

Media's war of wrong words on Iraq conflict

By George E. Curry
Special to Sentinel-Voice

As the U.S. begins Year 4 of its occupation of Iraq, the media cannot look at its behavior over the past three years and declare victory. In fact, when it comes to telling the truth, many journalists and commentators have surrendered without putting up a fight.

A compilation of the media's greatest hits — or biggest flops — has been assembled by the watchdog group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting and can be found online at www.fair.org. From the outset of the war, the public's watchdogs have been serving as the Bush administration's lapdogs.

Fox News Channel Brit Hume is one of Bush's leading cheerleaders.

"The majority of the American media who were in a position to comment upon the progress of the war in the early going, and even after that, we got it wrong," Humes said in a speech in Richmond, Va. "They didn't get it just a little wrong. They got it completely wrong." [*Richmond Times Dispatch* 4/25/04]

Fellow conservative Charles Krauthammer, a columnist for the *Washington Post*, sounds a similar alarm.

"The only people who think this wasn't a victory are Upper Westside liberals, and a few people here in Washington." ["*Inside Washington*" 4/19/03]

One of the newspapers read by Upper

Westside liberals in New York was not to be outdone by its Washington competitor. *New York Times* reporter David Carr said: "Liberal writers for ideologically driven magazines like *The Nation* and less overtly political ones like *The New Yorker* did not predict a defeat, but the terrible consequences many warned of have not happened. Now liberal commentators must address the victory at hand and confront an ascendant conservative juggernaut that asserts United States might can set the world right." [4/16/03]

Fox's News Bill O'Reilly boasted, "It won't take weeks. You know that, professor. Our military machine will crush Iraq in a matter of days and there's no question that it will." [2/10/03]

Another Fox commentator, Morton Kondracke, did not attempt to restrain his glee.

"Well, the hot story of the week is victory," he said. "...The Tommy Franks-Don Rumsfeld battle plan, war plan, worked brilliantly, a three-week war with mercifully few American deaths or Iraqi civilian deaths... There is a lot of work yet to do, but all the naysayers have been humiliated so far... The final word on this is hooray." [4/12/03]

A *Los Angeles Times* headline that pro-



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claimed, "Iraq is All but Won; Now What?" [4/10/03]

CBS News reporter Joie Chen declared, "Now that the combat phase of the war in Iraq is officially over, what begins is a debate throughout the entire U.S. government over America's unrivaled power and how best to use it." [5/4/03]

Along with cheering U.S. troops entering Iraq — maybe Rumsfeld confused U.S. journalists and commentators with the Iraqi citizens he had predicted would wave U.S. flags as they were being "liberated" — they sounded like Bush minions on the issue of weapons of mass destruction.

"Over the next couple of weeks when we find chemical weapons this guy was amassing, the fact that this war was attacked by the left and so the right was so vindicated, I think, really means that the left is going to have to hang its head for three or four more years," said Dick Morris on Fox News. [4/9/03]

"Saddam could decide to take Baghdad with him," *Newsweek* said. "One Arab intelligence officer interviewed by *Newsweek* spoke of 'the green mushroom' over Baghdad..." [3/17/03]

MSNBC Reporter Bob Arnot: "...More than anything else, real vindication for the administration. One, credible evidence of

weapons of mass destruction. Two, you know what? There were a lot of terrorists here, really bad guys. I saw them." [4/9/03]

Syndicated columnist Cal Thomas set himself up for a future ridicule.

"Speaking to the U.N. Security Council last week, Secretary of State Colin Powell made so strong a case that Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein is in material breach of U.N. resolutions that only the duped, the dumb and the desperate could ignore it." [2/12/03]

Okay, Cal, which one are you?

Bob Edwards, on National Public Radio at the time, announced: "Congress returns to Washington this week to a world very different from the one members left two weeks ago. The war in Iraq is essentially over and domestic issues are regaining attention." [4/28/03]

In another column Thomas said: "All of the printed and voiced prophecies should be saved in an archive. When these false prophets again appear, they can be reminded of the error of their previous ways and at least be offered an opportunity to recant and repent. Otherwise, they will return to us in another situation where their expertise will be acknowledged, or taken for granted, but their credibility will be lacking."

As an unrepentant false prophet, Thomas should know.

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Economic cooperation key to political strength

By James Clingman
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Before we are able to make the meaningful progress necessary to bring about a change in the economic status of our community, we must educate ourselves in the areas of collectivism, mutual economic responsibility, and the advantages of supporting one another in our endeavors. Yes, we must continue to participate in the political arena, but with the understanding of what really controls politics.

Bankers, corporate cronies, and lobbyists rule the day in Washington. By the way, who is the lobbyist for Black folks? We are in a war for our economic survival, and most of the time we seem to be in a blue funk when it comes to doing what we know is necessary to provide for our collective future.

Among the Bush people, liars abound. We have the likes of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney, two guys who couldn't care less about being elected or having a government job. They stand before the cameras, smugly and arro-

gantly, and spew their lies with impunity, not to mention Scott McClellan, the president's press secretary. In many cases, we are buying their lies, while our children are going out of the world backwards, as the saying goes. Politics, yes; but first, economic empowerment, absolutely.

Economics does not have to be shrouded in confusing terms nor be as complicated as many would have us believe. For our purposes, economics must be lowered from the lofty heights of academia to the "street talk" with which we are all familiar. It, too, must become a part of our vernacular, because at that level we can deal with our concerns, our complaints, and our problems with the only ammunition that is effective — our dollars.

During the sit-ins of 1960 in Greensboro, N.C., and other cities, while we were seeking equality and the right to integrate socially, we began to lose sight of the economic ad-



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vantages we already had. The most important of advantage were our Black-owned businesses, but they soon faded away. As we explored our new found "right" to buy the same products and services we had always bought, only now we could purchase them from White folks, we forgot about ourselves. Another boycott was about to begin — that of our own businesses.

Let us never discredit the sacrifices made to secure our public accommodation rights; those were some of the most important and significant times in Black history. We should be grateful to those who made it possible for us to have the things we have today. But now, here in the 21st century, with its "global economy," with all of our political and social progress, we are even more economically blind than we were just two generations ago.

Why is this true? One reason is the political complacency that sets in after we elect

Black people. Black elected officials do not necessarily equate to Black economic prosperity. Our African-American politicians can only do so much — and sometimes that's very little — to relieve the plight and blight of our communities. After we have helped them get into office, we cannot then sit back and wait to see what they are going to do "for" us. We must continue to help them so they will be able to something "with" us.

Our politicians, at least the ones we help get elected, must be accountable to us, and that will only happen if we abide by the one rule that counts in politics — the money rule. Yes, they want our votes, but have you noticed, during the run-up to an election, how much discussion there is about who has the most money in his or her coffers? Unless African-Americans are willing to support our candidates with our dollars as well as our votes, we will have neither accountability nor influence in the political arena.

We, as a national community, have a good understanding of elections and political pro-

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These are not my words, because I didn't write the book; these are actually from the Bible, and Romans 1:25 - 32 states: "God gave them up to uncleanness through lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves. Who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator? For this cause, God gave them up to disgraceful affections, for even their women changed their natural use into that which is against nature; and their men, also leaving the natural use of a woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men. And because they wanted to forget about God, being filled

with all unrighteousness [sin], sexual immorality, adultery, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness, gossipers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; who knowing the righteous judgment of God that those who practice such things are deserving of death and also those that approve of those who practice them."

We all sin and fall short of the glory of God, and the pastors, while they are responsible for correctly dividing the word of truth and have been admonished in Jeremiah 23 to not destroy and scatter the flock, are not to-

tally responsible for our walk with the Lord.

In 2 Timothy 2:15 it tells us to "study to show ourselves approved." The Bible, the inspired word of God, is the only conclusive source of wisdom, knowledge and understanding concerning life's realities. And we have a choice: to read it, live by it and reap the rewards; or we can be disobedient, live the way we want to live and, ultimately, reap the wrath of God. In either case, whether you believe in the sovereignty of God or whether you are the foolish man Proverbs 14:1 speaks of when it states, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God," we will all see Him face to face on Judgment Day. Atheist, agnostic, saved or unsaved — we all have an

appointment with God. What will your ultimate judgment be?

The bottom line is this: Either you are serving God, or you are serving Satan. Choose, this day, which you will serve. And if you choose God, serve Him with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your body and your soul. For as He tells us in Jeremiah 29:11-13, "He knows the plans that He has for us, plans to prosper us and not harm us, plans to give us hope and a future, when we seek Him with all of our heart."

Know that it's never too late. He admonishes us to renew our minds daily. And last but not least, God's word says, "If you love Me, you will obey My commandments"