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NATIONAL CONSERVATIVE FOUNDATION
SUITE 502 • 1500 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22209

NATIONAL CONSERVATIVE FOUNDATION

STRATEGY TO COMBAT THE LIBERAL MEDIA

Presented By

John T. (Terry) Dolan
National Chairman

April, 1983

*Ken Kanzler
2603 Tack Lane
Reston, Va 22090
703-6203704*

OVERVIEW: WHAT REAGAN IS UP AGAINST

The Problem

The liberal elite hold a veritable monopoly on the media; this monopoly has become the most powerful political force in America. Conservatives have been slow to recognize this frightening fact. Even The National Conservative Foundation has been slow to see that the greatest threat to America's security is not the liberals in Congress, or past Democratic administrations, or even the Soviet Union; it's the relentless barage of misinformation eating away at the American will.

Conservatives have watched idly for three decades as the media monopoly has contributed to communist victories in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa. Conservatives continue to do nothing as this elite group of people work to bring down their fifth successive administration. When was the last time America had a two-term president? Not since Eisenhower.

Last summer, a White House press official was startled to hear a veteran newsman proclaim: "Since the Loyal Opposition was not doing its job, the press would have to do it for them." By "Loyal Opposition" he meant the Democratic Party. Soon after, we began to hear network anchormen refer to the administration's economic recovery program as "Reagan's war on the poor."

The battle lines are drawn: the liberal media elite versus a Republican administration. Liberal bias in the media poses the single greatest threat to Ronald Reagan and the conservative movement.

In a recent issue of Public Opinion magazine, Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman published a series of surveys demonstrating extreme bias in the media. The authors interviewed 240 members of the media elite -- reporters, editors, bureau chiefs, news executives, anchormen, producers and film editors. Their findings were astonishing:

- * In the last five presidential elections, support for the Republican candidate never made the 20 percent mark.

- * In 1972, 80 percent of the media elite supported George McGovern.

- * They supported Hubert Humphrey in 1968 by a 7 to 1 margin.

- * In 1964, the media elite supported Johnson over Goldwater by an astounding 17 to 1.

- * 90 percent of the media elite think it's fine to have an abortion and more than half have no religious affiliation.

Moreover, a study by Lichter and Rothman demonstrates that attitudes and beliefs of students in the nation's leading journalism schools are even farther to the left. In other words, news coverage in the future will be even more vicious in its attacks on conservative administrations and principles than it is today.

What is worse, the media heavyweights no longer try to hide their hatred of President Reagan and his conservative views. At a recent Reagan press conference Frank Reynolds of ABC News called the President a liar. Sam Donaldson of ABC News charged that the President's economic program is a failure, and that "the President's claim that the Soviets still seek world domination is wrong."

"Hunger is back," Bill Moyers declared solemnly in his CBS special on April 21, 1982. Moyers was referring to Reagan's budget cuts, which, incidentally, were not budget cuts at all, but simply a slow-down in scheduled increases. "You'll find senior citizens out in the street," an interviewee asserted on the NBC Nightly News, on September 30, 1981. "Reagan has taken everything away from us," insisted a man on a food line in a CBS News report on November 17, 1981. All this before the so-called budget cuts even took effect!

Dan Rather of CBS News made a fool of himself when he defended two flawed CBS documentaries, "People Like Us," and "The Uncounted Enemy: a Vietnam Deception." Rather said he was "proud" of the "People Like Us" program, even though it was discovered that people who were portrayed on the show as victims of Reagan's "budget cuts" were not, in fact, affected at all.

Rather also said "The Uncounted Enemy" was "first rate," despite the fact T.V. Guide exposed the documentary as shoddy

and dishonest journalism, and despite the fact General Westmoreland has filed a \$120 million libel suit against CBS.

Asked why there weren't more commentators on the evening news programs who were not left-of-center, Rather said, "Bill Moyers is by my standards a conservative person."

We might ask: if Bill Moyers looks conservative to Rather, where does that leave Rather?

NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw let the cat out of the bag when he agreed to the following interview with the left-wing magazine, Mother Jones.

Reagan's values are "pretty simplistic," Brokaw says. "He's lived in this fantasy land for so long."

"I thought from the outset that his 'supply-side' was just a disaster. I knew of no one who felt it was going to work, outside of a small group of zealots in Washington and U.S.C. -- Arthur Laffer and Jack Kemp," said Brokaw.

The primary goal of the media elite is to change public policy, not report news. They have already decided what the truth is, and thus cannot report the news fairly. By selective presentation of information they influence public opinion and, in effect, set the public agenda. This fact is confirmed by the following exchange between Tom Brokaw and Mother Jones:

MOTHER JONES: . . . What is your visceral reaction when the State Department makes statements about how El Salvador is moving on the road to democracy and things

are getting better?

TOM BROKAW: I think they're wrong. I think that my job is to stay calm at the center and point out why they're wrong.

By this, Brokaw must mean his job is to slant the news, not report it.

It is this group of powerful elitists that have discredited President Reagan and the conservative movement and given credibility to the irresponsible and disgraceful policies of liberalism.

Conservatives today are at the mercy of the media. We know the power of the media to shape the views of millions. We can see the damage the media has done to President Reagan and the conservative movement. But, so far nothing has been done. No organization exists that can provide comprehensive analysis of news coverage. No ongoing systematic study is being done. No resources exist where conservative commentators can easily obtain information and analysis of a specific telecast or article. No one even knows who the media elite are because there is no detailed study on the backgrounds of reporters, correspondents, editors, directors and producers who wield so much power in shaping the perceptions of voters.

Because they don't have the facts, conservatives are forced to fight big media with ineffective generalizations. Unless we can demonstrate, every week, bias and dishonesty in

the news coverage, citing new outrages and distortions of facts, the media elite will continue to grow in power and arrogance, using their position to advance relentlessly their liberal agenda.

The Solution

It's time to make the press accountable for the inaccuracies, innuendos and slander regularly passed along to the helpless public as NEWS. It's a mammoth task; but it must be done. I don't think it's exaggerating to say the survival of the republic depends on it.

What follows is a proposal by the National Conservative Foundation to lead the counter-offensive against the liberal media through a series of highly ambitious programs. Only if we succeed, can we get the conservative agenda back in the foreground.

CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT BIAS IN THE MEDIA

1. Research:

A massive research program must be built to make news organizations and individual journalists accountable for what they say. Research is the cornerstone of our effort. The program will require at least four full time staff members. Major research will include the following:

A) Develop files on the media elite. We need to know who they are, their background and what they've said. We must prove without a doubt their extreme prejudice against conservatives and their views. Liberals have such files and use them to attack conservatives. For example: Tony Dolan, Reagan's speechwriter, is always labeled by the media as, "brother of Terry Dolan." It's an easy way to categorize Tony Dolan as right wing. By contrast, few people know that ABC anchorman Max Robinson is the brother of a prominent left-wing radical, Randall Robinson, chairman of Transafrica, a militant black group whose stated purpose is the overthrow of all "white governments." This may, or may not be relevant to Max Robinson's objectivity as a leading newsman; but it's useful information.

B) Monitor, transcribe and analyze every network news broadcast. A complete video tape and written library will be kept of every network news show, indexed by subject, date and reporter. This will allow analysis of the "herd instinct" of

reporters and demonstrate how similar the viewpoints of all the networks are. Every week a summary of the network news coverage will be made, documenting specific cases of bias.

C) Install the NEXIS information system. I will go on at some length about NEXIS because it's so essential to our research program.

NEXIS is a computerized library of all the major news publications, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek and many others. Articles dating back several years can be recalled instantly, saving hundreds of hours searching through stacks of newspapers and magazines.

The real value of NEXIS, however, is that it provides immediate access to individual words and phrases used by journalists allowing analysis of the disguised meanings and assumptions that underlie them. NCF plugged some of these phrases into the NEXIS computer and found the following:

Dictator: a label reserved exclusively for leaders of nations allied to the United States and under attack by communist inspired aggression: Chile, Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, ect.

Leader: Yuri Andropov is always described as "Soviet leader." NEXIS could not find a case where "dictator" was used to label a Soviet ruler. By contrast, "leader" is rarely used to describe Marcos of the Philippines or Pinochet of Chile -- two American allies. They, according to the

press, are dictators.

Right wing extremist: Used by The Washington Post in 1982 on 54 separate occasions to describe everything from members of the KKK to members of the U.S. Senate.

Left wing extremist: Almost never used. The term appeared in The Washington Post only 4 times in all of 1982.

The same is true for the term "ultra-conservative," used in 1982 by The Washington Post 31 times. "Ultra-liberal," by contrast, appeared on four occasions, and only in quotes. The tone was always sarcastic. For example: "Ted Kennedy, who is described by Jesse Helms as an 'ultra- liberal'. . . ." Ultra-conservative is employed routinely without quotes to label such Congressmen as Jack Kemp and Bill Armstrong.

ANNUAL BUDGET: \$150,000

2. Television Specials

We want to do at least one "60 Minutes"-style broadcast, isolating a particular journalist who has been especially outrageous in his presentation of the news, subjecting him to the same type of "When did you stop beating your wife" questions he used. The show would have an amusing quality in that it turns the spotlight on the media big shots who are more used to examining the culprit than being examined themselves. The host of the show will be conservative commentator John Lofton.

If our first show is successful, other editions will focus on the media's handling of the Nuclear Freeze issue, American involvement in Latin America, taxes, government spending, the 1984 presidential campaign, etc.

BUDGET FOR ONE SHOW: \$150,000

3. Weekly Television Series:

Similar to the McGlaughlin Group, Agronsky and Co., Firing Line, a panel discussion on bias in the media will air once a week over a cable network. The panelists will discuss the week's news coverage, armed with information from our research division. Reed Irvine of Accuracy in Media and others will be regular participants.

The cost depends entirely on the method of distribution and what media markets we want to hit.

ANNUAL BUDGET FOR SERIES: \$500,000 TO \$1 MILLION

4. Advertising

The success of our effort hinges on our Advertising program; it's the most effective way to bring our message into the home of every American. The ad program will educate our citizens on the liberal propaganda that comes from their T.V. sets every night; it will show Americans how they are being misinformed, misled and manipulated by big media with

regard to what's going on in politics, in America and in the world. NCF will run 30 and 60 second ads on television and radio asking the audience for their response. Viewers and listeners will be able to phone a toll free number for more information and report their stories of media bias and distortion. Through advertising NCF will be able to organize boycotts of news organizations and put pressure on individual newsmen. The potential is unlimited for launching major letter writing and phone campaigns against big media. If the public gets mad, if there is nationwide disgust with the news coverage, the media will fall back into line. The offending newsmen will be replaced.

ANNUAL BUDGET: \$1 MILLION

5. Newsletter

The National Conservative Foundation will publish a bi-weekly newsletter to serve as a media watchdog. This program is inexpensive and will have the biggest impact for the money spent.

The newsletter will report on the news coverage, focusing on bias in the general media and in the reporting of individual journalists. A typical issue will include analysis of network news coverage, an analysis of a particular news publication like The Washington Post or Newsweek and an in-depth expose on the reporting methods of a

particular journalist whom we have determined to be especially dishonest in his presentation of the news: Dan Rather, Bill Moyers, Tom Brokaw, David Broder, Lou Cannon and others.

It's vital for the American people to know that journalists determine how the information, how the news, is presented, and that, to a large extent, their method of presentation shapes our view of the world. The newsletter is important because it will enable NCF to subject the media to the same scrutiny and standards they apply to other institutions.

The newsletter will be mailed primarily to opinion makers: Journalists, politicians, businessmen, academics, grassroots leaders and NCF supporters. Through the newsletter, we can make sure the right people know about bias in the media. That's why it's so cost-effective. Projected circulation: 10,000.

ANNUAL BUDGET: \$80,000

6. The Janet Cooke Award

Our version of "The Golden Fleece Award" will be given on a monthly basis for the most irresponsible piece of journalism. The panel administering the award will include prominent people who have been unfairly attacked by the media, people like General Westmoreland; and columnists who

have written extensively about the media: Patrick Buchanan, Joseph Sobran, Ernest van den Haag, William Rusher, William F. Buckley, Jr., Jeffrey Hart. The Janet Cooke Award will be featured in the newsletter; press releases on the event will be distributed to news outlets throughout the nation.

Janet Cooke is the famous Washington Post reporter who won a Pulitzer Prize for her article on an eight-year-old heroine addict. Later, it was discovered the story was invented, a fabrication of Cooke's imagination. Her Pulitzer Prize was revoked causing a major embarrassment for The Post and the subsequent firing of Cooke.

The winner of The Janet Cooke Award will receive a copy of her article mounted on a plaque.

ANNUAL BUDGET: \$10,000

7. Conservative Campus Newspapers

If we are to be successful in our efforts to fight bias in the media, we must attack the problem at the core, the university. The media elite are products of the academic environment. Ultimately, it's the campus where the ideological battle is being fought.

Everyone knows that the left has been in control of our universities for more than half a century. But there is good news. The academy is undergoing a conservative revolution led by, of all people, the students. This revolution began

when the first issue of The Dartmouth Review rolled off the presses back in 1980. The emergence of this conservative student publication received wide coverage in the national media, including Time, Newsweek, The New York Times, the network news shows, etc. There are now 133 student newspapers across the nation modeled after The Dartmouth Review.

But, the attacks on these publications from all corners of the liberal establishment has been ferocious, and some students have not weathered the storm well. Many of the papers have stopped publishing, or moved more toward the center in an effort to appease liberals. The reason: conservative students have not received the support they need from people outside the campus. Some students felt their efforts were not appreciated or noticed. As a result, many students became discouraged.

Their morale must be maintained. They must be made to feel good about expressing conservative positions. It's crucial to the conservative movement as whole that it is represented well on campus.

The National Conservative Foundation has wanted for some time to set up a program to reward the efforts of young conservatives by helping to fund these newspapers. Obviously we can't finance them all; but we can help some of the best ones pay their bills. We propose to award 10 grants of \$10,000 apiece to the best and most promising of these

journals each year. The effect will be that students will feel their efforts make a difference, that people are taking notice, and that they will have the funds needed to continue.

ANNUAL BUDGET: \$100,000

CONCLUSION

If conservatives do nothing about the expanding power of the media monopoly, the conservative movement will die; our nation will continue along the path to socialism; our defense will deteriorate; the Soviet Union will continue its relentless advance toward world domination as the will of America grows weak. The Soviet Union could not have invented a better propaganda apparatus to advance their cause than the American media. The media elite have already begun to orchestrate the defeat of Ronald Reagan and the recapture of the Senate in 1984. We are moving toward a situation where the media will be so effective at manipulating public sentiment that it will be virtually impossible for conservatives to win a major election. Tip O'Neill admitted that Democrats are counting on the media to do their work for them in 1984.

We need support from conservatives who understand the awesome threat of the media monopoly. We believe our program to fight media bias will be an effective weapon against this threat. The price -- \$2.5 million -- is small in comparison to what's at stake.

BUDGET

1) RESEARCH

Staff ----- \$70,000
NEXIS ----- \$30,000
Organizational and
Overhead ----- \$50,000

TOTAL: \$150,000

2) DOCUMENTARY

Production ----- \$45,000
Distribution ----- \$105,000

TOTAL: \$150,000

3) TELEVISION SERIES

Production
at \$5000 per week --- \$250,000
Distribution ----- \$250,000 (Low)
 \$750,000 (High)

TOTAL: \$500,000 - \$1 million

4) ADVERTISING

Production
Five Commercials ---- \$50,000
Distribution
Nationwide ----- \$950,000

TOTAL: \$1 million

5) NEWSLETTER

Staff Support ----- \$28,000
Distribution
and Printing ----- \$52,000

TOTAL: \$80,000

6) JANET COOKE AWARD

TOTAL: \$10,000

7) STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

10 grants at \$10,000 apiece

TOTAL: \$100,000

TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET: \$2.49 MILLION

The Washington Times

MONDAY, JUNE 20, 1983

NCPAC head plans anti-Post ad drive

BY A WASHINGTON TIMES STAFF WRITER

John T. Dolan, chairman of the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC), has revived charges against the Washington Post of slipshod journalism and "stonewalling" and says he intends to make the charges stick with an expensive anti-Post advertising campaign.

Dolan, who built his political credentials on negative advertising campaigns in the 1978 and 1980 election cycles, said he is set to unveil today a multi-media campaign against Washington's largest daily newspaper "to demonstrate to everyone wronged by the Post that they can do something about the Post's irresponsible actions."

The ad campaign, Dolan said, will "expose the regular and consistent leftist bias of the Washington Post." He said the campaign will feature lapel buttons and bumper stickers in addition to newspaper ads and radio commercials.

He said the campaign will cost at least \$50,000.

Dolan's campaign is the second high-dollar conservative advertising punch at a major newspaper in less than a month. On May 31, Accuracy in Media spent nearly \$73,000 on nationwide full-page ads in the Wall Street Journal denouncing The New York Times over its reporting of stock ownership by physicist Edward Teller.

Dolan's charges against the Post date from the 1982 elections. He said the Post consistently and repeatedly reported erroneous information about NCPAC and its political activities and never attempted to verify its accounts by contacting an NCPAC spokesman to determine what the facts were.

His experience with the Post over that issue led to research into the Post's reporting of world events, Dolan said. He said the advertising campaign would focus on documented errors of fact and errors of implication — the use of particular phrases or quotation marks to impart editorial slant to news stories. — Edmond Jacoby

Press Treats Reagan Unfairly—U.S. Envoy

By MIKE FEINSILBER

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Reagan administration finds it difficult to get a fair shake in an American press that is both elitist and monopolistic, says Jeane Kirkpatrick, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

She said the founding fathers' idea that the truth would emerge in the clash of ideas in an open marketplace no longer works. The press is far more powerful than was envisioned, its outlets are fewer and its practitioners are out of step with the American majority, she said.

"We have a very hard time as a government getting fair play from our media as a consequence of this concentration of power in something like a cultural and monopolistic elite," she said.

Mrs. Kirkpatrick spoke Thursday night at a dinner meeting of a conference on "The Conservative Movement and the Liberal Bias in the Media" sponsored by the National Conservative Foundation. The foundation is headed by Terry Dolan, chairman of the National Conservative Political Action Committee.

MRS. KIRKPATRICK SAID the press reflects the same elitist viewpoint as the one she encountered at some of the nation's best college campuses this spring where hecklers tried to prevent her from speaking. But that view is not shared with the majority of American voters who installed President Reagan in office and who, she predicted, will re-elect him in 1984.

She said the founding fathers' view that the truth would emerge in the competition of ideas in a free marketplace is no longer valid because of the disappearance of newspapers and the emergence of a powerful press, especially in the electronic media.

The news outlets that remain are far more powerful than the country's founders envisioned, she said. In television especially, she said, "the possibility of deliberate manipulation has been magnified 10-zillionfold."

The Washington Times

JUNE 21, 1983 ★

WASHINGTON, D.C.

PHONE: 636-3000
SUBSCRIBER SERVICE: 636-3333

Media unit grills Post reporter

BY A WASHINGTON TIMES STAFF WRITER

Washington Post reporter Paul Taylor offered a *mea culpa* on behalf of his newspaper to the chairman of the newly formed Committee for a Free Press (CFP) yesterday morning at a press conference called to announce an advertising campaign to denounce Post inaccuracies.

CFP Chairman John T. "Terry" Dolan accused The Post of slipshod journalism practices and said the Post hierarchy had "stonewalled" him and others who attempted to call the paper to account.

He also said The Post's coverage of world events showed a documentable lean to the left — that it slants the news with a liberal bias.

The charges grew out of a dispute that erupted between Dolan, who also is chairman of the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC), and The Post over the paper's coverage of NCPAC's participation in various

political campaigns last fall. The Post, Dolan said, reported no fewer than six inconsistent NCPAC win-loss records within a few days in November and has refused since to discuss its inaccuracies with him.

At yesterday's press conference, Taylor, one of the reporters whom Dolan accused of writing inaccurate stories, at first challenged Dolan's claims, saying political campaigns were "pretty murky" affairs not always lending themselves to precise reporting.

When Dolan reminded him, "You're also one of the people who didn't call" NCPAC to get the facts, Taylor replied:

"Absolutely! There are a lot of people I don't call.

"It seems to me," Taylor continued, "you have clearly — I don't think I'm speaking out of turn for my institution — you have caught The Post in a bit of sloppy reporting."

Taylor noted that he thought, "It is an

embarrassment which we deserve to be — uh — skewered for."

The Post reporter said he could not see, however, how his paper's lapses of journalistic standards could be interpreted as a liberal slanting of news. "I think we're dealing with clear sloppiness," Taylor said, "but it seems to me the leap to a 'leftward tilt' is reaching."

Dolan replied that "we make the leap because ... we've undertaken a lot of studies about how your paper reports" as a follow-on to documenting errors in stories about NCPAC. He cited a story by Post writer Martin Schram that appeared in the paper June 15 in which presidential hopeful Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, was quoted as referring to "right-wing death squads" in El Salvador.

Schram, Dolan said, transposed "right wing" to "conservative" in the very next paragraph, and by so doing

tagged the entire conservative movement with all the connotations of "death squads." Dolan said he was astonished that no editor changed Schram's copy before it was approved for publication, and that the only explanation for that failure was what he called an inherent bias at The Post that predisposed reporters and editors alike to view conservatives and radical-right paramilitary organizations in Central America as indistinguishable.

"That kind of thing isn't sloppiness," Dolan said.

Dolan said most of the funding for the CFP campaign would come from NCPAC, though appeals may be made later to a few individuals to contribute large amounts to the CFP fund.

He played a taped 60-second radio commercial being aired this week on WTOP and WRC radio and said other radio ads, newspaper ads and other forms of public opinion advertising will appear in the near future. About \$5,000 to \$10,000 already had been spent, he said, and the total for a six-month campaign probably will reach \$50,000.

— Edmond Jacoby

The Washington Post

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 1983

Group Targets Post in Ad Campaign

By Paul Taylor

Washington Post Staff Writer

Chairman John T. (Terry) Dolan of the National Conservative Political Action Committee said yesterday his organization is underwriting a \$50,000 advertising campaign on local radio stations to "expose the regular and consistent leftist bias of The Washington Post."

"We caught The Post cheating," Dolan said at a news conference. "We want a correction. We can't get one. I believe it's because they think they run this city."

The first series of ads, which are sponsored by the Committee for a Free Press, a new NCPAC offshoot that Dolan chairs, takes the newspaper to task for reporting "falsehoods" about NCPAC's won/lost record in 1982 congressional elections.

"Following the 1982 elections The Post printed five contradictory win-loss records for NCPAC," the ad states. "All five were wrong. When these mistakes were pointed out by

NCPAC Chairman John T. Dolan, The Post responded by having Mr. [David S.] Broder write another article which came up with a sixth contradictory record and an additional seven falsehoods. Although The Post's own ombudsman agrees that The Post reported seven contradictory win/loss records, The Post refuses to run a correction."

In the days after the election, Post ombudsman Robert J. McCloskey has written, The Post did contradict itself. One story said NCPAC had won one race of nine; another one of 14 and another one of 17.

Dolan claimed yesterday that the contradictions were evidence not merely of sloppiness, but of the paper's desire "to report the 1982 election as a huge repudiation of conservatism."

In a Post editorial section article last November, Dolan maintained that NCPAC's win record in the 1982 election was 70 percent. He repeated that yesterday.

However, figures supplied by

NCPAC yesterday show that the group won one of 36 House and Senate races in which it made independent expenditures totaling \$3.1 million. In 137 House races in which the group made smaller direct contributions totaling \$250,000, it had 41 winners and 96 losers.

In 51 House races where NCPAC made endorsements but no expenditures, it backed 47 winners and four losers.

Asked where the 70 percent win figure came from, NCPAC spokesman Craig Shirley said it had appeared in Congressional Quarterly. He said NCPAC stood by that figure, but acknowledged he had no idea where it came from.

Dolan characterized NCPAC as having had a "successful" year in 1982 and said The Post's insistence on reporting it otherwise was evidence of bias. "Anytime you defeat an incumbent senator, you are successful," he said. "If we can help replace one liberal with one conservative per election, we'll be happy."



NATIONAL CONSERVATIVE FOUNDATION

Suite 201 • 5707 Seminary Road
Baileys Crossroads, Virginia 22041
Telephone (703) 671-0444

file

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, THURSDAY, MAY 7, 1981

CONTACT: Tom Olson, 671-0444

FOUNDATION RELEASES STUDY SHOWING POST BIAS

Washington, D.C. - The National Conservative Foundation (NCF) today accused the Washington Post of "an apparently deliberate attempt to sway the U.S. Congress from passing President Reagan's economic recovery program." NCF released a study that showed 45% of the articles printed by the Post in a one month period regarding the President's economic package were negative, while only 11% were positive.

John T. Dolan, Chairman of the Foundation, said, "This study gives great weight to those who say the Washington Post is more interested in lobbying for liberal proposals than in producing fair and unbiased news coverage."

"Coming on the heels of 'Post-gate', where the Post editorial staff and one of its writers made a sham of the Pulitzer Prize proceedings, this study should send a clear message to anyone who reads the Post -- particularly members of Congress -- not to believe everything they read."

The study attempted to gauge the major media response to the President's plan by tracking articles concerning the economic recovery plan in the Post and classifying them as either positive, negative,

(M O R E)

ADD 1

Post study 5/7/81

or neutral. A negative article was defined as one that was largely critical without giving countervailing explanations of the President's views. The study classified 113 articles from February 19, the day the President announced his proposal, to March 19th, a one month period. Of the articles, 45% were negative, 44% were neutral, and 11% were positive.

Dolan pointed out the fact that the Post articles are not only read in Washington, but in newspapers throughout the country via their wire service. "These activities are not only a disservice to their readers but to their profession. They have violated the public trust Americans place in the media to provide accurate and unbiased information," said Dolan.

"We hope that the Post will redirect their energies to improving their journalistic ethics of accuracy and neutrality. In view of our findings, the only proper action for the Post to follow is to register as a liberal lobby group."

Dolan was also critical of what he called "cheap shots in the Post's coverage." He cited an article by Janet Cooke titled "Losers" which he said was "heavily critical as well as outrageously playing on emotions and the stereotyped notion that the President's package was going to set class against class."

INTRODUCTION

On February 18th, President Reagan unveiled his proposal for America's economic recovery. Appealing for support of his plan, the President stated, "I don't want it to be simply the plan of my Administration--I'm here tonight to ask you to join me in making it our plan."

Unfortunately, the ultimate success or failure of the President's request for unity in solving our current economic crisis depends heavily on the activities of the liberally-biased news media which strongly shapes public opinion.

In this study, we have attempted to gauge the major media response to the President's plan by tracking articles concerning the economic recovery program in the Washington Post, one of the country's most influential newspapers.

The articles were classified as either positive, negative, or neutral. Each article was divided into positive and negative viewpoints, quotes and neutral facts. Neutral articles were defined as those that were either totally factual or had a balance between negative and positive opinion. Positive articles had an imbalance of opinion by presenting more pro-administration quotes and viewpoints than anti-administration criticisms, whereas negative articles featured criticisms without countervailing explanation of the President's views.

Our findings bear out the assertion that the Washington Post has printed a large volume of "negative" articles concerning the President's economic proposal. This unbalanced coverage will have the effect of shaping public opinion against the Reagan plan and

Page 2

erode its chances for success in the Congress.

The National Conservative Foundation strongly feels that the defeat of the President's proposal would be a severe defeat for the American people.

In the wake of the Post's embarrassment over the awarding of the Pulitzer prize for one of their articles that proved to be fictitious, we hope the Post will redirect their energies to improving their journalistic ethics of accuracy and neutrality rather than lobbying for liberal causes.

Feb. 19

- Reagan to Hill: "People Are Waiting" (Lee Lescage and Lou Cannon). neutral - largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Income Taxes (Caroline Atkinson). neutral - largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Jobless Benefits. (Martha Hamilton). neutral - largely factual although somewhat negative in tone.
- Risky Reagan Remedy Attacks Economic Ills on All Fronts at Once. (John Berry). negative. A surplus of criticism with only a weak presentation of the administration's position.
- Debate Replay. (David Broder). negative. Imbalance of opinion tilted to the negative.
- 45 Percent Cut in Impact Funds Hits Major Area School Aid Source. (Donald Baker). neutral - largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Editorial - Mr. Reagan's Gamble - neutral. balance of opinion.
- Reagan Calls for \$41.4 Billion in Spending Cuts for Fiscal 1982. (Peter Behr and Spencer Rich). neutral - largely factual.
- Reagan Proposes Pentagon Boost of \$169 Billion. (Michael Getler). positive. Largely factual with an imbalance of opinion tilted to the positive.

Feb. 20

- For Nation, "It's Time to Switch Lanes". (Bill Peterson). negative. preponderance of negative opinion
- Winners. (Pete Earley). neutral - largely factual with a balance of opinion although the article and the people interviewed directly support and reinforce the stereotyped criticism offered by the President's opponents.
- Losers. (Janet Cooke). negative - heavily critical as well as outrageously playing on the readers emotions.
- Administration Asks Hill to Speed Action In Slashing Budget. (Helen Dewar). negative - surplus of criticism without countervailing arguments.
- Still Powerful Democrats in the House Will Have a Big Say on Reagan Plans. (Margot Hornblower). negative - surplus of criticism without countervailing arguments.
- Reagan Sees Battle for Cutting Taxes. (lou Cannon) neutral. largely factual with a balance of opinion.

- AFL - CIO Issues Challenge to Budget. (Warren Brown). negative - surplus of criticism without countervailing arguments.
- Feb. 21
- Education Chief is Overruled on Block Grant Use. (Dan Morgan). neutral. largely factual with a balance of opinion
 - Block Predicts Tax Reductions Will Offset Food Stamp Losses. (UPI). positive - greater exposure to the Administration's position.
 - Democrats Call Tax Cut Inflationary. (Caroline Atkinson). neutral - balance positive & negative opinions.
 - Donovan Union Chiefs Divide on Spending. (Warren Brown). negative. a surplus of criticism with only a weak presentation of the Administration's position.
- Feb. 22
- Reagan Strides Coolly Onto the High Wire Without a Safety Net. (Hayne Johnson). Positive. Predominance is given to the Administration's view without countervailing criticism.
 - Byrd Foresees Cooperation With Reagan. (Kathy Sawyer). neutral - both negative and positive comments on the President's program were presented.
 - White House Opens Drive to Sell Governors and Mayors on Fund Cuts. neutral - largely factual with a good deal of information not directly related to the President's program.
- Feb. 23
- Gas Tax Raise Weighed. (David Broder, Herbert Denton). neutral - largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Administration Moves Abandon Ailing Northeast and Midwest Cities. (Dan Balz). negative. a preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Editorial: Should Karen Perry Work? negative - Narrow focus without giving space to the Administration's goals or priorities.
- Feb. 24
- Governors Opposing Reagan On Medicaid, Welfare plans. (David Broder, Herbert Denton). negative - Surplus of criticism with only weak presentation of the Administration's position.
 - Washington Post/ABC News Poll: Reagan Program Strongly Backed. (Barry Sussman). neutral - factual information.

- Feb. 24
(con't)
- Leaders in Senate Agree on Strategy To Gain \$125.9 Billion in Budget Cuts. (Helen Dewar). positive. largely factual with a predominance of pro-Administration opinion.
 - Editorial: Opening Round in Tax Debate. negative - largely critical with few explanations of Administration's policy.
- Feb. 25
- Governors Vow to Oppose Shift in Cost Burden. (David Broder and Herbert Denton). neutral - largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Amid Skepticism, Hill Committee Starts Work on Reagan Tax Bill. (Caroline Atkinson). negative - Heavy criticism with weak presentation of the Administration's views.
 - Block Grants Defended by Reagan Officials. (Spencer Rich). positive - Greater coverage of Administration's views.
- Feb. 26
- Budget Cutters Underestimate U.S. Outlays. (Lee Lescaze). neutral - largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Feb. 27
- Job, Food, School Programs New Reagan Budget Targets. (Peter Behr, Caroline Atkinson). neutral - largely factual.
 - The New Euphoria. (Robert Kaiser). negative. Mostly factual but did not balance criticisms with explanations of the Administration's views.
 - Editorial: A Slight Underestimate. negative - largely critical with few explanations of Administration's policy.
- Feb. 28
- Broad-Based Coalition Forms to Fight Reagan on Cuts.
 - Blacks Apprehensive About Plans for Budget. (Herbert Denton). negative - largely factual but with a preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Mine Workers to Call 2-Day Strike. (Robert Kaiser). negative - Largely factual but with a preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Veto Threatened If Tax Measure is Tilted, Loaded. (Lee Lescaze, and John Berry). neutral - Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Fund Cuts Would Make Times Harder in Lansing Schools. (San Morgan). negative. Narrow negative focus without equal attention to Administration's goals or priorities.

- Mar. 1 - New Cuts in Budget Approved. (Bill Peterson).
 neutral - factual description.

- Mar. 2 - Cities Group Backs Cut in Public Jobs. (Herbert Denton).
 neutral. largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Reagan Runs Into Resistance on Transferring Programs
 to States. (David Broder). negative. Largely factual
 with a preponderance of criticism and only weak
 presentation of the Administration's position.

- Mar. 3 - Reagan Warns Foes of Economic Plan. (Lou Cannon)
 positive. A preponderance of pro-administration opinion.
- Stockman Vows More Cuts if Economy Weakens. (David Broder)
 neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.

- Mar. 4 - Reagan Urges Dairy Price Aid Cutback (Lee Lescaze).
 Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Administration Said to Plan Cut in Funds for Youth
 Jobs, Training (Herbert Denton). neutral. factual
 description.

- Mar. 5 - President Wins First Hill Vote on Budget (Robert Kaiser)
 neutral. Largely factual.
- Ax Poised for Poverty Agency and Anti-Smoking Program
 (Spencer Rich & Hobart Rowen) neutral. Largely factual.
- Reagan's Economic Program Is Denounced by AFL-CIO President
 Negative. A preponderance of negative opinion with little
 presentation of the Administration's views.

- Mar. 6 - White House Wants to Cut Off Federal Legal Aid for the
 Poor (Fred Barbish). Negative. Largely factual with
 a preponderance of negative opinion..
- Baker, Long Try to Dodge Budget Ax (Helen Dewar)
 neutral. Largely factual with information not directly
 related to the economic proposal.
- 40 Conservative House Democrats Ask Reagan for More
 Budget Cuts. (Lou Cannon) neutral. Largely factual
 with a balance of opinion.
- Trims in Budget Contain a Break for 34 Oil Firms.
 (Patrick Tyler) neutral. Factual description with
 little opinion.
- Editorial: For the Jobless: Jobs. negative. Heavily
 critical with little explanation of administration policy.

- Mar. 7 - Federal Spending Freeze Began Before Request Went to
 Congress (Edward Walsh). Neutral. Largely factual with
 a balance of opinion.

Mar. 7
(con't)

- While Cutting Budget, Administration Redirects Priorities on Energy. (Peter Behr) Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Rep. Wright Says Budget Cut Likely (David Broder) Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion.
- Sen. Randolph in Silver Tones, Defends Pet Projects (Bill Peterson). Negative. Narrow negative focus.
- End to Legal Aid to Poor Opposed by ABA Chief (Fred Barbash) Negative. Mainly negative opinion without presentation of administration's views
- Administration Backs Off on Budget Cuts, Will Continue to Fund Bilingual Education. (Dan Balz) Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Reagan Imposes New Ceilings On Government Employment (Lee Lescaze). Positive. Preponderance of pro-administration opinion.

Mar. 8

- Reagan Ready to Unveil Social Welfare Cuts
 - New Resurgence in 'Workfare' (Spencer Rich, Ward Sinclair). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Major Revision in 40 Programs (Spencer Rich) Negative. Largely factual, but some excess in negative opinion
- Food Aid May Be Cut Another \$700 Million. Negative. Largely factual but with a heavy slant of negative opinion.
- Alternative Tax Plan To Help the Needier Offered by Kennedy. (Bill Peterson) Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion without representation of the administration's policy.

Mar. 9

- Reagan Will Seek to Slash Federal Loan Programs (John Berry) Positive. Largely factual with a preponderance of positive opinion.
- Editorial: Subway Subsidies: How Much? Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion without representation of the administration's policy.

Mar. 10

- Reagan Asks \$48 Billion Budget Cut. (Lou Cannon and Helen Dewar). Neutral. Balance of opinion.
- Editorial: supply-Side on the Downside. Negative. Heavily critical without presenting the Administration's views and policies.
- Editorial: Equal Chance for Justice. Negative. Very critical without presenting the Administration's views and policies.

- Mar. 11
- Reagan Sends Budget to Hill as 'Mandate for Change'. (John Berry, Lee Lescaze) Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - From Poor to Rich (Robert Kaiser) Negative. Negative without countervailing administration views.
 - From Poor to Worse (Bill Peterson) Negative. Very negative without presenting the administration's viewpoints.
 - House Leaders Join Senate in Putting Spending Cuts on Fast Track. (Helen Dewar). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - House Panel Chews Up Idea of School Lunch Cut (Ward Sinclair) Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Editorial: The Budget: What Will Congress Do? Neutral Balanced opinion.
- Mar. 12
- Doubters in Congress Take Aim At Reagan's 'Magic' Budget. (Helen Dewar) Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Administration Acknowledges Depth of Planned Welfare Cut (Spencer Rich) Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Budget Cutters Deep-Six National Aquarium Here (Donnel Nunes. Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Budget Cuts Constrain Major Civil Rights Agencies. (Kathy Sawyer). Neutral. Largely factual.
 - David Meets Goliath on the Giant's Own Turf. (Bill Peterson) Neutral. Balance of Opinion.
 - Missouri Will Be Happy With Less U.S. Aid if Reagan Cuts Strings (Dan Balz). Positive. Largely factual with a preponderance of positive opinion.
 - Editorial: Secretary Lewis on the Right Track. Positive. Largely factual but praised administration plans.
 - Editorial: Taxes and Redistribution. Negative. Critical of the administration's tax proposal without explaining the administration's justification for their policies.
- Mar. 13
- Mayors Attack Proposed Budget Cuts (Edward Walsh). Negative Predominance of negative opinion.
 - House Panel Reluctant to Cut Dairy Supports. Neutral. Balance of opinion.

- Mar. 13
(con't)

 - Reagan Shrugs At Projections of Cuts in Welfare (Lee Lescaze). Positive. Predominance of pro-administration views.
 - Hill Budget Cutters Zero In on Social Security Cost-of-Living Raises. (Helen Dewar). Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Editorial: Clearing Up the Confusion. Negative. Criticism of Reagan proposal without clearly explaining administration views and goals.
- Mar. 14

 - 3 Million Households Facing Cuts (Spencer Rich). Negative. A preponderance of negative opinion.
 - City Would Lose 1,000 CETA Employees (Ron Shaffer) Negative. A preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Indians See Dire Budget-Cut Consequences. (Dan Balz) Negative. A preponderance of negative opinion.
- Mar. 15

 - Weapons Being Mustered For the Battle of the Cuts. (David Broder). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Weaning on Conrail: A Tricky Political Problem for Budget-Cutters (Edward Walsh). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
- Mar. 16

 - 2 Programs Fall Ax, Victims of Their Own Popularity
 - Law Firm' for Poor Grew Into a Movement (Fred Barbash). Negative. Narrow negative focus.
 - College Assistance Costs Soared to \$4.5 billion (Dan Morgan). Negative. A preponderance of negative opinion.
- Mar. 17

 - Reagan's Estimates of Spending Called \$25 Billion Too Low. (Helen Dewar) Negative. Predominance of negative opinion.
 - Proposed Cuts in Benefits Easily Pass First Test (Spencer Rich, Caroline Atkinson). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Federal College Student Aid Halted Pending Plan to Cut It Back. (Dan Morgan) Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion.
- Mar. 18

 - Reagan Rips 'Phony' Hill Budget Data. (Helen Dewar) Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - House Committee Rebels Against Budget Cut Plans (Richard L. Lyons and Spencer Rich). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Administration is Loser On 1st Round of Milk Vote (Robert Kaiser). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.

- Mar. 18
(con't)
- Editorial: Struggling With Student Loans. Positive Supported the Administration's position.
 - Editorial: ...And the Truly Needy Aloft. Negative. Criticized the Administration's position.
- Mar. 19
- Senate Budget Panel Balks at Social Security Benefit Cuts. (Helen Dewar). Neutral. Largely factual with a balance of opinion.
 - Area Schools Face \$43 Million Loss in Reagan's Cuts. (Judith Valente, Athelia Knight). Negative. Largely factual with a preponderance of negative criticism.
 - House Tax Writers Agree With Reagan Budget Goals (Caroline Atkinson). Neutral. Largely factual with only weak criticism.
 - VFW Criticizes Reagan's Cuts in Funding for VA (AP). Negative. Preponderance of negative opinion.
 - House Panel Opts for Dairy Lobby's Plan Over Reagan's (Robert Kaiser). Neutral. Factual description.
 - Editorial: More than Mere Numbers. Negative. A preponderance of negative opinion.
 - Editorial: More on Food Stamps. Negative. Criticized the administration's position.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ARTICLES -113

NEGATIVE - 51 (45%)

NEUTRAL - 50 (44%)

POSITIVE - 12 (11%)

POINT VALUES FOR ARTICLES: NEGATIVE-0, NEUTRAL-1, POSITIVE-3

DATE	POINT VALUE			SCORE	HIGHEST POSSIBLE SCORE	%POSITIVE OF POSSIBLE SCORE
	NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE			
Feb. 19	2	6	1	8	27	30
20	5	2	0	2	21	10
21	1	2	1	4	12	33
22	0	2	1	4	9	44
23	2	1	0	1	9	11
24	2	1	1	3	12	25
25	1	1	1	3	9	33
26	0	1	0	1	3	33
27	2	1	0	1	9	11
28	3	1	0	1	12	8
Mar. 1	0	1	0	1	3	33
2	1	1	0	1	6	17
3	0	1	1	3	6	50
4	0	2	0	2	6	33
5	1	2	0	2	9	22
6	2	3	0	3	15	20
7	3	3	1	5	21	24
8	2	2	0	2	12	17
9	1	0	1	2	6	33
10	2	1	0	1	9	11
11	3	3	0	3	18	17
12	3	3	2	7	24	29
13	3	1	1	3	15	20
14	3	0	0	0	9	0
15	0	2	0	2	6	33
16	2	0	0	0	6	0
17	2	1	0	1	9	11
18	1	3	1	5	15	33
19	4	3	0	3	21	14

* %SCORES = NEGATIVE
0-33

NEUTRAL
34-66

POSITIVE
67-100