



Worst of the Week

The Most Egregious, Horrendous and Stupefying Liberal Media Bias of Campaign '08

ABC, CBS, NBC SKIP REPORT OF BENCHMARKS MET IN IRAQ

For most of the Iraq war, the national media has suggested to the public that there are two sides of the story on Iraq: the version painted by President Bush and his spokesmen, and the "reality" that Americans see in the media. But when things go well in Iraq, do the networks take any steps to acknowledge reality? Or do they keep a lid on the good news?

On July 1, the Associated Press reported that the White House notified Congress this spring that Iraq's efforts on 15 of 18 benchmarks of progress were "satisfactory" — almost twice as many as the eight benchmarks checked off a year ago. On FNC's *Special Report* that evening, anchor Brit Hume predicted: "I suspect that this broadcast tonight — and maybe some others on this channel — are the only ones who are going to make a headline out of this. This is not going to be a big story elsewhere."

Hume was right. Neither *CBS Evening News* nor *NBC Nightly News* mentioned Iraq at all. On ABC's *World News*, anchor Charles Gibson read a short update about "increasing dangers for U.S. troops in Afghanistan" since "in the month of June there were 28 American fatalities in Afghanistan, just one less than died in Iraq last month." NBC was the only network that put the words "Iraq" and "progress" together last week, in an item on the July 4 *Today* on optimism that American soldiers have in Iraq.

Newspapers also downplayed the positive progress report. *The Washington Post* put the news on page A-8 on Wednesday. But on Thursday, the top of the Post's front page highlighted "A Shortage of Troops in Afghanistan." Iraq is improving, so *Post* reporter Josh White shifted the bad-news spotlight back to the other battlefield: "Violence in Afghanistan has increased markedly over recent weeks, with June the deadliest month for U.S. troops since the war began in 2001."

On his "In Memoriam" segment on ABC's *This Week*, George Stephanopoulos announced: "You may have noticed that this is the first week since the beginning of the Iraq war where the Pentagon released the names of no combat-related deaths in Iraq." That's more than a short afterthought. If the Democrats were put in charge of the Pentagon, it might lead the program.

