

SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS

September 14, 2006

We are in receipt of a letter signed by you requesting the News-Press to advertise for "ethics" to return to the Santa Barbara News-Press. It is disturbing to see that community leaders of your stature and influence are being used by the union to further their agenda. This appears to be tactic #2 on page 17 of the Trends in Union Corporate Campaigns, a Briefing Book by Jarol B. Manheim, George Washington University, which encourages community ministers to voice their criticism of a company or its executives publicly.

It is dismaying to see the use of so many vacant slogans in the last few weeks. And to see religious leadership so willingly embrace a cause that they have no facts about and do not choose to understand. Tyrants, charlatans and religious intolerants have throughout history used slogans, instead of facts, to win people over to their side. For community leaders to engage in tossing around these same slogans in the name of divine intervention to save the News-Press is just plain irreverent. These tactics and slogans are designed to inflame, pressure and deflect attention away from the facts.

Looking past slogans and underlying motivations towards the facts, it is astounding what little evidence this loud but disingenuous group of journalists has produced. There have been no real examples or insinuations of interference, only the mind-numbing drumbeat of repetition.

Where are the facts? One departed journalist says you "cannot trust" the news reporting; but he admits never experiencing any interference. Others quit issuing vague and sentimental statements about being treated "unprofessionally,"

but are unable to cite one instance of interference. Still others cite the example of being told they could not publish the addresses of celebrities. Since when is "outing" the address of a celebrity and his family a journalistic right? This is not a right, but "gotcha" journalism which is exactly why the public consistently holds journalists in such low esteem: lower than politicians and even lower than – yes - lawyers in public opinion polls for decades.

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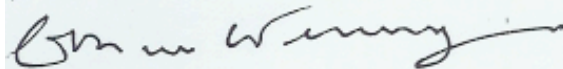
Where are the facts? The only purported example produced was that after one overblown story of a drunk driving case of Travis Armstrong, the paper refused to compound the error by reporting on a drunk driving “sentence.” Who in the public was clamouring to hear the sentence of Travis Armstrong, who already admitted guilt and received a standard drunk-driving sentence? Was this newsworthy? Do newspapers ordinarily report these sentences in no-injury cases (no)? Does the News-Press historically print these? (no).

The fact is there are no facts to support their arguments, and these so-called “journalists” have failed to make any case. In fact, the “bias” of which they complain is theirs alone, and one which will no longer be tolerated.

Then why have other media reported this? Because they are journalists. And everybody knows there is nothing a journalist likes more than writing about themselves.

But, it’s the Teamsters Union that saw an opportunity to use this situation as a vehicle to unionize all mid-sized newspapers across the country. By their own admission, they confirmed devoting all their resources to winning this campaign – and the rest of the campaigns, no matter what. In the height of hypocrisy, the ethics-preaching journalists chose the union with the most serious and pervasive history of corruption in the labor movement to represent them, a union that is still under federal monitoring for its racketeering activities—to bring “ethics” to the paper. One can be known by the company they keep.

Sincerely,



Arthur von Wiesenberger
Co-publisher