speech. Yet the liberal media, in a deluge of sensational headlines and speculative questions, did their best to make it appear the President had lied.

The MRC vigorously defended the President. In my nationally syndicated column on July 15, I noted that the entire affair was a partisan charade, brought to you by the same journalists who overlooked or apologized for every lie Bill Clinton told during his eight-year reign. Now, suddenly, a 16-word sentence that is technically correct but may eventually prove to be mistaken is a reason for hand wringing, doubt and endless criticism by the same journalists. Neglected in all of this is the fact that if it weren’t for President Bush’s steadfast leadership, Saddam Hussein would still be sitting in Baghdad, torturing and slaughtering his own people and threatening his neighbors and the world. My column wasn’t the only blow the MRC struck against the anti-Bush liberal media. Our CyberAlert exposed Aaron Brown’s careless and biased reporting and a Media Reality Check highlighted the outrageous mistake and both were picked up by numerous conservative news operations. Our web site provided daily updates on the stream of biased stories and our staff gave numerous interviews on the subject.

The MRC will aggressively mobilize to counter any liberal media unfair attack on the President. We understand fully that sometimes criticism is warranted. But cheap shots – and non-stop cheap shots especially – are out of line.

Until next time,

L. Brent Bozell III
C-SPAN Broadcast of MRC DisHonors Generates Large Viewer Response

After C-SPAN’s broadcast of the 2003 MRC’s DisHonors Awards dinner on June 28, e-mails poured into our office in Alexandria. Most of the viewers were delighted to see the liberal media skewered. A few liberals, however, had an altogether different opinion of the event.

LETTERS

I cannot possibly convey to you just how much I enjoyed watching MRC’s DisHonors Awards on C-SPAN Saturday night. And I cannot thank the presenters enough for fighting the good fight day after day… I am glad that C-SPAN aired your program and that it introduced me to your organization.

~ Don R.

I watched the DisHonors Awards and was stunned by the immature comments and maligning commentary by the journalists giving the awards. No matter how biased the liberal media, countering it with less-than-high school bad humor shows equally bad judgment and a terrible example for young people.

~ Marian H.

I am a freshman in college. Before tonight I had no interest in politics and would have never imagined myself watching C-SPAN! After watching the DisHonors Awards I can proudly consider myself a conservative. I just wanted to thank you for opening my eyes to a new outlook on government and showing just how ignorant some people can be.

~ Jonathan S.

I’ve been following the MRC for several years now and am wholeheartedly behind what you do. I finally managed to catch an entire DisHonors Awards on C-SPAN and was delighted by it.

~ Joey B.

Happened upon this evening’s CSPAN broadcast of MRC’s DisHonors Awards; an embarrassing and cheesy production that, in reality, dishonored yourselves. Setting aside the fiction that America can be made better by matching or replacing “their” bias with your own, what seemed sadly most on display was the conservative penchant for being graceless, hateful and small minded.

~ Barry M.

I just saw your DisHonor Awards on C-SPAN. I am going to live – although I almost died laughing! What a breath of fresh air you all are. As soon as I can get together a few bucks they are yours. I live surrounded by the dumbest, meanest Dems in the world here in Toledo. Thank you again for your hard work!

~ Deb M.

“Are you guys for real? The truth will burst from it’s burial and explode in your faces. Oh, and nothing you guys have done is the least bit funny, your attempts at comedy are what is funny.”

~ Anonymous

MRC Archive Reaches 30,000 Milestone

On July 3, the MRC’s News Analysis Division celebrated the addition of the 30,000th videotape to its one-of-a-kind news archive. The collection now contains more than 180,000 hours of news programming.

Get the latest CyberAlert!

Want to stay on top of media bias? Sign up for the CyberAlert e-mail report. It’s FREE!
To subscribe, just e-mail sengle@mediaresearch.org
Mention that you read about the offer in FLASH.

**NBC’s New “Homeless”**

NBC dedicated its entire July 4 Dateline to a story about four families who, according to reporter John Hockenberry, represent the “new true face of homelessness in America.”

A New York City woman was the first to be profiled. She had been in and out of the city’s emergency housing system with her two children for a year but then received a subsidized apartment. A Cleveland, Ohio man was up next. He lost his job and fell behind in the mortgage payments on his suburban home. But then the man found a job, so a crisis was averted.

The third case was a Santa Cruz, Calif. man who makes $38,000 a year as a computer technician but lives in a motor home with his wife and two kids because housing is so expensive. The last case, and the most compelling one, was a single father who was evicted from his apartment after losing his job and becoming ill with cancer. That man, who also lost a son to suicide, had to move in with relatives.

We’re not really sure what the point of the program was because none of the “new homeless” families was homeless at any point. If NBC is to be believed and this is the new face of homelessness in America, then it appears the country is doing a great job.

**Networks Pass Off Activists as “Typical” Seniors**

In last month’s FLASH, we told you the MRC’s CyberAlert had exposed how ABC and CBS, in stories filed two years apart, had somehow managed to find and use the same supposedly “average Joe” senior citizen in stories critical of Republican prescription drug plans. The item was picked up by Rush Limbaugh, who broadcast it to his audience of 20 million listeners, and by the Wall Street Journal’s OpinionJournal.com.

No sooner had the dust settled on that journalistic fraud than NBC pulled a similar stunt. Correspondent Norah O’Donnell highlighted 77-year-old Pat Roussos in a Nightly News story about the shortcomings of the proposed prescription drug entitlement. Roussos, who said she pays $6,500 a year for her prescription drugs, claimed the current proposal is “only a start, and I’m not convinced it’s going to go very far.”

But Roussos was hardly an unbiased source. As MRC Vice President Brent Baker discovered and subsequently publicized in CyberAlert, Roussos serves as the Connecticut Community Coordinator for the leftwing AARP, the senior citizens group formerly known as the American Association of Retired Persons, and oversees the state’s 72 chapters. There was no mention of that fact in NBC’s piece.

CNSNews.com reporter Marc Morano followed up the CyberAlert expose with an investigative story that found other networks have commonly used political hacks, not innocent bystanders, as sources for prescription drug stories. CBS News has used Viola Qirion, an elderly political activist, as a “typical victim” of high drug costs three times since 1999! Morano’s story also cited a study by the Rather-Biased.com web site that found CBS news had used seven elderly activists 23 times without disclosing their political activities in stories on the prescription drug issue.

**NY Times Appoints a Another Leftwing Editor**

It’s out with the old and, well, back in with old at the New York Times.

Former Managing Editor Bill Keller was named Executive Editor on July 14, replacing ultraliberal Howell Raines, who resigned in disgrace after the Jayson Blair fiasco. Keller was runner-up to Raines for the paper’s top position in 2001 and has been a columnist at the paper since then. In that time, he has proven to be just as leftist as Raines.

The MRC’s special project, TimesWatch.org, provided a list of the savage attacks Keller has made on conservatives. The new Executive Editor has called Attorney General John Ashcroft an “ayatollah,” insulted Senators Jesse Helms, James Inhofe and the late Strom Thurmond as part of the “American Taliban” and claims Al Gore won the 2000 election.

Keller has also claimed the Bush administration has “fortified the obscene gap between America’s rich and poor” and once wrote that the country’s “simple-minded political discourse intimidates anyone who might favor raising taxes.”

“Mr. Keller’s writings are indistinguishable from the hyperbolic liberalism coming from the most leftwing Democratic presidential candidates.” MRC President Bozell said in a national press release. Keller must keep his strong opinions from slanting the news, Bozell warned, or “the paper’s credibility may worsen beyond repair.”

**Media Drop Labels When Democrats are Disgraced**

When former Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina died last month, every
media story discussed his segregationist past and identified him as a Republican. Fair enough.

But when Lester Maddox, a lifelong Democrat and the last segregationist Governor of Georgia, died in late June the networks forgot all about his party label. On the June 25 morning shows, neither Good Morning America or Today applied the Democrat label to Maddox, nor did the CNN or even the Fox News Channel morning shows.

The omission continued into the night. Brief stories on CBS Evening News and NBC’s Nightly News didn’t identify Maddox’s party. ABC’s World News Tonight and CNBC’s The News with Brian Williams ran two-minute pieces on Maddox but still didn’t mention his party affiliation.

Burying the Democratic label for controversial or disgraced Democrats has become standard procedure at the networks over the last couple of years. An MRC study during the summer of 2001 found Rep. Gary Condit, the California Democrat at the center of the Chandra Levy controversy, was the subject of 179 network stories on ABC, CBS, and NBC during a two-month period. He was identified as a Democrat in only 14 stories. Similar treatment has been applied to Democrats convicted of crimes, such as former Ohio Rep. Jim Traficant and former Louisiana Gov. Edwin Edwards.

Those Ferocious, Extreme Conservatives

The liberal media used a recent Supreme Court decision that struck down a Texas law banning sodomy to contrast “gay rights” proponents with conservatives. As always happens in the coverage of social issues, the media hammered conservatives without regard for their arguments.

“Gays and lesbians are clearly encouraged [by the decision], but given some of the ferocious language on the other side, full equality may be a good ways off,” ABC’s Cynthia McFadden lamented on the June 26 World News Tonight. And what exactly was the “ferocious” language McFadden was so concerned about? A spokesperson from the Concerned Women of America, without any reference to gays and lesbians, had called the legal ruling a “raw act of judicial tyranny.”

McFadden wasn’t the only reporter outraged by conservative opposition to gay rights. NBC’s Roger O’Neill claimed talk radio represented the lunatic fringe. “On the extremes, talk show host Rush Limbaugh [was] lambasting the court, agreeing with Justice Antonin Scalia’s dissenting opinion that the court has taken sides with gays in America’s culture wars,” O’Neill reported.

This is the network journalists view of the world. Limbaugh agrees with the dissenting opinion of a Supreme Court case and that viewpoint, which contained no slurs, no attacks and no judgments, is described as extremist by the media.

This reporting proves what we already knew. These network journalists are so radical and contemptuous of conservative concerns on social issues they simply refuse to give them a fair hearing.

mini-bits

[Affirmative action] is a bit of a sideshow that assuages us guilty liberals,” admits Newsweek’s Evan Thomas. CBS’s Joie Chen claims with a straight face that “With only $400 billion to spend, there just isn’t enough money to fix [the Medicare prescription drug entitlement]” CNN’s Aaron Brown sees yet another role for government: “Let’s just publicly fund the [federal] campaigns. Let’s use tax dollars.” “It seems to me,” former CBS anchor Walter Cronkite says, “that instead of cutting taxes, we ought to increasing taxes to pay off the deficit” “Why are the Democrats so much more willing than the Republicans to make political sacrifices in the name of procedural fairness or of good government? Maybe Democrats are just nicer…” says New York Times Magazine contributing writer James Traub. ABC’s Peter Jennings takes a cheap shot at President Bush: “The President’s tax cut is beginning to show up. Will three extra dollars stimulate the nation’s economy?” Actor Kelsey Grammer, famous for the role of psychiatrist Frasier Crane on Cheers and Frasier, takes aim at Jennings: “It seems I’ve been playing the same effete, pompous character on television for 20 years. And I know what you’re thinking: Wow, Peter Jennings looks terrible!”
CNSNews.com Interns Distinguish Themselves in Professional Environment

Training the next generation of journalists has always been a priority at CNSNews.com, so when our annual crop of summer interns comes in, we look forward to the harvest.

We always prided ourselves on providing college students with high quality internships, not just opportunities to hang out for a summer in a Mid-Atlantic city with high humidity and monuments. These young people toil in our newsrooms and generate news articles on a daily basis.

David Fein is a rising senior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he’s majoring in history and political science with an eye toward law school. We harnessed his interest and skills with legal matters and assigned him earlier this month to cover a controversy at California Polytechnic State University, where student Steve Hinkel was under fire by university officials for having the audacity to post a flyer advertising a conservative speaker.

David’s article caught like wildfire around the Internet, and resulted in something few interns have ever achieved – authorship of the single most read news article of the week.

Intern Danielle Gillespie is on track to graduate from the University of Oregon in a few months, and has already earned more than a dozen bylines. In just a short time, Danielle has demonstrated a certain fearlessness in covering controversial topics, including sexual orientation in corporate policy, police interrogation of school children and church views on homosexuality.

Around the Independence Day holiday, Danielle authored an article on the role of our Constitution in the 21st Century, resulting in a re-print request from a conservative law review in Pakistan.

Our intern staff was reinforced in July by the arrival of Nathan Masters, who begins his senior year this fall at the University of California – Irvine.

Although he only recently came on board at CNSNews.com, Nathan has already immersed himself into the debate over whether the U.S. should re-join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, an organization from which Ronald Reagan withdrew America’s membership.

Nathan’s also demonstrated another critical trait for a professional newsman – the willingness to doggedly stay with a story, even when it means staying up while the sun goes down.

The issues reported by these young journalists are not simple by any stretch of the imagination; but these are not ordinary interns. They have survived a rigorous interviewing and screening process by which we select only the most motivated and skilled college students for a program designed to take them to a higher level.

CNSNews.com interns are challenged to perform alongside experienced professionals and when they end their internships, they return to their campuses with an experience that gives them a leg-up on their contemporaries. And I’m proud to report that each of them has risen to that challenge.
Fighting the Good Fight

The MRC took the fight to the liberal media on several different fronts last month. Highlights included:

☛ MRC President Brent Bozell’s statement on MSNBC’s firing of talk show host Michael Savage was re-printed as a column in the July 9 New York Post and cited by the Boston Globe and Washington Times. Bozell also appeared on the Fox News Channel’s Fox & Friends on June 26, where he discussed the capture of Iraqi Information Minister Muhammed Saeed Al-Sahaf, better known as “Baghdad Bob.” That appearance led to a conversation with Eason Jordan, the chief news executive at CNN, who shared information about how vicious Al-Sahaf had been when Jordan was working in Iraq. The conversation resulted in a nationally syndicated Bozell column “Baghdad Bob’s No Joke” that noted the Iraqi propaganda minister’s brutality.

☛ Clay Waters, Director of MRC’s special project on the New York Times, TimesWatch.org, participated in a panel discussion on media bias at the South Asian Journalists Association conference at Columbia University in New York City on June 21. In addition, a TimesWatch.org piece on the New York Times appointment of liberal columnist Bill Keller to the paper’s top job was cited on OpinionJournal.com’s Best of the Web, National Review Online and on MSNBC’s Scarborough Country.

☛ MRC Director of Media Analysis Tim Graham wrote an article on departing White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer for National Review Online that was also cited by the Washington Times. Graham also did numerous radio interviews on the media coverage of the Iraq-uranium connection and Bill Keller’s appointment to the top job at the New York Times.

☛ MRC Vice President Brent Baker’s CyberAlert item about the media’s overreaction to the deletion of a global warming paragraph in an EPA report was picked up by MSNBC’s Scarborough Country and the Washington Times.

☛ Rush Limbaugh.com’s Total Stack of Stuff, a compilation of the material Limbaugh uses to prepare for his show, cited Media Research Center products on June 25 and July 10. MRC information was also cited in the July 1 National Review Online, the June 27 Lucianne.com and the June 30 Bulletin’s Frontrunner.
MRC Praises MSNBC for Firing Savage But Points to Media Hypocrisy

In a national press release issued on July 8, Media Research Center President Brent Bozell praised MSNBC for firing talk show host Michael Savage for wishing death to a caller. But Bozell also pointed out the hypocrisy: The same media turn a blind eye to liberals in the media who spew the very same hateful venom against conservatives.

Savage’s outburst came on his July 5 program, when he asked a heckling caller if he was a “sodomite.” When the man said yes, Savage responded that “you should only get AIDS and die, you pig.”

“MSNBC was right to fire Michael Savage,” Bozell said. “His comments have no place in civilized debate. But neither did comments that have come from liberal icons of television such as Bryant Gumbel, Nina Totenberg and Julianne Malveaux—all of whom have said hateful things about conservatives, and none of whom has had to answer for it,” Bozell noted.

The release, which was also ran by the New York Post as a Bozell column, provided three examples.

From the July 8, 1995 Inside Washington: ABC News/NPR Reporter Nina Totenberg: “I think [Jesse Helms] ought to be worried about what’s going on in the Good Lord’s mind, because if there is retributive justice, he’ll get AIDS from a transfusion or one of his grandchildren will get it.”

From PBS’s To The Contrary, November 4, 1994: Former USA Today columnist Julianne Malveaux on Justice Clarence Thomas: “You know, I hope his wife feeds him lots of eggs and butter and he dies early like many black men do, of heart disease. Well, that’s how I feel. He is an absolutely reprehensible person.”

From The Early Show, CBS, June 29, 2000: Host Bryant Gumbel, caught on national television after concluding an interview with the Family Research Council’s Bob Knight, who defended Boy Scouts’ refusal to allow homosexual scoutmasters: “What a f***ing idiot.”

“Not one of these hatemongers ever apologized, nor did the networks they were affiliated with take any action,” Bozell said.