

The Media Research Center's Monthly Members' Report

TV's Never-Ending Bad News Brigade

Dear Member,

Make no mistake about this: The American news media are doing everything in their considerable power to undermine the U.S. war effort in Iraq. Nearly every day the headlines and stories are painted in the gloomiest of hues to help the media push their agenda against a military response to terrorism. They see their coverage of the war as their means to destroy the Bush Administration.

A tough accusation? Sure. But it's also obvious given the evidence from a new MRC study on coverage of the Iraq war; and it's also obvious given some recent headlines. And this is why, in part, the MRC keeps

fighting back to counter (and balance) the barrage of liberally biased news that is doing so much damage to our country.

Let's look at some recent stories.

On Oct. 15, millions of Iraqis walked with determination to the polls to vote for a new constitution. The turnout was high, 79 percent of eligible voters. The violence was down dramatically from the triumphant elections of January. But the networks found all this boring. On the night before the historic vote, ABC led with bird-flu panic. CBS

imagined Karl Rove in a prison jumpsuit. NBC hyped inflation.

Yet in the Middle East, how common is a constitutional referendum? Have they ever had one in Saudi Arabia? Syria? Jordan? Until the last few years, the phrase "Arab constitutional democracy" sounded like a pipe

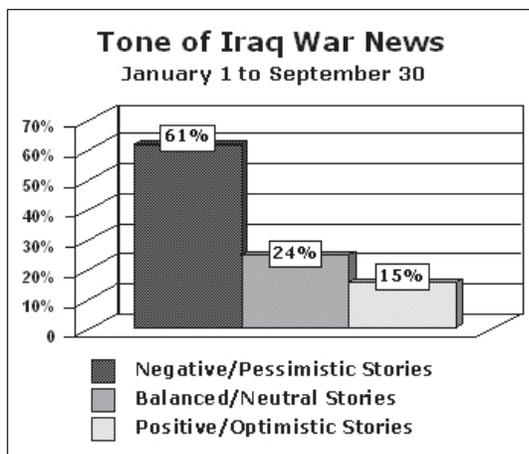
dream or an oxymoron. But today the reporters can only complain, complain, complain.

NBC's Richard Engel growled online that the new constitution was "a deeply flawed document, peppered with religious slogans, and leaves plenty of room for Shiites and Kurds to govern themselves." Engel

says Iraqis disagree on the constitution, but "with the daily pressures of the insurgency, power cuts and lawlessness, there might not be enough time to start over before this country and the people lose hope — along with many of their lives." Does Engel wear black everywhere he goes?

A week after the historic vote in Iraq, *CBS Evening News* Anchor Bob Schieffer barely mentioned it. "Iraq's government announced today that voters did approve the country's new constitution in this month's

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Source: *TV's Bad News Brigade*, MRC Special Report • November, 2005

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America's Media Watchdog

referendum,” said Schieffer, who then launched into a full story about the 2,000th death of U.S. servicemen in Iraq. In the piece, the very liberal Schieffer snidely said, “More than 90 percent of the 2,000 who died in the war have died since the President declared major combat was at an end in May 2003.” Other liberal media ran stories claiming that the referendum in Iraq was likely not legal because of alleged massive voter fraud.

Those are just some examples of how the American media are using their power to undermine the war and depict U.S. actions in Iraq as dark and ugly. It’s a pattern of gloom and doom.

For instance, in the MRC’s new study, *TV’s Bad News Brigade*, Research Director Rich Noyes reviewed every Iraq story on the evening news programs of ABC, CBS, and NBC from January through September of 2005. That’s 1,388 news stories. Conclusion? 61 percent of the stories were negative or pessimistic, while only 15 percent of the stories were positive or optimistic — a four-to-one ratio. The trend in coverage has also become increasingly negative during 2005, with pessimistic stories rising to nearly three-fourths of all Iraq news by August and September, with a ten-to-one ratio of negative stories over positive ones.

Terrorists, it seems, are the real assignment editors of American TV news from Iraq. For instance, two out of every five network evening news stories (564 stories this year) featured car bombings, assassinations, kidnappings or other attacks launched by the terrorists against the Iraqi people or coalition forces, more than any other topic. That’s an average of two stories every night between the three shows.

Even the evolution of democracy in Iraq is presented in more negative than positive terms. More stories (124) focused

on shortcomings in Iraq’s political process — the danger of bloodshed during the January elections, political infighting, and fears that the new Iraqi constitution might spur more violence — than on the positive side of democracy-building (92 stories). And then there’s this: One-third of those optimistic stories (32) appeared on just two nights — January 30 and 31, just after Iraq’s first successful elections. You can see how people who watch the news regularly would ask where the good news can be located.

That’s especially true when the subject of the story is the American soldier. In the most upsetting part of the study, Noyes found that 79 stories focused primarily on allegations of wrongdoing by American forces in Iraq, including this year’s Abu Ghraib hangover stories.

But what about positive stories about the military? There were only eight stories that focused on the heroism of American soldiers, and only nine on soldier-acts of kindness or generosity. The TV news titans not only suggest the mission in Iraq is a waste of money and lives, they are also painting our soldiers as a big problem there, not a part of the solution.

The liberal media clearly want America to lose. They also want the Iraqis to lose. And they want conservatives to lose. Well, we’re not giving an inch. That’s why we do what we do. And that’s also why we truly appreciate all the support you have given us over the years to fight the good fight.

Until next time,



L. Brent Bozell
Founder and President



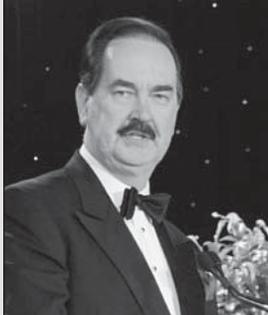
SAVE THE DATE

March 30, 2006

**The MRC’s Annual Gala featuring the
DisHonors and Conservative of the Year Awards**

Grand Hyatt Hotel • Washington, D.C.

“The Most Humorous Night in Washington”



Join the MRC, Cal Thomas, and more than 1,000 movers and shakers in the conservative movement as we roast the most liberal members of the national news media.

NewsBusters Hits Liberal Media Like GANGBUSTERS!

In August, the MRC launched its official blog, NewsBusters.org. This “blog” is a Web (or Internet) log where MRC experts post examples of liberal media bias and readers respond with comments and Internet links to related stories. It’s like a very interactive Web site, and very fast-paced, 24/7.

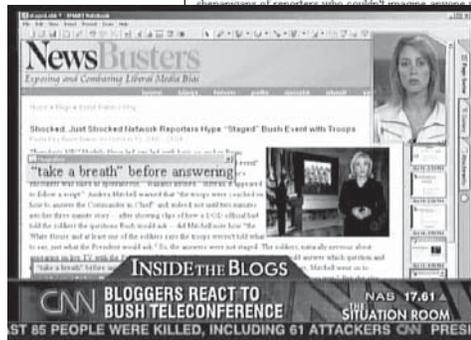
Since the launch, NewsBusters has received a lot of attention from Rush Limbaugh and *The Drudge Report*, as well as from some of the establishment media. So far, an average 29,000 people visit the site every work day, and on some days more than 400,000 people will go to the site to read a certain story or watch a certain video. Other blog and Web sites mention and provide Internet links to Newsbusters stories, as well.

That’s pretty good for a “conservative” site that’s only three months old. For comparison, CNSNews.com averages 100,000 readers every day at its home site (while 750,000 people worldwide are reading CNSNews.com articles from myriad other Web sites and outlets). While it’s difficult to precisely measure NewsBusters’ success, there are some clear sign posts, such as being quoted by Rush Limbaugh, who reaches 3 million people on average during his radio show. Then there’s *Drudge*, who is viewed by about 3 million people every day and, after he posts a NewsBusters item on his site, drives hundreds of thousands of people directly to NewsBusters.org. Below are some highlights.

➤ On Oct. 22, *The Drudge Report* posted a NewsBusters item about left-wing author Al Franken joking on the David Letterman show about an “execution” of I. Lewis Libby, Karl Rove, and possibly Vice President Cheney and President Bush. That “hit” was potentially viewed by 3 million people and it helped drive more than 400,000 people to NewsBusters.org to read the story and watch a video of Franken making his vicious comments. For comparison, the No. 16 newspaper in the United States, the *Newark Star-Ledger*, has a daily circulation of 408,000.

➤ Three days later, *Drudge* linked to NewsBusters again. Al Franken had told the same “joke” on the *Today* show and MRC analyst Geoff Dickens wrote up a short item on it. More than 200,000 people went to NewsBusters.org to read that post.

➤ On Oct. 14, NewsBusters posted a video of a staged story produced by the *Today* show. *Today*’s Michelle Kosinski was reporting “live” on flooding in New Jersey



On October 14, CNN's *The Situation Room* carried, on-screen, a NewsBusters item.

from inside a canoe she was paddling. Then two men walked by in hip-waders, proving that the water was only a few inches deep. That post brought more than 200,000 visitors to the NewsBusters site. The highly influential *Weekly Standard* magazine ran a story on Oct. 31 about *Today*’s canoe-flooding theatrics and cited NewsBusters.org.

➤ MRC Director of Media Analysis Tim Graham was interviewed Oct. 26 on Fox’s *The O’Reilly Factor*, which has an average audience of 2.5 million people. During the segment, the Media Research Center and NewsBusters.org were posted on-screen, as well as a shot of the Web site, www.MRC.org.

➤ On Oct. 14, CNN’s *The Situation Room* carried, on-screen, a NewsBusters item by Brent Baker about President Bush’s talk by satellite with U.S. soldiers stationed in Iraq. The liberal media had inaccurately labeled the talk a “staged” event.

➤ On Oct. 18, Rush Limbaugh’s Web site posted links to three NewsBusters items. The next day, Rush Limbaugh.com used a NewsBusters photo and posted a link to the relevant story, as well as links to four other NewsBusters stories. The MRC is delighted that Rush Limbaugh finds NewsBusters material valuable, and is proud to note that after NewsBusters was launched, Limbaugh said of the site, “It’s cool!”

All from a new MRC product that is only three months old.



Newsweek's Eleanor Clift suggests that one of the "next logical step[s]" in Plamegate is "impeachment" of President Bush.

Impeach Bush

Newsweek's Eleanor Clift could barely contain her glee: Senate Democrats had orchestrated a closed session to supposedly "investigate" pre-Iraq war intelligence, and Vice President Cheney's chief of staff, I. Lewis Libby, had been indicted. "The Democrats are going to push" the idea that President Bush "abused his authority" in going to war," said Clift on the Nov. 6 edition of *The McLaughlin Group*. Then, "if the country, according to polls, believes by a margin of 55 percent that President Bush misled us into war, the next logical step is impeachment" In her Nov. 4 column for MSNBC.com, Clift had suggested that "impeachment may not be so far-fetched after all."

Asked by John McLaughlin to predict if Karl Rove will resign, Clift said no before she condescendingly asserted that President Bush "can't tie his shoelaces without Karl Rove."

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What Media Bias?

The idea that there's a liberal media bias is just "damn foolishness," barked CBS's Mike Wallace during an interview with his son Chris Wallace on *Fox News Sunday*. Yes, a lot of folks think people in the major media are "wild-eyed commies, liberals," said Mike Wallace, but, he added, "reporters are in the business because they want to be — first of all, they're patriots just as much as any conservative. Even a liberal reporter is a patriot, wants the best for this country. And people — you know, your fair and balanced friends at Fox don't fully understand that."



CBS's Mike Wallace tells his son, Fox News Sunday reporter Chris Wallace, that the idea of a liberal media bias at CBS is just "damn foolishness."

Mike Wallace then said that Dan Rather should have resigned over the "Memogate" scandal. However, Wallace rejected any notion that Rather's team was over-zealous or wanted to believe the forged memos were real because of their loathing of President Bush. "Are you serious?" said Mike Wallace. "I don't believe that for a moment."

Alter: 'Corrupt Zealot' DeLay

Jonathan Alter of *Newsweek* let rip a vicious attack against Rep. Tom DeLay on MSNBC's *Imus in the Morning*, ranting that "it's the first time in 200 years that the House of Representatives has been run for a whole decade, or almost a decade, by a corrupt zealot." In his *Newsweek* article, "Tom DeLay's House of Shame," Alter said he had "no idea if DeLay has technically broken the law."

Nonetheless, Alter wondered "how this moderate, evenly divided nation came to be ruled on at least one side of Capitol Hill by a zealot." "Congress has always had its share of extremists," charged Alter. "But the DeLay era is the first time the fringe has ever been in charge." Extremists? Fringe? The same should be said for certain reporters at *Newsweek*.

More Taxes, Now!

NPR's Nina Totenberg is eagerly advising Democrats to use President Bush's tax cuts as a campaign weapon in 2006. On the Oct. 23 edition of *Inside Washington*, host Gordon Peterson cited several issues Democrats could use against the GOP — Iraq, Harriet Miers, Hurricane Katrina, Tom DeLay — and then Totenberg shouted, "And you've got the tax cuts!"

Totenberg further explained what Democrats should do: "One of the other things is, you say, 'Look, we're in this mess fiscally and they want to increase the tax cuts for the most wealthy people in the United States,' the top one half of one percent would get a hundred thousand dollars, people who make over



NPR's Nina Totenberg advises Democrats to push the tax-cuts-for-the-rich line against Republicans in 2006 and 2008.

a million dollars or something like that." Back on Sept. 26, she also argued for a "Katrina Tax" to pay for hurricane relief.

'Staged' Event?

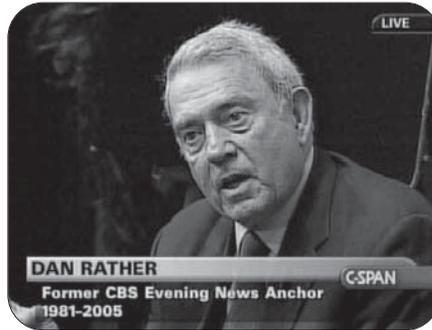
NBC and other liberal media ran lengthy stories on Oct. 13 about how President Bush spoke from the White

House by satellite with U.S. soldiers in Iraq – a morale-boosting discussion the liberal media labeled a “staged” and “scripted” event. Problem was, it wasn’t staged. “Today’s encounter was billed as spontaneous,” said Anchor Brian Williams in the lead story on the *NBC Nightly News*. “Instead, it appeared to follow a script.” Andrea Mitchell then reported “that the troops were coached on how to answer the Commander-in-Chief.” Only later, two minutes into her three-minute story, did Mitchell note that “the White House and at least one of the soldiers says the troops weren’t told what to say, just what the President would ask.” So, the answers were not staged.

The soldiers, naturally nervous about appearing on live TV with the President of the United States, were simply told who should answer which question and to “take a breath” before answering. Scandalous!

Media Honor Rather

Dan Rather’s media colleagues rallied around him, and denigrated his critics, at the Sept. 19 News and Documentary Emmy Awards, where Rather was honored with a lifetime achievement award. At the event, ABC’s Ted Koppel praised Rather as “a man of honesty and



The disgraced Dan Rather of Memogate was praised by his left-wing colleagues and honored at the News and Documentary Awards.

integrity and decency.” Referring to the National Guard forged memo scandal, Koppel sarcastically suggested: “I would simply urge your most vociferous critics to take a page from the White House’s own playbook. When one of their own makes a mistake, they stress the importance of looking to the future and of not playing the blame game.”

MSNBC President Rick Kaplan – a longtime friend of Bill Clinton – rattled on about how “Dan was meticulously careful to be fair and balanced and accurate” during his career. Kaplan then lashed out: “When did we allow those with questionable agendas to take the lead

and convince people of something quite the opposite? It’s shameful.” Kaplan went so far as to declare – we’re not making this up – that Rather’s “legacy” is “the gold standard journalists today have struggled to live up to.”

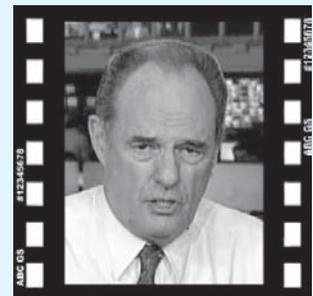
Media Bias Confession

Liberals at the *Washington Post*? Say it ain’t so! Well, an internal memo by *The Post*’s *Book World* Editor Marie Arana said that “if you work here, you must be one of us. You must be liberal, progressive, a Democrat. I’ve been in communal gatherings in *The Post*, watching election returns, and have been flabbergasted to see my colleagues cheer unabashedly for the Democrats.” (Arana’s memo was quoted in a column by *Post* media critic Howard Kurtz.)

“The elephant in the newsroom is our narrowness,” wrote Arana. “Too often, we wear liberalism on our sleeve and are intolerant of other lifestyles and opinions... We’re not very subtle about it at this paper.” Editor Leonard Downie explained Arana’s comments as typifying the diversity of *The Post*. This makes “clear that we do have a diverse staff when it comes to ideological backgrounds,” he claimed.

MINIBITS

CNN’s Jack “No Bias” Cafferty chuckles that if Karl Rove is indicted, “he might want to get measured for one of those extra large orange jump suits” because he’s not sure “they’d be able to zip him into the regular size one.” 🐦 The editorial staff of the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* exposes its racism in an editorial that reads, “In losing a woman, the court with Alito would feature seven white men, one white woman and a black man, who deserves an asterisk because he arguably does not represent the views of mainstream black America.” 🐦 The Bush Administration does “not care about the Iraqi people” or the “families of dead soldiers,” bemoans actor **Donald Sutherland**. “They only care about profit. They will destroy our lives.” 🐦 On *The West Wing*, “Alan Alda plays a Republican Senator who tells the Christian Right to go screw, and I’m like, why can’t we have that in real life?” asks HBO’s **Bill Maher**. 🐦 **Al Franken** gleefully tells David Letterman: “Libby and Karl Rove are going to be executed” for “treason” in the Plame case, and that while President Bush may also be guilty, says Franken, “I think, by the way, that we should never ever, ever, ever execute a sitting President.” 🐦 And, actress **Roseanne Barr** says she is “psychic,” and, if forced to mind-battle President Bush, chimes, “I could so totally still win on account of like being female, being a grandmother and like, you know, being intelligent. I could totally win.”



CNN’s Jack Cafferty threw insults at Karl Rove and suggested he get fitted for an “extra large” prison uniform.

By David Thibault
CNSNews.com Managing Editor



No Knee-Jerk Liberal Coverage of Katrina at CNSNews.com

A presidential administration is always a convenient target when something goes wrong. Often there's a good reason to point a finger at the White House. However, allegations of Bush administration wrongdoing in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina again demonstrated just how committed the political Left and liberal media are to perpetuating the welfare state. In their world, the government shouldn't only protect you from the elements, it should protect you from yourself.

At CNSNews.com, we were not swayed by the phony cries of victim-hood coming from the many residents of flooded New Orleans who refused to evacuate the city when warned to do so. We also were not swayed by their allies in the media, who helped advance doxy conspiracy theories of the White House wanting to punish Louisiana blacks.

Instead, CNSNews.com investigative reporter Jeff Johnson looked back over the last ten years to determine why the Orleans Levee Board had failed to spend the necessary money to shore up the levees holding back Lake Pontchartrain. He discovered that the levee board had bragged in 1995 of drafting "the most ambitious flood-fighting plan in generations" with a price tag of \$140 million. The board boasted that it "marched into Congress and brought back almost \$60 million" in federal taxpayer dollars to help pay for the improvements.

But Jeff's Sept. 7 report went on to explain how less than a year after all of that boasting, the levee board, allegedly on the verge of bankruptcy, was denied the authority to refinance its debts because of the way it had previously awarded contracts and spent its money. Blocked from financing the local portion of the flood fighting plan, the levee board was unable to spend the federal matching funds designated for the project.

A follow-up article, on Oct. 17, contained a scathing indictment of New Orleans politicians charged with the responsibility of protecting the city against flooding. Titled, "New Orleans Corrupt 'Down to the Bone,' Former Pol Charges," the article quoted former Republican City Councilor and Orleans Levee Board member Peggy Wilson. She told Jeff Johnson that instead of spending money on levee maintenance and improvements, the levee board had focused on widening bridges and making

other accommodations for riverboat casinos. There was widespread cronyism and corruption on the board, Wilson alleged.

Nevertheless, most of the establishment media used the days and weeks after Hurricane Katrina to point out the flaws of the federal response, especially at the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Apparently seeking to mollify his critics on the Left, President Bush announced on Sept. 15 that his administration would spend whatever it took to rebuild New Orleans. The declaration not surprisingly won some immediate praise from some of his most hostile opponents in the liberal civil rights establishment.

This prompted CNSNews.com investigative reporter Marc Morano to look at the potential for those liberal groups to get a slice of the estimated \$200 billion in federal rebuilding contracts. Titled, "Katrina Cash Could Create 'Slush Fund' For Left," Marc reminded readers that groups like the Southern Christian Leadership Council, the National Urban League and the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition had been reeling financially in recent years amid speculation of their diminished relevance.

Peter Flaherty of the National Legal and Policy Center was quoted in the article, wondering whether the liberal groups were seeking "to help storm victims or to resuscitate their own sagging financial fortunes." Flaherty also warned that it would "be a shame if the hurricanes are a disaster for some African-Americans, but a bonanza for others."

CNSNews.com's coverage of the Hurricane Katrina aftermath was not the kind of knee-jerk reactionary reporting you saw in so many publications and broadcast operations afraid to ask questions about personal responsibility and local politicians run amok. Instead, we provided tough, fair and honest journalism. The other guys ought to try it once in a while.

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AMERICA'S MEDIA WATCHDOG

Documenting, Exposing and Fighting Media Bias

MRC IN THE NEWS

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

- ✦ FNC, *The O'Reilly Factor*, Oct. 26
- ✦ CNN, *The Situation Room*, Oct. 14
- ✦ FNC, *Hannity & Colmes*, Oct. 14
- ✦ MSNBC, *Scarborough Country*, Oct. 26
- ✦ CNN, *Reliable Sources*, Oct. 16
- ✦ CBS News, Sept. 30

RADIO

- Sean Hannity, Tuned Into America*, Oct. 14, 27
- Rush Limbaugh Show*, Oct. 20
- The CORE Hour*, Oct. 11
- WBAL, Baltimore, Oct. 15, 29
- WFLA, Tampa, Oct. 17
- WCHS, Charleston, Oct. 14
- KTSA, San Antonio, Oct. 18, 27
- KAHL, San Antonio, Oct. 26
- WIBC, Indianapolis, Oct. 27
- WIBA, Madison, Oct. 14, 26
- KDKA, Pittsburgh, Oct. 26
- WMET, Washington, D.C., Oct. 14
- WTKF, Moorehead City, NC, Oct. 14
- WSAU, Wausau, Oct. 17
- NRA News, Oct. 28
- KOGO, San Diego, Oct. 26
- WTWB, Lakeland, Fla., Oct. 26
- KMED, Medford, Oct. 10
- WMUZ, Detroit, Oct. 17

PRINT

- The Washington Post Style*, Oct. 30
- The Washington Post*, Sept. 23
- Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
- Variety*, Oct. 19
- San Diego Union-Tribune*, Oct. 2

- Financial Post*, Sept. 2
- The Washington Times*, Oct. 5, 6, 7, 12, 18, 19, 25, 27, 28
- BP News, Oct. 26
- Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, Oct. 27
- Human Events*, Oct. 3, 21
- Keene Sentinel*, Oct. 19
- Mobile Register*, Oct. 23
- About, News & Issues*, Oct. 22
- The Common Voice*, Oct. 3
- Oliver North Syndicated Column, Oct. 20

INTERNET

- CBS The Public Eye, Oct. 11
- Rush Limbaugh.com, Sept. 29, 30, Oct. 13, 19, 20
- Washingtonpost.com, Sept. 30
- Townhall.com, Oct. 14, 29
- National Ledger, Oct. 8, 17, 20, 26, 29
- Media Matters, Oct. 13, 14, 15, 29
- I-Newswire.com, Oct. 30
- MichNews.com, Oct. 7, 21, 26
- National Review Online, Oct. 27
- WorldSocialistWeb, Oct. 24
- Human Events Online, Oct. 11, 12, 17, 20, 31
- Political Gateway, Oct. 17
- The Rant.us, Oct. 21
- Military.com, Oct. 20
- NewsHounds, Oct. 11, 14, 20
- DetNews, Oct. 20
- The OneRepublic, Oct. 7, 19
- Conservative voice, Oct. 13
- ChronWatch, Oct. 5, 11, 12, 14
- American Thinker, Oct. 2, 11
- Agape Press, Oct. 4, 5
- FAIR, Oct. 5
- RedState.org, Oct. 1
- FrontPage magazine.com, Oct. 3

PARTIAL LISTING FOR ALL MEDIA



On *Hannity & Colmes*, MRC President Brent Bozell discusses the MRC's Special Report on liberal media coverage of the Iraq war.



On *The O'Reilly Factor*, Director of Media Analysis Tim Graham explains why the left-wing Media Matters is not interested in a politically balanced media.



In its Katrina coverage, the liberal media pushes a pro-welfare, pro-big-government agenda, contends MRC President Brent Bozell on CNN's *NewsNight*.

POST-TAX ANALYSIS

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ONE LIFE		TWO-LIFE		
Age	Rate	Age	Age	Rate
60	5.7%	60	65	5.5%
65	6.0%	65	70	5.7%
70	6.5%	70	75	6.1%
75	7.1%	75	80	6.6%
80	8.0%	80	85	7.3%
85	9.5%	85	90	8.4%
90+	11.3%	90	95+	10.1%



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