

## C O M M E N T A R Y

## When it comes to Reagan, media suffer Alzheimer's

By George E. Curry  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

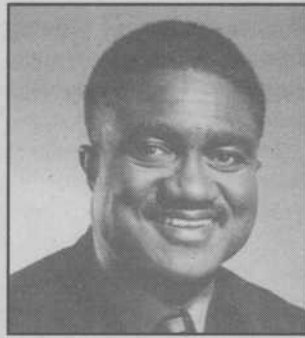
A recent study by FAIR — Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting—shows that when it comes to evaluating Ronald Reagan in the days immediately following his death, the news media contracted a case of self-induced Alzheimer's.

"As the media spent the week memorializing Ronald Reagan, journalists are redefining the former president's life and accomplishments with a stream of hagiographies that frequently skew the facts and gloss over scandal and criticism," observes FAIR, a New York-based media monitoring group.

A June 6 article in the Washington Post claimed that Reagan was "one of the most popular presidents of the 20th Century." ABC's Sam Donaldson uncharacteristically proclaimed: "Through travesty, triumph and tragedy, the president enjoyed unprecedented popularity." And the Chicago Tribune reported on June 6 that Reagan's popularity with the electorate was deep and personal...rarely did his popularity dip below 50 percent; it often exceeded 70 percent, an extraordinary high mark."

What's extraordinary are the lies being told about Reagan's popularity.

Citing data from the Gallup Organiza-



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tion, FAIR noted that Reagan did not rate much higher than other post-World War II presidents. In fact, his 52 percent average ranked him sixth out of the past 10 presidents, behind Kennedy (70 percent), Eisenhower (66 percent), George H.W. Bush (61 percent), Johnson and Clinton (tied at 55 percent).

Reagan's popularity frequently fell below 50 percent during his first term, reaching 46 percent during the Iran-Contra fiasco. Reagan's highest approval rating was 68 percent. Even though he was pilloried by Republicans, Clinton scored higher, with 71 percent.

That same pattern held true as the two men left the White House.

"Ronald Reagan was the most popular president ever to leave office," trumpeted ABC Anchor Elizabeth Vargas on June 6. "His approval ratings were higher than any other at the end of his second term."

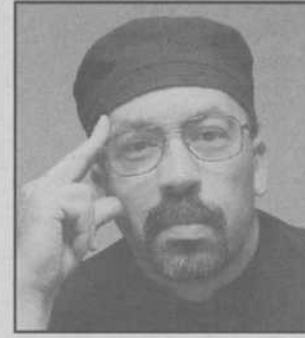
According to a Gallup poll taken in January 2001, Bill Clinton's approval rating was 66 percent, three points higher than Reagan's. Franklin D. Roosevelt also had a 66 approval rating at the time of his death in office after almost three and a half terms.

Journalists also did the public a disservice. (See Curry, Page 12)

## Rwanda-like catastrophe slowly unfolding in Darfur

By Bill Fletcher Jr.  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

I have to confess that until recently, I had no idea where Darfur was located. Yet, over the last number of months I have joined the growing throng of observers who have increasing concerns about the ethnic/civil war unfolding in that region of the western Sudan.



BILL FLETCHER JR.

It is ironic that at a moment when the longest running civil war in Africa is winding down—the war between the Sudanese government, based in Khartoum, and the forces of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army in the southern Sudan—that a new war of disastrous proportions is emerging. Partly because of the colonial borders set up and upheld by African countries, an ethnic clash has unfolded over the years in the western Sudan.

Darfurian opposition groups to the Khartoum government [Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)] turned to arms in protest over what they have felt to be decades of abuse. The Khartoum government responded by providing active backing to Arab militias known as "janjaweed." These militias, with the apparent backing of the Sudanese military, have carried out a war not only against the insurgents, but as well as against the non-

Arab Sudanese civilians living in the Darfur region.

Despite protests to the contrary by the Sudanese government, each day that passes seems to provide further evidence that the war in Darfur has taken on the characteristics of ethnic-cleansing, so familiar to those who observed the disintegration of the former

Yugoslavia and the holocaust in Rwanda. The Sudanese government has claimed that they are not involved in the Darfur strife, but that they are trying to deescalate tensions, including by providing relief.

While this sounds quite admirable, foreign observers point to a continued lack of cooperation on the part of the Sudanese government in humanitarian assistance, while, according to Human Rights Watch, 110,000 refugees have fled into neighboring Chad and nearly 750,000 Darfurians are displaced within Darfur itself. As Human Rights Watch points out, the further deterioration of the situation could destabilize the region and thereby internationalize the conflict.

Terror against civilian populations can take place when any situation is shrouded in silence and mystery. The Sudanese government has done more than its share to mislead the outside world as to the situation

(See Fletcher, Page 12)

## All the president's men—are invertebrate finks

By James Clingman  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

But mark this: *There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.* 2nd Timothy 3:1-5 (NIV)

The above passage of scripture reflects, in my opinion, the dire straits we face, not only in this country but also throughout the world. We have a president who has surrounded himself with some of the most vile, evil, greedy, arrogant men in America. We have a world leader who has allowed himself to be dangled by puppet strings and made to dance to tunes played by the likes of Rove, Cheney, Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, and all of the other dastardly characters in Washington.

Our president has also cavorted with various corporate thieves and, although he has tried to make examples of a few of them by prosecuting a crook here and there, Enron executive, Ken Lay, the leader of the pack, is still "Mr. Untouchable" and has yet to be brought to justice.

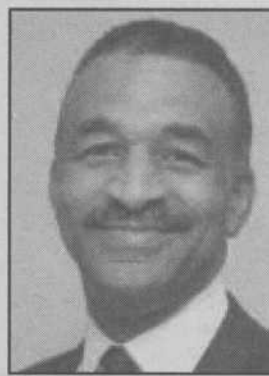
All the president's men could also be described as "All the President's Friends." What is taking place in this oil-based economy

of ours is beyond shameful and beyond unconscionable. Under the guise of a war to "protect America's freedom" and to "liberate the people of Iraq" our president and his friends are raping this country's economy and robbing the consumers and hard working people who live here.

The latest in-your-face discovery is the audio tape recording of Enron employees bragging about how they ripped-off "Grandma Millie" and how they knew what they were doing was wrong but, as one said, "I'll just be a good soldier so I won't have to go to jail but once." The boastful proud, abusive, and treacherous men on the tape actually laughed at their ability to cause the energy prices for consumers in California to rise to a level, one of them described as "\$250 per kilowatt hour."

They knew they were doing wrong; they knew they were stealing from people, but they did it, without remorse, and laughed and joked about it on tape, even though they knew their conversation was being recorded. How brash is that? How arrogant is that? These men worked for Ken Lay, the King of Enron, who is one of Bush's friends and one of Cheney's men. Maybe that's why he has not bitten the dust in court yet.

What malevolence; what maliciousness; what immorality; what wickedness we see in



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"high places." This, indeed, let's us know that we are not fighting against flesh and blood. These guys could very well be signals to us that the end is very near. They are the epitome of unrighteousness, as far as I am concerned.

How about Halliburton? You remember, Cheney's company, the one with which he declared he had no "financial ties." This company and its crooks get no-bid contracts from the Bush administration and immediately start stealing from the taxpayers by overcharging for their gasoline. What an irony! High gasoline prices in Iraq.

All the president's men export high paying jobs to Iraq by destroying the infrastructure of that country, and then give billions of dollars in contracts to Cheney's company, Halliburton, to fix what they broke. Men and women willing to put their lives at risk for six-figure salaries must chase those jobs by going to Iraq, maybe to be kidnapped, tortured, maimed, or slaughtered like Nick Berg. All of this on top of the president's edict to lock up Americans, indefinitely and without access to due process, because he and his men decide "certain" citizens are threats.

Another one of the president's men, Ahmad Chalabi, has been paid more than \$40 million dollars for services rendered. He was a crook when they began to use him, at least that's

what Jordanian officials said, yet the Bush administration put him into the top job in Iraq, no doubt to do their bidding. Chalabi is now under investigation by the FBI for giving information to that other country in Bush's "Axis of Evil," Iran. What a circle of friends our president has.

So what will we do about this group? How will we respond to their increasing control of economic resources and the very freedom we hold so dear? They have shown us their disdain for ethics, justice, and humility, and they have dug-in for four more years of even more shenanigans. Will we continue to put up with their treachery, or will we put an end to this madness?

I don't know what we will do, but I know what we should do. First, we must admit that we have gotten ourselves into a terrible situation, and George Bush should put his swagger aside and do the same. Then, we must understand the spiritual ramifications of what is taking place in these "last days." And finally, we must make sure that in November 2004, this dishonest, greedy, arrogant group of men is sent packing, back to wherever they came from, never to be in charge again. Because, as we are admonished in 2nd Timothy 3:5, they have a "form" of godliness, but they deny the power of godliness, and we must "have nothing to do with them."

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