



THE PATRIOT POST®

VOICE OF ESSENTIAL LIBERTY

ALEXANDER'S
ESSAY

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THE FUNDAMENTAL TRANSFORMATION OF NEWSWEEK AND AMERICA

Common Threads of Delusion and Demise

“During the course of administration, and in order to disturb it, the artillery of the press has been leveled against us, charged with whatsoever its licentiousness could devise or dare. These abuses of an institution so important to freedom and science are deeply to be regretted...” --Thomas Jefferson

Freedom of the press is codified in the First Amendment of our Bill of Rights (“Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of ... the press”) because our Founders rightly understood that a free and impartial press was a vital component of Essential Liberty.

However free, the press has rarely risen to the challenge of impartiality, not even during earliest days of our Republic. Thomas Jefferson observed as president, that the nation’s newspapers “serve as chimnies to carry off noxious vapors and smoke.” With the advent of the 24-hour “news” cycle, the press has never been more partisan than it is today.

Hence in 1996, when we launched The Patriot Post, one of our primary objectives was to break the mainstream media’s chokehold on public opinion. Since our inception, The Patriot has devoted much-needed attention to the threat that a partial press poses to liberty, even receiving the Accuracy in Media Award for Grassroots Journalism for our efforts.

The Leftmedia’s threat to liberty has been perilous in recent years, while we’ve been at war with a formidable adversary -- Jihadistan and its terrorists in Iraq, Afghanistan and other theaters around the world.

By way of confirmation that our foreign Jihadi enemy understand the power of the American Leftmedia as an instrument of propaganda, as do domestic Leftist politicians, consider this authenticated communiqué between Osama bin Laden’s chief lieutenant, Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahiri, to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi at the height of Operation Iraqi Freedom: “I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media.”

In the midst of that critical period for OIF, one of the most egregious Leftmedia print propagandists, Newsweek, under the leadership of its (now former) editor Jon Meacham, ran defeat and surrender cover stories with headlines like “We’re losing...”, in which Meacham claimed the expertise to chart a retreat from Iraq before total defeat.

The unmitigated arrogance of such positions notwithstanding, surely Meacham understood that such cover stories serve only to embolden our enemy, which results in the deaths of America’s uniformed Patriots on the warfront. Some call giving “aid and comfort” to the enemy, “treason.” At best, it brands Meacham with the same stripes as Hanoi Jane Fonda.

Meacham, whose “golden boy” career was christened by a benefactor heiress of The New York Times, became editor of Newsweek in late 2006, 10 years into his stint with the magazine. He then promptly set about to transform the magazine into an elitist tabloid for those who want to read, in his words, “what I’m interested in.”

Of that transformation, columnist Jeff Goldberg punned, “[T]he redesigned Newsweek. (Now with even more Meacham!)”

While dragging Newsweek deeper into the Leftist abyss, Meacham insisted, “We’re not a partisan magazine. ... I am not a reflexive lefty. Far from it.” At the same time, he editorialized, “Obama is essentially a centrist.”

One trademark characteristic of most “reflexive lefty” elitists in media and politics is that their capacity for introspection is short circuited by pathological narcissism. Thus, they self-righteously believe they embody the “spirit of the people,” and perceive themselves to be centrist, just much smarter than the masses whose devotion they desire.

Narcissists with Obama-like charisma can create a cult following among their devotees, which is sustainable until enough of them open their eyes and realize that the emperor has no clothes.

When asked recently, “Think of one of your least favorite people in Washington and describe what makes that

person so unappealing,” Meacham responded, “Total lack of self-awareness.” At least he can see it in others.

Of his plan to fundamentally transform Newsweek, Meacham said, “It’s hugely counterintuitive. The staff doesn’t even understand it.”

Apparently, it was so “counterintuitive” that Meacham’s readers didn’t understand it either.

According to Business Insider, “Newsweek’s negligible operating loss of \$3 million in 2007 (its first year under the Meacham plan) turned into a bloodbath: the business lost \$32 million in 2008 and \$39.5 million in 2009. Even after reducing headcount by 33 percent, and slashing the number of issues printed and distributed to readers each week, from 2.6 million to 1.5 million, the 2010 operating loss is still forecast at \$20 million.”

Consequently, Newsweek was sold this week to another Lefty, billionaire Sidney Harman (hubby to Leftcoast Rep. Jane Harman), who agreed to assume the glut of debt accumulated since Meacham took the helm. The winning bid? One dollar. No kidding. Given all the debt Harman took on, another bidder, Fred Drasner (former CEO of US News and World Report) quipped, “I think he paid a very full price.”

I took note of the sale not because of Meacham’s abysmal performance at Newsweek (most of the antique print media outlets are in financial trouble) but because 25 years ago I arranged payment of Jon’s tuition at a very fine private high school that his family could not afford. At the time, he was a polite, adroit teenager, a Young Republican cheerleader for Ronald Reagan with a promising future.

While I had hoped that my investment in his education would produce a good return for our national heritage of Liberty and its extension to our posterity, I also realize

that some seeds fall upon fertile ground and some upon the rocks. Instead of a stalwart constitutionalist, Jon, under the stewardship of various Leftmedia employers, lost his bearing and veered Left. (I recently wrote Jon and asked for a refund of that tuition, but got no response. Perhaps it was because of the salutation, “Dear Jon.”)

Further, I was struck with the similarities between Jon’s delusional vision to transform Newsweek as a microcosm of Obama’s failed vision for the “fundamental transformation of America.” Both visions reveal unbridled arrogance and an underlying contempt for those who are just not smart enough to see it their way, and both set a course for demise.

In a recent essay on Obama, Meacham wrote that if not for “a series of counterintuitive bets,” he would not be president. Unfortunately for the nation, Obama’s bets are meeting with the same disastrous fate as Meacham’s bets at Newsweek. Fortunately for the remaining employees of Newsweek, Harman bailed them out, while Red China is bailing out (Read: “taking ownership of”) America.

Thomas Jefferson concluded, “[T]he press is impotent when it abandons itself to falsehood,” asserting that partisanship undermines the vital role of a free and impartial press in defense of liberty against tyranny. In the case of Newsweek, Meacham and company betrayed that trust, and his readers, like a growing number of Obama’s supporters, unsubscribed.

Veritas vos Liberabit -- Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus, et Fidelis! Mark Alexander, Publisher, for *The Patriot Post*’s editors and staff. Read online at <http://patriotpost.us>

(Please pray for our Armed Forces standing in harm’s way around the world, and for their families -- especially families of those fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, who granted their lives in defense of American liberty.)