

The War on Words: The Obama Administration and the Silencing of Its Critics

During the race for a Senate seat in Illinois in 1858, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas engaged in a series of seven debates. The *Lincoln-Douglas Debates* were featured in the September 2008 issue of the Smithsonian Magazine and because of their excessive length, the article referred to the debates as a *war OF words*. Today's political debates have become a *war ON words*, as President Barack Obama plans to silence his critics by whatever means necessary to advance his socialist agenda.

A Wall of Silence

Prior to the presidency of Ronald Reagan, an FCC regulation called the Fairness Doctrine ruled the airwaves. Its history is instructive for the present. In the early 1940s Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal had come under a lot of criticism. To stifle his critics he pushed the Federal Communications Commission for a rule that would bar radio, and later, television news commentators from *slanting* the news that might have a negative impact on the war effort.

The extent of left-wing media bias was not publicly understood until 1981 when Robert Lichter, then of George Washington University, and Stanley Rothman of Smith College, released a groundbreaking survey on the political attitudes and voting patterns of 240 journalists at all the influential national media outlets — including the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine and ABC, CBS, NBC and PBS. The results of their survey on the *media elite*, published in the October/November 1981 issue of Public Opinion, concluded that journalists and broadcasters held liberal positions on a wide range of social and political issues.

In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan ordered the FCC not to enforce the vaguely worded Fairness Doctrine. In hopes of resurrecting the doctrine, Congress sent Reagan the Fairness in Broadcasting Act of 1987, which would have codified the doctrine into federal law. Reagan vetoed the bill because he believed *history has shown that the dangers of an overly timid or biased press cannot be averted through bureaucratic regulation, but only through the freedom and*

competition that the First Amendment sought to guarantee. According to author Brian K. Jennings' book, *Censorship: The Threat to Silence Talk Radio* President Reagan tore down two walls during his presidency—first the Berlin Wall and then the Fairness Doctrine's wall of silence.

Unfettered by such intrusive rules, conservative talk radio led by Rush Limbaugh, Neal Bortz, Sean Hannity, Laura Ingraham, and Michael Savage, soared to a zenith of popularity. It was not that radio station managers were all dyed-in-the-wool conservatives but they realized that the inherent popularity of conservative talk radio greatly enhanced their bottom line.

Hot Air-America

During the Clinton and Bush administrations, the formidable popularity of Rush Limbaugh and conservative talk radio became so unbearable for the left that it felt compelled to offer its brand of talk radio as an antidote to the conservative message. Air America was the liberals' vain attempt to compete with conservative ideas in the public marketplace.

According to Byron York of the National Review, liberal talk radio was the brainchild of a Chicago businessman named Sheldon Drobny, a successful venture capitalist, with zero experience in radio or entertainment. Drobny intended to put just \$10 million into the venture, which was not nearly enough to build a national network. He naively reasoned that a consistent liberal message on a network with 14 to 16 hours a day programming should garner an audience equal to what Limbaugh enjoys.

In November, he unexpectedly sold his idea to a group of investors led by a former Internet executive named Mark Walsh. A veteran of America Online and VerticalNet, as well as an earlier stint at Home Box Office. Walsh had recently served as a volunteer for the Democratic Party. With a fresh start and more money, the new owners tried to redefine the idea of liberal talk radio. Walsh & Co. desperately tried to avoid the stultifying self-righteousness that had characterized liberals' previous efforts, such as the failed programs featuring former New York

Governor Mario Cuomo and Jim Hightower.

While some liberals blamed the demise of those shows on a poor distribution network, Walsh had a more honest take: that liberals were often guilty of offering programming that *sounds like eat-your-vegetables scolding*. So the owners vowed to make their radio more entertaining, like Limbaugh. Air America, which was more Hot Air America, ultimately failed because it relied on a political philosophy based on emotion and feelings and its leading star performers, the politically humorless Al Franken and the equally obnoxious comedian Janeane Garofalo, did little or nothing for its rating numbers, its ability to attract sponsors and seemed like a blatant contradiction to Walsh's philosophy of more entertainment and less political venom.

According to Rush's brother David Limbaugh, a conservative columnist and lawyer, the left was so used to its media monopoly before Rush came along and they apparently forgot what it was like to compete in the marketplace of ideas. They can't compete because they are intellectual elitists who curry no argument nor accept any rational dissent from their party line, so their only alternative is to legislate the conservative opposition out of existence.

The Hush Rush Bill

It is no surprise that there are serious discussions about resurrecting the antiquated Fairness Doctrine which will focus primarily on talk radio, the bastion of conservative power, but leaves commercial news shows alone. When criticized for not equally applying this restrictive document, the left's stock answer is: No, the other forms of mass media are objective and already balanced! The recent battle over Health Care with the anger and discontent that was evidenced at the Town Hall meetings all over the country during the August recess aptly demonstrates the power of talk radio and the Fox cable TV network.

According to author Jennings, the Fairness Doctrine portends the coming epic battle for the airways that could mark another step down the pockmarked road to socialism that the Obama administration has been driving the country since January. Insiders see the move to resurrect the moribund law as the *Hush Rush Bill*.

Like most liberals, Barack Obama has been waging his own *war on words* since 2007 when he lobbied the FCC for more diversity in talk radio. Obama knows that the easiest way for liberals to rectify the imbalance in the popular ratings of conservative TV and radio talk shows is to force them out of business through aggressive legislation.

Radio Silence

The Obama administration adds a new tactic called *localism*, another example of Obama's stealth in relying on Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* handbook by denying he is in support of something but imposing language that will bring about the desired result.

Localism would require broadcasters to seek the input of community organizations in programming their stations. Such community boards would decide which talk show host was acceptable to the community and which ones offended the local standards. Obama's Minority Media and Telecommunications Council defines localism as: stations must recruit *leaders in the civic, religious, and non-profit sectors that regularly serve the needs of the community, particularly the needs of minority groups that are typically poorly served by the broadcasting industry as a whole*.

Under Obama's plan, localism and diversity hide behind nebulous regulations as an alternate route to the Fairness Doctrine. Stations who fail to meet Obama's tough new standards of fairness will be forced to pay fees to public broadcasting, such as National Public Radio (NPR) which is little more than a government-supported propaganda outlet.

If this plan becomes law it will impose draconian fines of up to 100% of operating costs that will effectively silence liberals' most vociferous critics on radio and cable television. The FCC can pull the licenses of radio stations they deem as failing to meet these public interest standards, which coincide with the goals of the Obama regime. If that happens, the silence of conservative talk radio will be deafening.

A Death Knell

Christian radio stations and their programming will not be immune to localism regulations. The FCC will begin applying these regulations to their licenses as well. Catholic and other Christian stations would have to air opposing sides of all controversial subjects, such as abortion and homosexuality. With small budgets and staffs, Catholic stations would be hard pressed to meet these government requirements to air opposing views on controversial issues or provide the range of programming that local review boards may demand. Such a policy would also be inimical to Church teachings and diocesan governing rules, not to mention their right to the protections of the First Amendment.

Localism and diversity regulations would signal *the death knell for Catholic radio*, said Stephen Gajdosik, president of the Catholic Radio Association, a trade association with some 200 member stations and programs throughout the nation. Doug Keck, program director of the Eternal Word Television Network, which broadcasts mainly by cable and satellite but also sends radio programs over the airwaves, says that the small stations which provide the variety and *niche* programming in a community would be the ones hurt most by regulations that purport to encourage variety.

Such an effort could *eliminate one of the most effective tools for... the conversion of our culture!* The leading lobbying group for religious broadcasters, the *National Association of Religious Broadcasters*, has gone on record against *localism mandates, adverse definitions of 'public interest' obligation, and media reform rules that could disfavor Christian broadcasters*.

The Speech Police

Another way for the Obama regime to silence its critics is to rely on a monitoring system that listens to and watches what their critics are saying on the various programs. Two such watchdog groups are MoveOn.org (funded by leftist billionaire George Soros) and Media Matters, a leftwing group that monitors all conservative radio. Obama's *Speech Police* will do virtually anything to undermine the credibility and content of shows that disagree with their agenda.

Using their websites as their principal vehicles for their disinformation, Media Matters posts rapid-response items as well as longer research and analyses that purport to document what they claim is conservative misinformation. They shower their disciples with dozens of e-mails, urging them to take direct action against the offending parties, especially Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck. They work diligently to dissuade sponsors from underwriting programs that oppose the Obama agenda.

Missing few opportunities to silence his critics, Obama also relies heavily on his proxy army of organizations or churches such as the United Church of Christ, which has a track record dating back to the sixties of shutting down TV and radio stations offensive to their civil rights sensitivities.

For added muscle the Obama regime has resorted to the street tactics of what author Michelle Malkin calls Obama's *Chicago Thuggery*. The most proficient enforcers have been the ubiquitous Association of Community Organization Reform Now (ACORN) volunteers in their bright orange shirts and the purple shirt clad members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) or what columnist Ernest Istook calls *The Purple People Beaters*. Several SEIU members thrashed Kenneth Gladney, a black conservative outside an August Town Hall meeting in St. Louis. The White House provided buses and tickets, so that Obama's *palace guard* could turn out in force to *protect* him at another Town Hall meeting in New Hampshire.

A Purple Ocean

President Obama has enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the SEIU, which spent \$61-million to elect him and \$10-million for his *Change That Works* campaign. The SEIU, which calls itself the *Purple Ocean*, led a breakaway from the AFL-CIO in 2005, bringing others like the Teamsters into its rival Change to Win Federation. The Associated Press dubbed

the SEIU as the nation's fastest-growing labor union when it passed the 2.2-million member mark. About 50% of its members work in health care, especially in hospitals and nursing homes. Approximately 17% of American health care workers belong to the SEIU.

The SEIU is gaining dominance among public service employees, including clerical and janitorial workers in schools, bus drivers, and childcare providers, as well as those who provide services to commercial property—security personnel and janitors in particular. Its website declares, *56 percent of SEIU members are women, and some 40 percent people of color*. It also represents more immigrants than any other union.

While many Democrats highlight their SEIU *sponsors*, the word *enforcers* might be a more accurate word. In her 2009 book *The Culture of Corruption*, Michelle Malkin writes, *the SEIU seeks membership growth through aggressive 'corporate campaigns' that have a blunt message to employers, that is to sign up or suffer the consequences*. SEIU president Andy Stern summed up his leadership philosophy precisely when he said, *we prefer to use the power of persuasion, but if that doesn't work we use the persuasion of power*.

It is obvious that the Obama regime is using these groups as a palace guard to protect their Romanesque emperor from the slings and arrows of his sharpest critics. A free media is the greatest and most dangerous obstacle Obama can face. Anything or any group that can silence the media is advancing his cause of socialist change and power concentration. Given the president's Chicago political and moral roots, author Malkin often accuses him of using the *thuggery* of a Mafia Don. Obama's encouragement and support of both ACORN and SEIU are a throwback to the days when the Mafia controlled the major docks and piers of the Eastern seaboard. Anyone that got out of line was quickly beaten back into submission or even went waterskiing in the Atlantic with cement skis.

While many repeat the adage of the past that "it can never happen here" one does not have to be an intellectual giant to see it is happening here!

~

William A. Borst, Ph.D. can be contacted at PO Box 16271; St. Louis, MO 63105 or write BBPROF@sbcglobal.net

The Mindszenty Report is published monthly by the
Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation,
7800 Bonhomme Ave.
P. O. Box 11321
St. Louis, MO 63105
Phone 314-727-6279 Fax 314-727-5897

Subscription rate: \$20.00/year, \$36.00/two years.
Outside the U.S.A. \$28.00

The Mindszenty Report is not copyrighted, and
subscribers are invited to have it printed in
their local newspapers.

Contributions to the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation
are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Eleanor Schlafly, *Publisher*
William A. Borst, Ph.D., *Feature Editor*
e-mail: info@mindszenty.org
web site: www.mindszenty.org

Radio

CMF's weekly radio program DANGERS OF APATHY continues to provide radio listeners with timely interviews of nationally-acclaimed experts such as Jerome Corsi, Steven Mosher, Dinesh D'Souza and many others addressing the hot-button issues of the day. You can purchase CD's or Cassettes of any program; contact us for a list of our excellent interviews and other information.

Did You Know...

On September 20, 2009, the Communist Chinese flag was raised with much fanfare and expense on the secured lawn of the White House next to the American flag, to "celebrate" the 60th anniversary of the Communist takeover of China 1949. This is the first time that a Communist flag has flown over the Capitol of the U.S.A.

Since 1952, a National Day of Prayer has been observed in our country. In 1988 President Ronald Reagan designated the first Thursday in May of each year as the National Day of Prayer. This year President Obama decided to cancel the ceremony at the White House in order not to offend anyone. However, on September 25th from 4pm to 7pm a National Day of Prayer for the Muslim religion was held on Capitol Hill. The sound of amplified prayers to Allah was heard all over Washington, DC and the event was described by Islam scholar Robert Spencer as "ultimately about Islam superiority"

(Excerpted from Robert Knight, columnist Townhall.com)

Chavez Chicanery...

An education bill signed into law in mid-August by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez will remove all religious education from the nation's schools, according to Caracas Cardinal Jorge Urosa Savino. The new law also creates "neighborhood committees" financed by government to "contribute to the integral formation of citizens." (Sound familiar?)

The Most Important Person on Earth is a Mother Cards now available in Spanish

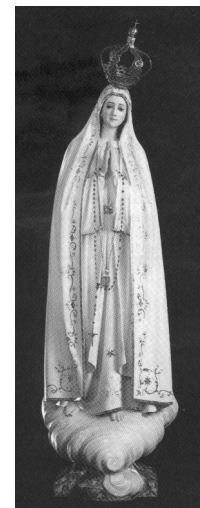
Cardinal Mindszenty considered the Mother the most important person in the world. Our Mother card has been distributed worldwide in English. We now have available the same beautiful Cardinal Mindszenty message in Spanish. Contact our office to order a supply of these Guadalupe cards. Cost of the cards includes postage:

20 for \$3.00 50 for \$5.00
100 for \$8.00 500 for \$37.50
1,000 for \$70.00

October - Month of the Rosary

HIS EM. JOSEPH CARDINAL MINDSZENTY, in his last sermon before being imprisoned by the Communists in Hungary in 1948, said "Give me a million families with Rosaries in their hands, uplifted to Mary. They will be a *military power*, not against other people, but for all mankind...for their welfare, their healing...We need a Rosary of love. Let us therefore take the Rosary from family to family. With it in our hands, we shall conquer ourselves and convert sinners..."

PRAY THE ROSARY DAILY LEAFLET has colorful and holy depictions of each of the Mysteries including the Luminous with concise explanations. It can be used to meditate, teach a child, encourage a friend to the daily habit, even convert the skeptical. Don't miss the opportunity to teach others about one of the greatest tools Catholics possess, the Rosary. Order by calling our office at 314-727-6279 or mail to Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation P.O. Box 11321, St. Louis, MO 63105.



St. Matthew 5:10

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Mindszenty Report Reprints

HEALTHY FOOD FOR THOUGHT We all know how important good healthy food is for our bodies...what about food for the mind in the form of great reading? Our annual Recommended Book List (19 reviews) is categorized under headings of Faith, History, Government and Culture for easy reference. Ask for 9/09

A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR: THE SOCIALIZATION OF THE AMERICAN HEALTH SYSTEM Our health system is flawed, not broken, can be fixed without the radical socialism of Obamacare; it could ration care, include abortion, euthanasia and put government in total control, the mandates virtually hidden in this massive one thousand-plus page bill. Churches should be especially concerned over the life issues. Ask for 8/09

THE GREEN MONSTER: SOCIALISM AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT Cites the political-socialist-neo Marxist theories that have created today's radical environmentalism. Fear mongering, government coercion, junk science and "a green" president have propagandized the American people. Several good books with accurate scientific info are recommended. Ask for 7/09

1 copy	\$.50	100 copies	\$20.00
20 copies	\$5.00	500 copies	\$85.00
50 copies	\$11.00	1000 copies	\$160.00