

Analysis of Project Censored: Are We a Left-Leaning, Conspiracy-Oriented Organization?

By Peter Phillips and Mickey Huff

“Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe.” –Frederick Douglass

One continuing criticism of Project Censored is that we are a left leaning organization. Which is an interesting claim in that over 200 faculty and students from multiple disciplines and political orientations work with Project Censored each year. Over 1,500 students have been trained in media research techniques since we began in 1976, and it would be hard to find a more mainstream, mostly Californian college student body.

Critical thinking and fact finding are not left leaning, they are the basis of democracy, and we proudly stand for the maximization of informed participatory democracy at the lowest possible level in society. To this end, Project Censored supports social justice and media democracy in action.

The most common complaint about Project Censored is that we are more critical of powerful Republicans and conservatives than Democrats and liberals. The second most often announced complaint that that we cover news stories that are really not “censored” or are part of some crazy conspiracy theory.

In regards to censorship our definition has been quite clear all along. Any interference with the free flow of information is censorship. Even if the interference is structural or not deliberate, it has the same impact by creating a lack of public awareness on critical issues. This means that when *The New York Times* chooses to cover the updates on celebrity deaths, marriages, or divorces, and ignores the ACLU’s release of military autopsy reports proving that the US was torturing prisoners to death in Iraq and Afghanistan (Censored Story #7, 2007), that is censorship. It is censorship even if most of *The New York Times* journalist didn’t know about the ACLU report, they certainly should have—It was an AP release! The ACLU report was only covered in a dozen or so newspapers (not the NYT) and went widely unnoticed. For a story this important to go virtually unreported implies a degree of overt censorship.

Further, if journalists ignore topics related to 9/11, election fraud, electromagnetic weapons, contrail irregularities, because they might be labeled “conspiracy theorists,” that is censorship as well. Any decision to cover up, ignore, avoid, steer away from, or simply fail to investigate—even if the investigation is not fruitful—is censorship because it implies a willful choice to not cover a particular story. Ignoring important news stories for whatever reasons is not commensurate with principles of a free press.

Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracies tend to be actions by small groups of individuals instead of massive collective plots by governments and corporations. However, small groups can be dangerous, especially when the individuals have significant power in huge public and private bureaucracies. However it is very unlikely that conspiracies can be interlinked in

a macro way bridging the gaps between dozens of corporations and government bureaucracies. There are just too many connections for possible leaks and exposures.

Nonetheless, corporate boards of directors meet in closed rooms to plan to how best to maximize profit. If they knowingly make plans that hurt others, violate laws, undermine ethics, or show favoritism to friends, they are involved in a conspiracy. Conspiracies exist everywhere, and, yes, people do sit in rooms and conspire all the time. They may not congregate at the end of dark piers in abandoned warehouses under lights with no shades smoking cigars in trench coats mumbling and looking askance. But conspirators do exist. Micro-plots may well be the answer to some of the famous conspiracies theories floating in our circles of cynicism on the Internet. However, without accurate thorough investigations, we can only stew in our distrust. Critical thinking and accurate, transparent investigative research are needed to counter the emotional fraud and propaganda of speculative ideas, fear mongering, and groupthink.

The first thing that critics of investigations on 9/11, elections fraud, and any other issues do is to link all the questions—including some of the most hair-brain ideas—together in a crazy hodgepodge of irrationality that undermines legitimate investigations. There is often a series of logical fallacies used by critics of controversial issues, which include ad hominem attacks, red herring and straw person distractions, and false dilemmas. Because many people are taken in by these irrationalities, some journalists are fearful of being labeled conspiracy theorists. To protect their careers many—especially those in corporate media—will steer their inquiries to “safer” stories.

For example, in 2007, Project Censored covered research into the events of September the 11th by Brigham Young University physics professor, Steven E. Jones. Dr. Jones concluded that the official explanation for the collapse of the World Trade Center (WTC) buildings was implausible according to laws of physics. Jones called for an independent, international scientific investigation “guided not by politicized notions and constraints but rather by observations and calculations.” Jones specifically investigated the collapse of WTC 7; a forty-seven-story building that was not hit by planes, yet dropped in its own “footprint,” in the same manner as a controlled demolition late in the afternoon on September 11, 2001. WTC 7 collapsed in 6.6 seconds, just .6 of a second longer than it would take an object dropped from the roof to hit the ground. “Where is the delay that must be expected due to conservation of momentum, one of the foundational laws of physics?” Jones asked. “That is, as upper-falling floors strike lower floors—and intact steel support columns—the fall must be significantly impeded by the impacted mass,” he explained. “How do the upper floors fall so quickly, then, and still conserve momentum in the collapsing buildings?” The paradox, he says, “is easily resolved by the explosive demolition hypothesis, whereby explosives quickly removed lower-floor material, including steel support columns, and allow near free-fall-speed collapses.”

To support his theory, Jones and eight other scientists conducted chemical research on the dust from the World Trade centers. Their research results were published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. The Open Chemical Physics Journal, Volume 2, 2009 included their research article, “Active Thermitic Material Discovered in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Center Catastrophe.” In the abstract the authors write, “We have discovered distinctive red/gray chips in all the samples. These red/gray chips show marked similarities in all four samples. The properties of these chips were analyzed using optical microscopy, scanning electron microscopy (SEM), X-ray energy dispersive

spectroscopy (XEDS), and differential scanning calorimetry (DSC). The red portion of these chips is found to be an unreacted thermitic material and highly energetic.” Thermitic is a pyrotechnic composition of a metal powder and a metal oxide, which produces an aluminothermic reaction known as a thermitic reaction and is used in controlled demolitions of buildings.

Additionally, architect Richard Gage, AIA, founder of Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth, has to date amassed nearly 700 scientific professionals in the fields of architecture, engineering, and physics who have signed a petition calling for a new investigation of the events of 9/11 in New York. Gage’s and Jones’ empirical research suggesting the possibility of controlled demolition have moved thousands of others to question the events of 9/11, but most in the media have either ignored their hard data, marginalized their significance, or outright attacked them. Again, this is not the role of a free press. If bias is unacceptable, these views should be heard and vetted fairly in an open society regardless of their ultimate outcomes and without contingency upon their popularity.¹

In the case of Gage and Jones, there are scientific, factual arguments that establish the clear possibility of controlled demolition of the World Trade Center buildings on September 11, 2001, and there is zero coverage in the corporate media in the US. This is top down corporate censorship pure and simple. Even if other scientists can be found to disagree with the study, the totality of ignoring the topic inside the corporate media is absolute. It seems unlikely that corporate journalists are unaware of the research as it is listed on hundreds of websites worldwide. Yet for some reason coverage is lacking inside the corporate media. Perhaps the mainstream science journalists leave their critical thinking skills at home and give the scientific method the day off. Or, the real conspiracy exists within the boardrooms of the corporate mainstream media.

We asked a faculty physicist at Sonoma State University what she thought about the new research from Dr. Jones in the *Open Chemical Physics Journal*. She had been one of our primary critics when Jones originally spoke on our campus in 2006. At that time she said she didn’t need to read Jones’ research because she had read *Popular Mechanics* on the issue, a nonacademic report that has been debunked in scholarly circles. She went on to imply that she “just knew” Jones was wrong. So when presented with a peer reviewed release in an academic chemical journal, her response was that it was not one of the most prestigious journals, without going into any detail. In other words, if one doesn’t like what a scientific journal says, one can dismiss it a priori. No debate, no open discussion required. These are hardly principles of the academy and they are not tenets of a free press. In fact, these tactics and practices of attack and avoidance are enemies of free thought in any democratic society.

Project Censored as Left Leaning

According to the editor of the Pasadena Weekly, Project Censored suffers from a "perceived extreme left-leaning bent that editors (us) . . . have assumed over the years in selecting, writing, and publishing its stories . . . more than anything it has been the Project's perceived long leftward lean that has done the most damage to its overall credibility. Although the group never explicitly takes a political stance, a majority of the stories Project Censored highlights have a leftist political slant, criticizing big business,

economic inequality, damage to the environment, and the Pentagon, and misdeeds of conservative politicians, among other progressive issues.”²

Why covering stories about the powerful in government and big business, or environmental and inequality issues are left leaning is beyond our understanding. It seems that this is just good journalism—the journalism that is missing in the corporate media—and could just as well be middle-leaning-journalism, right-leaning-journalism or crazy California journalism. Maybe it’s just holding those in powerful positions in society accountable for their decisions and actions, which we believe is what a free press is supposed to do. Nonetheless, we decided to examine the key stories Project Censored covered that past sixteen years during both the George W. Bush and the William Jefferson Clinton administrations. Perhaps we can detect some bias from our records.

We have examined censored news stories from both Bush and Clinton from our records. Amazingly, the similarities are very evident. Both administrations lied to support military aggression, supported policies that resulted in hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths, spied on Americans, undermined civil liberties and violated international treaties, supported global arm sales/distribution and private mercenaries, ignored environmental issues, lobbied for unsafe industrial practices, allowed big banks and Wall Street unregulated freedoms, encouraged media consolidation and repression of open journalism.

Here are some of the stories Project Censored covered under the Clinton and Bush Presidencies. All stories are archived online at <http://projectcensored.org> under the archives link catalogued by year.³

Arms Sales/Support and Consequences

Under Clinton

Turkey Destroys Kurdish Villages with U.S. Weapons
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2000, Story #5

Source: Kevin McKiernan, “Turkey’s War on the Kurds,” *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, March/April, 1999.

In 1995, the Clinton Administration recognized that the Turkish government used American arms in domestic military operations where human rights abuses occurred. In fact, Turkey has forcibly evacuated, leveled and burned more than 3,000 Kurdish villages in the past decade. Most of the atrocities, which have cost over 40,000 lives, took place during Clinton’s first term in office. As an ally of the U.S. through NATO, Turkey receives U.S. weapons, from dozens of companies, including Hughes, Boeing, Raytheon, and General Dynamics. Despite a horrifying report of violent abuse by Amnesty International, the State Department passed arms deals with Turkey. The war in Turkey represents the greatest use of U.S. weapons in combat anywhere in the world today.

Under Bush

U.S. Aid to Israel Fuels Repressive Occupation in Palestine

Top 25 Censored Stories for 2004, Story #24

Sources: John Steinbach, "Palestine in the Crosshairs: U.S. Policy and the struggle for Nationhood," *Covert Action Quarterly*, Spring 2002, No. 72; Matt Bowles, "U.S. Aid Lifeblood of the Occupation," *Left Turn*, March 4, 2002; Bob Wing, "Israel Erecting 'Great Wall' Around Palestine," *Wartimes*, April 2003.

U.S. aid to Israel over the course of its fifty-four years of nationhood has fueled the illegal occupation of Palestinian land superceding Palestinian rights to self-government. During the last 25 years US aid to Israel has been about 60% military aid and 40% economic aid. There is a new plan to phase out all economic aid by 2008 in order to have all the aid going to military. Israel receives about \$3 billion a year in direct aid and \$3 billion a year in indirect aid in the form of special loans and grants. Under the Arms Export Control Act the US can only supply weapons that are used "for legitimate self defense". The US Foreign Assistance Act prohibits military assistance to any country "which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights". The Proxmire Amendment bans military assistance to any government that refuses to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to allow inspections of its nuclear facilities. All three of these laws are currently being broken with aid to Israel.

Pre-War Intelligence Used to Justify Military Aggression

Under Clinton

Evidence Indicates No Pre-war Genocide in Kosovo
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2000, Story #12

Sources: Mark Cook, "William Walker: 'Man With a Mission,'" *Covert Action Quarterly*, Spring/Summer 1999; *The Progressive Review*, "My Multinational Entity, Right or Wrong," June 1999; Pablo Ordaz, "Spanish Police and Forensic Experts have not Found Proof of Genocide in the North of Kosovo," *El Pais*, September 23, 1999.

According to the *New York Times*, the "turning point" to NATO's decision to go to war against Yugoslavia occurred on January 20, 1999 when U.S. diplomat William Walker led a group of news reporters to discover a so-called Serb massacre of some 45 Albanians in Racak, Kosovo. This story made international headlines and was later used to justify the NATO bombings.

The day before the "massacre," Serb police had a firefight with KLA rebels that was covered by an Associated Press (AP) film crew. At the end of day, the village was deserted. Then, the next day the village had been reoccupied by the KLA, and it was the KLA who initially led foreign visitors to the alleged massacre site. William Walker arrived at noon with additional journalists, and expressed his outrage at a "genocidal massacre" to the world press.

Walker's story remains shrouded with doubt. "What is disturbing," remarks war correspondent Renaud Girard, "is that the pictures filmed by the AP journalists radically contradict Walker's accusations." Challenges to Walker's massacre story were published

in Le Monde and Le Figaro: “During the night, could the UCK (KLA) have gathered the bodies, in fact killed by Serb bullets, to set up a scene of cold-blooded massacre?” (Le Figaro). Belarussian and Finnish forensic experts were later unable to verify that a massacre had actually occurred at Racak.

Under Bush

US Illegally Removes Pages from Iraq UN Report
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2004, Story #3

Source: Michael I. Niman, “What Bush didn’t want you to know about Iraq,” *The Humanist* and *ArtVoice*, March/April 2003.

Throughout the winter of 2002, the Bush administration publicly accused Iraqi weapons declarations of being incomplete. The almost unbelievable reality of this situation is that it was the United States itself that had removed over 8,000 pages of the 11,800 page original report given by Iraq to the UN. This came as no surprise to Europeans however, as Iraq had made extra copies of the complete weapons declaration report and unofficially distributed them to journalists throughout Europe. The Berlin newspaper Die Tageszeitung broke the story on December 19, 2002 in an article by Andreas Zumach.

According to Niman, “The missing pages implicated twenty-four U.S.-based corporations and the successive Ronald Reagan and George Bush Sr. administration in connection with the illegal supplying of Saddam Hussein government with myriad weapons of mass destruction and the training to use them.” Groups documented in the original report that were supporting Iraq’s weapons programs prior to Iraq’s 1990 invasion of Kuwait included: Eastman Kodak, Dupont, Honeywell, Rockwell, Sperry, Hewlett-Packard, and Bechtel; U.S. government agencies such as the Department of Energy, Department of Agriculture and Department of Defense; and nuclear weapons labs such as Lawrence-Livermore, Los Alamos and Sandia.

Beginning in 1983, the U.S. was involved in eighty shipments of biological and chemical components, including strains of botulism toxin, anthrax, gangrene bacteria, West Nile fever virus, and Dengue fever virus. These shipments continued even after Iraq used chemical weapons against Iran in 1984.

Civilian Deaths in Iraq

Under Clinton

U. S. Weapons mass Destruction Linked to the Deaths of a Half-Million Children
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Top 25 Censored Stories for 1999, Story #5

Sources: Dennis Bernstein, “Made in America,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, February 25, 1998; Bill Blum, “Punishing Saddam or the Iraqis,” *I.F. Magazine*, March/April

1998; Most Rev. Dr. Robert M. Bowman, Lt. Col., USAF (Ret.), "Our Continuing War Against Iraq," *Space and Security News*, May 1998.

For the past seven years, the United States has supported sanctions against Iraq that have taken the lives of more Iraqi citizens than did the war itself. The sanctions imposed on Iraq are causing shortages of food, medical supplies, and medicines. Since the war ended, more than half a million children under the age of five have died. UNICEF reports that 150 children are dying every day.

The Iraqi people are being punished for their leader's reticence to comply fully with U.S.-supported U.N. demands "to search every structure in Iraq for weapons of mass destruction." Ironically, 1994 U.S. Senate findings uncovered evidence that U.S. firms supplied at least some of the very biological material that the U.N. inspection teams are now seeking

A 1994 U.S. Senate panel report indicated that between 1985 and 1989, U.S. firms supplied microorganisms needed for the production of Iraq's chemical and biological warfare. The Senate panel wrote: "It was later learned that these microorganisms exported by the United States were identical to those the United Nations inspectors found and removed from the Iraqi biological warfare program.

Under Bush

Over One Million Iraqi Deaths Caused by US Occupation
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2009, Story #1

Sources: Michael Schwartz, "Is the United States Killing 10,000 Iraqis Every Month? Or Is It More?" *After Downing Street*, July 6, 2007; Joshua Holland, "Iraq death toll rivals Rwanda genocide, Cambodian killing fields," *AlterNet*, September 17, 2007; Luke Baker, "Iraq conflict has killed a million, says survey," *Reuters* (via *AlterNet*), January 7, 2008; Maki al-Nazzal and Dahr Jamail, "Iraq: Not our country to Return to," *Inter Press Service*, March 3, 2008.

Over one million Iraqis have met violent deaths as a result of the 2003 invasion, according to a study conducted by the prestigious British polling group, Opinion Research Business (ORB). ORB's research covered fifteen of Iraq's eighteen provinces. Those not covered include two of Iraq's more volatile regions—Kerbala and Anbar—and the northern province of Arbil, where local authorities refused them a permit to work. In face-to-face interviews with 2,414 adults, the poll found that more than one in five respondents had had at least one death in their household as a result of the conflict, as opposed to natural cause.

Authors Joshua Holland and Michael Schwartz point out that the dominant narrative on Iraq—that most of the violence against Iraqis is being perpetrated by Iraqis themselves and is not our responsibility—is ill conceived. Interviewers from the Lancet report of October 2006 (Censored 2006, #2) asked Iraqi respondents how their loved ones died. Of deaths for which families were certain of the perpetrator, 56 percent were attributable to US forces or their allies. Schwartz suggests that if a low pro rata share of

half the unattributed deaths were caused by US forces, a total of approximately 80 percent of Iraqi deaths are directly US perpetrated.

Administrative Support for Big Banks And Stock Brokers

Under Clinton

New Mega-Merged Banking Behemoths = Big Risk
Top 25 Censored Stories for 1997, Story #6

Source: Jake Lewis, "The Making of the Banking Behemoths," *Multinational Monitor*, June 1996.

Nineteen ninety-five was a record year of bank mergers. Chase Manhattan and Chemical bank combined to create the nation's largest bank, with \$300 billion in assets—while on the West coast, the merger of First Interstate and Wells Fargo created a new giant with over \$100 billion in assets. The massive consolidation of the nation's banking resources has resulted in 71.5 percent of U.S. banking assets being controlled by the 100 largest banking organizations, representing less than 1 percent of the total banks in the nation.

The trend toward bigger banks is creating a system whereby giant banking institutions are taking on "too big to fail" status. Indeed, a failure of any one of these new giants would have a devastating effect on the nation's financial health. And with the Federal Reserve capping the amount that financial institutions have to pay into the government's bank insurance fund at \$25 billion, just 1.25 percent of deposits are now insured. Consequently, any bailout of one of these new megabanks would come directly from the pockets of taxpayers.

Studies have also found that banks in concentrated markets tend to charge higher rates for certain types of loans, and tend to offer lower interest rates on certain types of deposits than do banks in less concentrated markets. A 1995 study by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group and the Center for Study of Responsive Law showed that fees on checking and savings accounts increased at twice the rate of inflation from 1993 to 1995 as bank mergers moved forward.

Under Bush

Little Known Stock Fraud Could Weaken U.S. Economy
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2006, Story #18

Sources: David Hendricks, "Naked Short Selling Is A Plague For Businesses And Investors," *San Antonio Express News*, March 2, 2005; Karl Thiel, "Who's Behind Naked Shorting?" *TheMotleyFool.com*, March 30, 2005; *Financial Wire*, Stockgate Today Series, "SEC's Donaldson Addresses Liquidity Fraud," September 20, 2004; and Dave Patch, "Dateline NBC Cancelled and Attorney Accuses DTCC of Cheap Thuggery," April 7, 2005.

While the balance of supply and demand is a fairly well known principle of economic health, a related and similar relationship exists between liquidity-the availability of liquid, spendable assets such as cash, stocks and bonds-and security-the stability, endurance and trustworthiness of more long-term financial mechanisms.

The scandal coined “Stockgate” by the *Financial Wire* involves the abuse of a practice called “short selling.” As opposed to a traditional approach to investing in which stocks are researched and bought on the hope they will rise over the “long” term, going “short” involves a bet that a stock is about to go down in value. In a short sale, an investor sells stock that he or she technically doesn’t own. The investor borrows these shares of stock from their broker, who in turn may likely borrow the shares himself from a financial clearinghouse like a brokerage firm or hedge fund. Hoping that the price of the stock will drop, the investor is obligated to eventually “close” the short by buying back the sold shares at a hopefully lower price, thus making a profit from the fall of the stock. When the time runs out for “covering” the short and the price hasn’t dropped, the investor is forced to buy back the shares at a loss and take a financial hit. The short sale of stocks is a risky bet, usually not recommended except for speculation or hedging-to protect long-term financial positions with short-term offsets. As short-selling is a sale of stocks not owned, but loaned, it is an example of buying on margin-a category of practices whose abuses stand out clearly in many people’s minds as a significant factor in the Stock Market Crash of 1929 which ushered in the Great Depression.

Naked shorting is an illegal abuse of short selling in which investors short-sell stock that they have no intention or ability to ever cover. When allowed to occur, naked shorting drives the stock value of a company down by creating more stock shares flowing around the market than actual shares of stock that the company can back with their current earnings. Companies, their shareholders, and indeed the entire economy are hurt financially by naked shorting, as it reduces the money available to support economic growth.

Additional References:

David Sedore, “Hedge Fund Assets Frozen,” March 4, 2005, and “Hedge Fund Virtually Bare,” March 12, 2005, *The Palm Beach Post*-KL Financial fraud series; *PrimeZone Media Network*, “First American Scientific Corp. Takes Counter Measures to Stop ‘Naked Shorting’ of its Stock,” December 17, 2004.

National Security/Government Secrecy

Under Clinton

Little Known Federal Law Paves The Way for National Identification Card
Top 25 Censored Stories for 1998, Story #8

Sources: Cyndee Parker, “National ID Card is Now Federal Law and Georgia Wants to Help Lead the Way,” *Witwigo*, May/June 1997; Mainstream media coverage: *The New York Times*, September 8, 1996, section 6; page 58, column 1; related article in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, September 19, 1996, page A1.

In September 1996, President Clinton signed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act of 1996. Buried on approximately page 650 was a section that creates a framework for establishing a national ID card for the American public. This legislation was slipped through without fanfare or publicity.

This law has various aspects: It establishes a “Machine Readable Document Pilot Program” requiring employers to swipe a prospective employee’s driver’s license through a special reader linked to the federal government’s Social Security Administration. The federal government would have the discretion to approve or disapprove the applicant for employment. In this case, the driver’s license becomes a “national ID card.”

The author of the national ID law, Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), stated in a Capitol Hill magazine that it was her intention to see Congress immediately implement a national ID system whereby every American would be required to carry a card with a “magnetic strip on it on which the bearer’s unique voice, retina pattern, or fingerprint is digitally encoded.” Congressman Dick Armey (R-TX), among others, has strongly denounced the new law, calling it “an abomination, and wholly at odds with the American tradition of individual freedom.”

Under Bush

Bush Administration Moves to Eliminate Open Government
Top 25 Censored Stories of 2006, Story #1

Source: Karen Lightfoot, “New Report Details Bush Administration Secrecy,”
Committee on Government Reform, September 14, 2004, online at
<http://www.commondreams.org/cgi-bin/newsprint.cgi?file=/news2004/0914-05.htm>.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) gives citizens the ability to file a request for specific information from a government agency and provides recourse in federal court if that agency fails to comply with FOIA requirements. Over the last two decades, beginning with Reagan, this law has become increasingly diluted and circumvented by each succeeding administration.

Under the Bush Administration, agencies make extensive and arbitrary use of FOIA exemptions (such as those for classified information, privileged attorney-client documents and certain information compiled for law enforcement purposes) often inappropriately or with inadequate justification. Recent evidence shows agencies making frivolous (and sometimes ludicrous) exemption claims, abusing the deliberative process privilege, abusing the law enforcement exemption, and withholding data on telephone service outages.

The Bush Administration also engages in an aggressive policy of questioning, challenging and denying FOIA requesters’ eligibility for fee waivers, using a variety of tactics. Measures include narrowing the definition of “representative of news media,” claiming information would not contribute to public understanding.

The Bush Administration has also obtained unprecedented authority to conduct government operations in secret, with little or no judicial oversight. Under expanded law enforcement authority in the Patriot Act, the Justice Department can more easily use

secret orders to obtain library and other private records, obtain “sneak-and-peek” warrants to conduct secret searches, and conduct secret wiretaps.

Homeland Security And Government Spying

Under Clinton

Exposing the Global Surveillance System
Top 25 Censored Stories for 1998, Story #4

Source: Nicky Hager, “Secret Power. Exposing the Global Surveillance System,” *Covert Action Quarterly* (CAQ), Winter 1996/1997.

For over 40 years, New Zealand’s largest intelligence agency, the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB), has been helping its Western allies to spy on countries throughout the Pacific region. Neither the public nor the majority of New Zealand’s top elected officials had knowledge of these activities. These procedures have operated since 1948 under a secret, Cold War-era intelligence alliance between the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand-the UKUSA agreement. But in the late 1980s, the U.S. prompted New Zealand to join a new and highly secret global intelligence system. U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) is one of the world’s biggest, most closely held intelligence projects. Unlike many of the Cold War electronic spy systems, ECHELON is designed primarily to gather electronic transmissions from nonmilitary targets: governments, organizations, businesses, and individuals in virtually every country.

The system works by indiscriminately intercepting very large quantities of communications and using computers to identify and extract messages of interest from the mass of unwanted ones. Computers at each secret station in the ECHELON network automatically search millions of messages for pre-programmed key words. For each message containing one of those key words, the computer automatically notes time and place of origin and interception, and gives the message a four-digit code for future reference.

Under Bush

Homeland Security Threatens Civil Liberty
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2004, Story #2

Sources: Alex Jones, “Secret Patriot II Destroys Remaining US Liberty,” *Global Outlook*, Volume 4; Frank Morales, “Homeland Defense: Pentagon Declares War on America,” *Global Outlook*, Winter 2003; Charles Lewis and Adam Mayle, “Justice Department Drafts Sweeping Expansion of Terrorism Act,” *Center for Public Integrity* online at <http://publicintegrity.org>.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) represents the most extensive restructuring of the U.S. government since 1947 - the year the Department of War was

combined with the Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, and Air Force, to create the Department of Defense. The new Department of Homeland Security combines over one hundred separate entities of the executive branch, including the Secret Service, the Coast Guard, and the Border Patrol, among others. The DHS employs over 170,000 federal workers and commands a total annual budget of \$37 billion.

One DHS mandate largely ignored by the press requires the FBI, CIA, state, and local governments to share intelligence reports with the department upon command, without explanation. Civil rights activists claim that this endangers the rights and freedoms of law-abiding Americans by blurring the lines between foreign and domestic spying (as occurred during the COINTELPRO plan of the 1960s and '70s). According to the ACLU, the Department of Homeland Security will be "100% secret and 0% accountable

As part of Homeland Security, the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 allows the government increased and unprecedented access to the lives of American citizens and represents an unrestrained imposition on our civil liberties. Wiretaps, previously confined to one phone, can now follow a person from place to place at the behest of government agents and people can now be detained on the vague suspicion that they might be a terrorist - or assisting one. Detainees can also be denied the right to legal representation (or the right of private counsel when they are allowed to meet with their attorneys).

Private Mercenary Companies Used Around the World

Under Clinton

Mercenary Armies in Service to Global Corporations
Top 25 Censored Stories for 1999, Story #16

Sources: Pratap Chatterjee, "Mercenary Armies & Mineral Wealth," *Covert Action Quarterly*, Fall 1997, No. 62; Pratap Chatterjee, "Guarding the Multinationals," *Multinational Monitor*, March 1998.

In many countries, multinational corporations have paid directly for private policing services from the local army; or have hired outside security companies to harass nationals who protest against the environmental impact of their operations. The firms involved represent a growing number of new corporate security operations around the world, linking former intelligence officers, standing armies, and local death squads.

One of these security companies is Defense Systems Limited (DSL). DSL is run by two ex-Special Air Service commandos out of London offices, across the street from Buckingham Palace. Their clients include petrochemical companies, multinational banks, embassies, nongovernmental organizations, and national and international organizations. One of DSL's biggest contracts is with Mark Heathcote, a former M16 (British equivalent of the CIA) officer who ran operations in Argentina during the Falklands War. Heathcote is now the chief of security for British Petroleum (BP). In 1996, DSL sent a group of British personnel to train Colombian Police on BP-owned rigs. Training included lethal-weapons handling, sniper fire, and close quarter combat.

Another firm, Executive Outcomes, also offers mercenary armies to multinationals. Executive Outcomes fielded a private mercenary army in Angola in 1993, and offers high-tech security forces to corporations all over the world. In Nigeria, the Anglo-Dutch multinational Shell Corporation has been accused of causing major pollution in the Niger Delta for the last 38 years. Shell directly employs an elite detachment of Nigerian police to protect its own interests. Numerous demonstrators have been beaten and executed because of Shell operations in Nigeria.

Under Bush

Behind Blackwater Inc.

Top 25 Censored Stories for 2008, Story #7

Source: Jeremy Scahill, "Our Mercenaries in Iraq: Blackwater Inc and Bush's Undeclared Surge," *Democracy Now!* January 26, 2007, online at

<http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/01/26/1559232>.

The company that most embodies the privatization of the military industrial complex—a primary part of the Project for a New American Century and the neoconservative revolution is the private security firm Blackwater (now called Xe). Blackwater is the most powerful mercenary firm in the world, with 20,000 soldiers, the world's largest private military base, a fleet of twenty aircraft, including helicopter gunships, and a private intelligence division. The firm is also manufacturing its own surveillance blimps and target systems.

Blackwater is headed by a right-wing Christian-supremist and ex-Navy Seal named Erik Prince, whose family has had deep neo-conservative connections. Bush's latest call for voluntary civilian military corps to accommodate the "surge" will add to over half a billion dollars in federal contracts with Blackwater, allowing Prince to create a private army to defend Christendom around the world against Muslims and others. One of the last things Dick Cheney did before leaving office as Defense Secretary under George H. W. Bush was to commission a Halliburton study on how to privatize the military bureaucracy. That study effectively created the groundwork for a continuing war profiteer bonanza.

Administration Support for the Chemical Industry

Under Clinton

Clinton Administration Lobbied for Retention of Toxic Chemicals in Children's Toys
Top 25 Censored Stories for 1999, Story #9

Source: Charlie Gray, "Out of the Mouths of Babes," *Multinational Monitor*, June 1998.

The Clinton Administration and the Commerce Department have lobbied on behalf of U.S. toy and chemical manufacturers against proposed new European Union (EU) restrictions, which would prevent children's exposure to toxic chemicals released by polyvinyl chloride (PVC) toys such as teething rings. Documents obtained under the

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), suggesting that the U.S. government lobbied at the behest of toymaker Mattel and chemical manufacturer Exxon, may help explain the European Commission's rejection of the proposed emergency ban. A cable from Vernon Weaver, the U.S. Representative to the EU in Brussels, sent "heartfelt thanks" to Washington and U.S. missions in Europe for "making contact" with member state representatives of the EU Product Safety Emergencies Committee. "We are told by Exxon Chemical Europe Inc. that the input was very effective and the weigh-in was invaluable."

Health authorities in several European countries, including Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands, have recommended a ban on PVC toys, such as teething rings and bath toys. The Spanish government requested action by the EU in March 1998. PVC, or polyvinyl chloride (also known as vinyl), is a common plastic that frequently contains toxic additives. The Front reports that no major U.S. retailers have taken precautionary action, chiefly because the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), which is responsible for toy safety regulations, has yet to take action.

Under Bush

Chemical Industry is EPA's Primary Research Partner
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2007, Story #15

Sources: Jeff Ruch, "Chemical Industry Is Now EPA's Main Research Partner," *Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility*, October 5, 2005; Jeff Ruch, "EPA Becoming Arm of Corporate R&D," *Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility*, October 6, 2005.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) research program is increasingly relying on corporate joint ventures, according to agency documents obtained by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). The American Chemical Council (ACC) is now EPA's leading research partner and the EPA is diverting funds from basic health and environmental research towards research that addresses regulatory concerns of corporate funders.

Since the beginning of Bush's first term in office, there has been a significant increase in cooperative research and development agreements (CRADAs) with individual corporations or industry associations. During Bush's first four years EPA entered into fifty-seven corporate CRADAs, compared to thirty-four such agreements during Clinton's second term.

EPA scientists claim that corporations are influencing the agency's research agenda through financial inducements. One EPA scientist wrote, "Many of us in the labs feel like we work for contracts." In April 2005, EPA's Science Advisory Board warned that the agency was no longer funding credible public health research. It noted, for example, that the EPA was falling behind on issues such as intercontinental pollution transport and nanotechnology.

Attacks on Journalists

Under Clinton

Did the U.S. Deliberately Bomb the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade?
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2001, Story #4

Sources: Joel Bleifuss, "A Tragic Mistake?" *In These Times*, December 12, 1999; Seth Ackerman, "Mission Implausible," June 26, 2000, online at <http://inthesetimes.com>; Yoichi Shimatsu, "Reports Showing U.S. Deliberately Bombed Chinese Embassy Deliberately Ignored by U.S. Media," *Pacific News*, October 20, 1999; Action Report, "NY Times on Chinese Embassy Bombing: Nothing to Report," *Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting*, February 9, 2000, online at <http://www.fair.org/activism/china-response2.html>.

Elements within the CIA may have deliberately targeted the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, without NATO approval, because it was serving as a rebroadcast station for the Yugoslavian army.

The London Observer and Copenhagen's Politiken reported that, according to senior U.S. and European military sources, NATO knew very well where the Chinese embassy was located and listed it as a "strictly prohibited target" at the beginning of the war. The Observer stated that the CIA and its British equivalent, M16, had been listening to communications from the Chinese embassy routinely since it moved to its new site in 1996. The Chinese embassy was taken off the prohibited target list after NATO detected it sending Yugoslavian army signals to forces in the field. "Nearly everyone involved in NATO air operations (radio) signals command knows that the bombing was deliberate," said Jens Holsoe of Politiken, lead investigative reporter on the news team reporting on the story.

President Clinton called the bombing a "tragic mistake" and said it was the result of a mix-up. NATO claimed that they were using old maps and got the address wrong. However, Observer reporters quoted a Naples-based flight controller who said the NATO maps that were used during the campaign had correctly identified the Chinese embassy.

A French Ministry of Defense report stated that the flight that targeted the Chinese embassy was not under NATO command, but rather an independent U.S. bombing raid. In July 1999, CIA director George Tenet testified before Congress that of the 900 sites struck by NATO during the bombing campaign, the only one targeted by the CIA was the Chinese embassy.

Under Bush

Journalists Face Unprecedented Dangers to Life and Livelihood
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2006, Story #7

Sources: Steve Weissman, "Dead Messengers: How the U.S. Military Threatens Journalists," *Truthout*, February 28, 2005; online at http://www.truthout.org/docs_2005/022405A.shtml; Dahr Jamail, "Media Repression in

'Liberated' Land," *Inter Press Service*, November 18, 2004, online at <http://www.ipsnews.net/interna.asp?idnews=26333>.

According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)¹, 2004 was the deadliest year for reporters since 1980, when records began to be kept. Over a 12-month span, 129 media workers were killed and 49 of those deaths occurred in the Iraqi conflict. According to independent journalist Dahr Jamail, journalists are increasingly being detained and threatened by the U.S.-installed interim government in Iraq. When the only safety for a reporter is being embedded with the U.S. military, the reported stories tend to have a positive spin. Non-embedded reporters suffer the great risk of being identified as enemy targets by the military.

The most blatant attack on journalists occurred the morning of April 8, 2004, when the Third Infantry fired on the Palestine Hotel in Baghdad killing cameramen Jose Couso and Taras Protsyuk and injuring three others. The hotel served as headquarters for some 100 reporters and other media workers. The Pentagon officials knew that the Palestine Hotel was full of journalists and had assured the Associated Press that the U.S. would not target the building

Environmental Issues

Under Clinton

Clinton Administration Retreats on Ozone Crisis
Top 25 Censored Stories for 1995

Source: David Moberg, "Full of holes: Clinton's retreat on the ozone crisis," *In These Times*, January 24, 1994.

The ozone hole over Antarctica has continued to grow every year since its discovery in 1985 and damage to the ozone layer over heavily populated areas of the Northern Hemisphere also has been increasing rapidly. Scientists recorded all-time low levels of ozone over the United States in 1993.

The ultraviolet rays that penetrate a weakened ozone layer have been linked to increased cataracts, skin cancer, genetic damage and infectious diseases among humans -- as well as reduced plant growth. Meanwhile, the Clinton administration has been moving backward on protecting the stratospheric ozone layer. This ominous precedent will encourage other industrial countries to stall on their own CFC phase-outs and puts the administration in a far weaker position to argue for an accelerated phase-out of CFCs in the developing countries where CFC production is soaring.

DuPont, the giant chemical firm that developed the first industrial CFC, had planned to halt CFC production at the end of 1994. Yet, in late 1993, EPA asked DuPont to keep making CFCs until 1996. The EPA defended its decision as a "consumer protection" measure that will make it easier for car owners to recharge their old air conditioners, which use CFCs as a cooling agent.

Under Bush

Bush Administration Manipulates Science and Censors Scientists Top 25 Censored Stories for 2005, Story #3

Sources: Robert F. Kennedy Jr., “The Junk Science of George W. Bush,” *The Nation*, March 8, 2004; “Censoring Scientific Information,” *Censorship News: The National Coalition Against Censorship Newsletter*, Fall 2003, #91; Sunny Lewis, “Ranking Scientists Warn Bush Science Policy Lacks Integrity,” *Environment News Service* and *Oneworld.net*, February 20, 2004; Committee on Government Reform - Minority Staff, “Politics And Science In The Bush Administration,” Office of U.S. Representative Henry A. Waxman, August 2003, updated November 13, 2003.

Critics charge that the Bush Administration is purging, censoring, and manipulating scientific information in order to push forward its pro-business, anti-environmental agenda. In Washington, D.C. more than 60 of the nation’s top scientists, including 20 Nobel laureates, leading medical experts, and former federal agency directors, issued a statement on February 18, 2004 accusing the Bush Administration of deliberately distorting scientific results for political ends and calling for regulatory and legislative action to restore scientific integrity to federal policymaking.

Under the current administration, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has blacklisted qualified scientists who pose a threat to its pro-business ideology. When a team of biologists working for the EPA indicated that there had been a violation of the “Endangered Species Act” by the Army Corps of Engineers, the group was replaced with a “corporate-friendly” panel.

Media Deregulation

Under Clinton

Telecommunications Deregulation: Closing Up America’s “Marketplace of Ideas” Top 25 Censored Stories for 1996, Story #1

Source: Ralph Nader, James Love, and Andrew Saindon, “Federal Telecommunications Legislation,” *Consumer Project on Technology*, July 14, 1995.

The Telecommunications Deregulation Bill, eliminates virtually all regulation of the United States communication industry. As tends to be the case with most anti-consumer legislation, the bill stealthily moved under the guise of “encouraging competition”—but will, in reality, have the opposite effect of creating huge new concentrations of media power.

The most troubling aspect of the bill allows easing-and outright elimination-of current anti-trust regulations. In what the New York Times described as “a dazzling display of political influence,” the nation’s broadcast networks scored big in the House version of the bill by successfully getting the limits on ownership eased so that any individual company can control television stations serving up to 50 percent of the country. The Senate version of the bill provides for a more modest 35 percent coverage.

The legislation also dismantles current regulations, which limit the number of radio stations that can be owned by a single company. Currently no one single company can own more than 40 stations. It also would lift the current FCC ban on joint ownership of a broadcast radio or TV license and a newspaper in the same market—allowing a single company to have 100 percent control over the three primary sources of news in a community.

Under Bush

FCC Moves to Privatize Airwaves
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2003, Story #1

Sources: Jeremy Rifkin, “Global Media Giants Lobby to Privatize Entire Broadcast System,” *London Guardian*, April 28, 2001 and in *Media File*, Autumn 2001 volume 20, #4; Brendan I. Koerner, “Losing Signal,” *Mother Jones*, Sept/October 2001; Dorothy Kidd, “Legal Project to Challenge Media Monopoly,” *Media File*, May/June 2001.

For almost 70 years, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has administered and regulated the broadcast spectrum as an electronic “commons” on behalf of the American people. The FCC issues licenses to broadcasters that allow them, for a fee, to use, but not own, one or more specific radio or TV frequencies. Thus, the public has retained the ability to regulate, as well as influence, access to broadcast communications.

Several years ago, the Progress and Freedom Foundation, in their report “The Telecom Revolution: An American Opportunity,” recommended a complete privatization of the radio frequencies, whereby broadcasters with existing licenses would eventually gain complete ownership of their respective frequencies. They could thereafter develop them in markets of their choosing, or sell and trade them to other companies. The few non-allocated bands of the radio frequency spectrum would be sold off, as electronic real estate, to the highest bidders. With nothing then to regulate, the FCC would eventually be abolished. The reasoning behind this radical plan was that government control of the airwaves has led to inefficiencies. In private hands, the frequencies would be exchanged in the marketplace, and the forces of free-market supply and demand would foster the most creative (and, of course, most profitable) use of these electronic “properties.”

This privatization proposal was considered too ambitious by the Clinton administration. However, in February 2001, within months after a more “pro-business” president took office, 37 leading US economists requested, in a joint letter, that the FCC allow broadcasters to lease, in secondary markets, the frequencies they currently use under their FCC license. Their thinking was that with this groundwork laid, full national privatization would follow, and eventually nations would be encouraged to sell off their frequencies to global media enterprises.

Violations of International Treaties

Under Clinton

Planned Weapons in Space Violate International Treaty
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2000, Story #8

Sources: Karl Grossman, "US Violates World Law to Militarize Space," *Earth Island Journal*, Winter/Spring 1999; Bruce K. Gagnon, "Pyramids to The Heavens Space," *Toward Freedom*, September/ October 1999.

The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 bans the deployment of space weapons of mass destruction. Recently the U.S. Congress ignored further need of such a treaty, and approved the development of the U.S. Military's Space Command Weapons program. This sudden shift of viewpoint coincides with the complete absence of any foreign government competition, and with the increase in the ability of the US to effectively use satellite surveillance in military campaigns. The proposed system is designed to extend control of space far beyond the outer boundaries of the Earth's atmosphere. To prevent deployment of any adversarial country's satellites, the Pentagon is well along in its research and development of an anti-satellite weapons program. The reemergence of a "Star Wars" weapon system is echoed in the words of General Joseph Ashly, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Space Command: "It's politically sensitive but its going to happen...we are going to fight from space and we are going to fight into space." Concerned with the possibility of nuclear contamination of the atmosphere from satellite breakup, the European Space Agency has urged the US to utilize solar power to fuel space-military command modules.

Under Bush

Treaty Busting By the United States
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2004, Story #7

Sources: Marylia Kelly and Nicole Deller, "Rule of power or rule of law?" *Connections*, June 2002; John B. Anderson, "Unsigning the ICC," *The Nation*, April 2002; Eamon Martin, "U.S. Invasion Proposal Shocks the Netherlands," *Ashville Global Report*, June 20-26, 2002; John Valleau, "Nuclear Nightmare," *Global Outlook*, Summer 2002.

The United States is a signatory to nine multilateral treaties that it has either blatantly violated or gradually subverted. The Bush Administration is now outright rejecting a number of those treaties, and in doing so places global security in jeopardy as other nations feel entitled to do the same. The rejected treaties include: The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Treaty Banning Antipersonnel Mines, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), a protocol to create a compliance regime for the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM). The U.S. is also not complying with the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Commission (CWC), the BWC, and the UN framework Convention on Climate Change.

The ABM Treaty alone is a crucial factor in national security; letting Bush get away with facilitating its demise will destroy the balance of powers carefully crafted in our Constitution. The Bush Administration has no legitimate excuse for nullifying the

ABM Treaty since the events that have threatened the security of the United States have not involved ballistic missiles, and none of them are in any way related to the subject matter of the ABM Treaty. Bush's withdrawal violates the U.S. Constitution, international law, and Article XV of the ABM Treaty itself. The Bush Administration says it needs to get rid of the ABM Treaty so it can test the SPY radar on the Aegis cruisers against Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) and so that it can build a new test facility at Fort Greely, Alaska. In addition, some conservatives have willingly dismissed the ABM Treaty because it stands as the major obstacle towards development of a "Star Wars" missile defense system. Discarding treaty constraints and putting weapons in space is nothing short of pursuing absolute military superiority.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is crucial to global security because it bars the spread of nuclear weapons. The U.S. is currently in noncompliance with the NPT requirements, as demonstrated in the January 2002 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review. Moreover, critics charge that the National Ignition Facility (NIF) under construction at Livermore lab violates the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which the U.S. signed in 1996 but has not ratified. The CTBT bans nuclear explosions, and its language does not contain any "exceptions allowing laboratory thermonuclear explosions."

Some Things Never Change: Power of Elites Inside the Trilateral Commission

Under President Jimmy Carter

Jimmy Carter and the Trilateral Commission
Top 25 Censored Stories for 1977, Story #1

Sources: Michael Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, New York University Press, 1975; *The Review of the News*, August 18, 1976; Gar Smith, *The Berkeley Barb*, July 30, 1976; Gary Allen, "Carter Brings Forth a Cabinet," *American Opinion*, February 1977; W.E. Barnes, Political Analyst, *San Francisco Examiner*, December 12, 1976; *In These Times*, February 2, 1977; Noam Chomsky, "Trilateral's RX for Crisis: Governability Yes, Democracy No," *Seven Days*, February 14, 1977.

In the election year of 1976, Jimmy Carter ran a successful campaign for the presidency based on his image as an anti-establishment, peanut-farming, ex-governor of the state of Georgia. Yet, since the fall of 1973, Carter had been associated with David Rockefeller and other members of an international power elite through his association with the Trilateral Commission, one of Rockefeller's many policy-making organizations. According to the Italian publication *Europa*, as cited in *The Review of The News*, Rockefeller and Zbigniew Brzezinski, a founding director of the Trilateral Commission (TLC), had agreed on Carter's potential as our next president as far back as 1970. Supportive of Carter's close relationship with this little-known power elite is the fact that many members of his administration have been drawn from the membership rolls of the TLC. These include: Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State; Brzezinski, National Security Adviser; W. Michael Blumenthal, Secretary of Treasury; Harold Brown, Secretary for

East Asian and Pacific Affairs; Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary of State; Richard N. Cooper, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs; Andrew Young, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations; and C. Fred Bergsten, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for International Economic Affairs. Carter's personal choice for vice president, Walter Mondale, is also a member of the TLC.

Under President Barack Obama

Obama's Trilateral Commission Team
Top 25 Censored Stories for 2010, Story # 22

Source: Patrick Wood, "Obama: Trilateral Commission Endgame," *The August Review*, January 30, 2009, online at http://www.augustreview.com/news_commentary/trilateral_commission/obama%3a_trilateral_commission_endgame_20090127110/.

Barack Obama has appointed no less than eleven members of the Trilateral Commission to top-level and key positions in his Administration. During Obama's presidential campaign Zbigniew Brzezinski, co-founder of the Trilateral Commission with David Rockefeller in 1973, was Obama's principal foreign policy advisor. According to official Trilateral Commission membership lists, there are only 87 members from the United States (the other 337 members are from other regions). Thus, in less than two weeks since his inauguration, Obama's appointments encompass more than 12% of Commission's entire U.S. membership.

Conclusion

"No experiment can be more interesting than that we are now trying, and which we trust will end in establishing the fact, that man may be governed by reason and truth. Our first object should therefore be, to leave open to him all avenues of the truth. The most effectual hitherto found, is the freedom of the press. It is, therefore, the first shut up by those who fear the investigation of their actions." –Thomas Jefferson, 1804

Media scholar and FreePress.net founder Robert McChesney in his work, *Rich Media, Poor Democracy*, wrote, "A media system set up to serve the needs of Wall Street and Madison Avenue cannot and does not serve the needs of the preponderance of the population . . . What types of important stories get almost no coverage in the commercial news media? The historical standard is that there is no coverage when the political and economic elites are in agreement."⁴

Reflecting upon the aforementioned examples of censored topics and stories, the bias of Project Censored seems to be quite simple: we promote protection of First Amendment rights in support of a truly free press, one that holds those in power, elected by the people or appointed, accountable. Investigating controversial and difficult subjects that impact society should not earn journalists and scholars the label "conspiracy theorist." Labeling is a tactic of suppression and censorship.

Furthermore, supporting the US Constitution should not be distorted as an ideological bias of Left or Right. It is merely patriotic duty to enforce the rule of law, in so far as the law is based upon the true notions of liberty and justice for all. Without media freedom, not only can democracy not thrive, it simply cannot exist.

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¹ The Open Chemical Physics Journal, Volume 2, ISSN: 1874-4125, Active Thermite Material Discovered in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Center Catastrophe pp.7-31, Authors: Niels H. Harrit, Jeffrey Farrer, Steven E. Jones, Kevin R. Ryan, Frank M. Legge, Daniel Farnsworth, Gregg Roberts, James R. Gourley, Bradley R. Larsen, <http://www.bentham-open.org/pages/content.php?TOCPJ/2009/00000002/00000001/7TOCPJ.SGM>. For more detailed, scientific discussion on these issues, including possibilities of controlled demolition, see Richard Gage and Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth online at <http://AE911Truth.org>.

Then-President George W. Bush said to the UN in November, 2001, "Let us never tolerate outrageous conspiracy theories concerning the attacks of September the 11th; malicious lies that attempt to shift the blame away from the terrorists, themselves, away from the guilty." Apparently, even though the eventual official story of the 9/11 Commission itself was a conspiracy theory, the press seemed to follow Bush's lead by not looking closely at the many problems associated with the events of 9/11 (which can be viewed here <http://www.projectcensored.org/articles/story/unanswered-questions-of-9-11-july-2005/>). Even most "left-leaning" journalists refuse to honestly and openly investigate the events of 9/11 as was noted by Peter Phillips in the study "Left Progressive Media Inside the Propaganda Model," online at <http://www.projectcensored.org/articles/story/left-progressive-media-inside-the-propaganda-model/>. For more fact-based information regarding the many research problems associated with the official government theories on 9/11, see <http://911truth.org>.

We in a free society should be entitled to robust debate in the press. As Thomas Jefferson stated in his 1801 inaugural address, "If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union, or to change it's republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it." This is a crucial component of media democracy.

² Uhrich, Kevin, *Pasadena Weekly*, “Uncovering Project Censored,” May 18, 2006.

³ All the stories in this chapter were published by Project Censored as part of the Top 25 Censored Stories for each year between 1976 and 2009. Included here are only brief summaries of each story example. For more details on each, please see the Project Censored website. The stories are accessible online at <http://www.projectcensored.org/top-stories/publications/>. There, the stories are catalogued by year in their top 25 rankings. A subject archive is available online as well at <http://ringnebola.com/>. All other sources not in endnotes here are in the actual text of this article with more available online in the Project archives.

⁴ Thomas Jefferson quote from *The Jeffersonian Cyclopedia*, p. 637. Robert McChesney, *Rich Media, Poor Democracy: Communication Politics in Dubious Times*, (New York: The New Press, 1999, p. xiii, xviii).