

MEDIA FAIRNESS CAUCUS

A Look at Media Bias

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Outlet Fires Journalist Who Criticized Democrats 9/22/10



For journalists who criticize Democrats, the punishment can be severe. **ABC's Washington, D.C. affiliate recently fired veteran anchorman Doug McKelway after he broadcast a negative report about President Obama and congressional Democrats, according to The Washington Post.**

During the Gulf oil spill, McKelway reported that an anti-oil demonstration attracted protesters from “far-left environmental groups.” He also mentioned that President Obama accepted over \$77,000 in campaign contributions from BP. And he said that the Senate was unlikely to pass cap-and-trade legislation this year because Democrats don't want to “propose a huge escalation in your electric bill” before Election Day. Although McKelway's comments were true, he was subsequently fired.

This is yet another example of the media protecting President Obama. The media should give Americans the facts, not fire journalists who tell the truth.

Media Use “Conservative” More Often than “Liberal”

The national media label political candidates and organizations “conservative” far more often than “liberal.” **For example, during the last year, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Los Angeles Times used the word “conservative” almost twice as often as “liberal” in political news stories, according to an internet search.**

Furthermore, by margins of 3 to 1, the newspapers used the term “far right” more often than “far left” and “right wing” more frequently than “left wing.” And the term “extreme right” appeared five times more often than “extreme left.”

This disparity shows the media's liberal perspective. To them, “liberal” is actually “mainstream,” and therefore not worth mentioning. But Americans describe themselves as conservative rather than liberal by a margin of 2 to 1. The national media should give Americans the facts, not use biased language.

Media Show Bias Toward GOP Senate Nominee

The national media have shown a clear liberal bias in their coverage of Delaware GOP senate nominee Christine O'Donnell. CBS News political analyst John Dickerson recently acknowledged the media's bias, saying that “the national media is not doing [O'Donnell] any favors and, basically, a lot of people want her on so that she can have a car crash on air.”

For example, CBS Evening News reporter Nancy Cordes described O'Donnell as “**ultra-conservative,**” but media outlets rarely describe candidates as “ultra-liberal” or “very liberal.” CNN contributor John Avlon referred to O'Donnell as the “**new queen of the wingnuts.**” And ABC's George Stephanopoulos recounted allegations from her political opponents that O'Donnell is “**not a viable candidate**” and “**cannot be elected dog catcher in Delaware,**” as well as a claim that she is “**either a liar or mentally unhinged.**”

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