

COMPLICIT OMISSIONS

(WHEN BAD NEWS IS HARDLY ANY NEWS AT ALL)

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The selective reporting of the American mainstream media is no longer a contestable issue. During the three and a half years of the Bush presidency, an unprecedented number of vital news stories potentially damaging to the administration have been ignored, underreported or misrepresented by the major news sources available to the public. But this week, the media have outdone themselves in spades. The story that should have shattered the eardrums of a sleeping public was reported as if it had been an insignificant weather report. A magnitude 5 hurricane was downgraded to a passing drizzle as George W. Bush was once again protected by a restrained and submissive media. The standard prevailed: bad news for George W Bush is hardly any news at all.

The story in question is about an unprecedented event in American political history, and involves a group that calls itself the Diplomats & Military Commanders for Change. The story is about a unique bipartisan coalition of 27 career chiefs of mission and retired four-star military leaders who launched a nationwide campaign to effect a change in U.S. foreign and defense policy. The story is about their deep concern that the Bush Administration has caused irreparable damage to our national and international interests. But the story made hardly any news at all.

The story is about a group of senior diplomatic and military leaders so alarmed by the Bush/PNAC foreign policy that they did something previously unheard of in this country. They came together from every segment of the political spectrum to call for the ouster of a sitting president! The announcement of their intent to issue a public statement was received with widespread support from their peers around the world. The enormity of their concerns could not possibly be overstated, nor could the credibility of their collective source in any way be denied. And yet, the story made hardly any news at all.

As a group, the American news media managed to rush this story into their "protect Bush's image" archives. During the 15 minutes of fame given to this blockbuster story, the majority of coverage was devoted to suggesting that the group had organized for political, rather than national interests. Coverage of their public statement was limited to C-Span, and barely mentioned by the news networks during prime news hours. The one or two representatives from the group invited to appear on any major television channels were faced with challenges from Republican spokespersons, supporting the accusation that they were merely Democrats in disguise. Even these appearances made hardly any news at all.

During their brief, one time TV exposure, there was little, if any focus on the revelations that many in the group had supported and voted for George W. Bush. No mention was made that the members of the group had served every president since Harry S. Truman. The public did not hear that one member had been the chairperson of the Dole campaign in Oregon during the 1996 election and was also a member of Veteran for Bush during

the 2000 election. In a nutshell, this story involved an urgent plea by informed, accomplished and dedicated, public servants, willing to step up to the plate to save their country from further harm. And yet, it made hardly any news at all.

Other concerned professional groups and non political organizations have raised alarms about dangerous policies of the Bush administration. They have tried to bring public attention to issues ranging from the President's devastating environmental programs to his manipulation of scientific data in favor of religious ideology. Just this week a group of Nobel Prize winners spoke out in opposition to the repression of scientific research by this administration, but were largely ignored by news networks. Sadly, the American media whisked these stories past the public faster than the Florida Board of Elections could purge African Americans from its voter registration lists. In short, they made hardly any news at all.

Without any attempt to undermine the importance of the many news stories that have been given short shrift, we want to stress the unparalleled relevance of the announcement by the Diplomats & Military Commanders for Change. This cannot be allowed to continue. The American people have to restart the flow of pertinent information that has become stagnant in the hands of the corporate media. The focus in this important election season continues to be on the Scott Peterson and Kobe Bryant trials, and the sensational stories that have no effect on the future of the nation. There has to be a call for full coverage of real news that the public has a right to know even when it is openly, yet accurately critical of the policies of George Bush and others members of his administration.

Please view the video of the press conference held by this concerned group of citizens to discover its incomparable importance for yourself. Please do not let this story die. Download this article, download the associated flyer. Share this story with others so that Americans who have not yet made a choice for president can hear what these important people have to say. This election is not one of partisan politics, it is one of survival. For the sake of this nation help sound the alarm, so that stories such as this finally take their appropriate place in the news, and are no longer relegated to being hardly any news at all.

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