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SUSAN FRIED
Photographers



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415 N. Killingsworth St.,
P.O. Box 5455, Portland, OR 97228.

Telephone (503) 285-5555.

E-mail: info@theskanner.com

World Wide Web site:

<http://www.theskanner.com>

Fax: (503) 285-2900

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Fox News Brings Out the Knives for Obama

Fox News, the unofficial arm of the Republican Party that claims to be fair and balanced, is conducting an all-out assault on President Obama, doing everything from letting Mitt Romney advisers masquerade as objective commentators to ignoring facts when a high-profile Obama critic or Fox News commentator make unfounded charges.

MediaMatters.org, the watchdog group, has catalogued numerous instances of Fox's one-sided and unethical behavior.

“Fox News has repeatedly hosted advisers to presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney without disclosing that they are helping his campaign. Media Matters examined recent appearances by advisers John Bolton, Jay Sekulow, and Walid Phares, who have all appeared on Fox News and criticized the Obama administration. Bolton and Phares are Fox News contributors, while Sekulow is a frequent Fox News guest,” the group stated.

“Bolton, a Romney foreign policy adviser, said on Fox News that Obama's foreign policy is ‘confused and incoherent and incompetent’ and defended Romney's foreign policy experience. Sekulow, a Romney legal adviser, has repeatedly appeared on Fox to attack the Obama administration on a variety

of legal issues. And veterans, maybe not all veterans, but this one – and they were saying that he was arrogant and taking credit, that he was not humble and had no humility ... it's very boorish to take credit away from those brave men ... at the scene, who did actually execute this unbelievable

THE CURRY REPORT

George E. Curry



Phares, a member of Romney's foreign policy and national security advisory killing of Osama bin Laden.” Fox also allowed guests

The personal references by Obama were taken out of context and the president has often given credit to field operatives

team, has criticized the Obama administration's handling of Syria and Afghanistan on Fox.”

Greta Van Susteren, host of “On the Record with Greta Van Susteren,” said on May 3: “One year after the killing of bin Laden, Republicans are blasting President Obama for spiking the football. And now, a veterans group is slamming the president for taking the credit instead of giving it to the special forces.”

She aired part of the ad and said, “What I take away from that ad is that the veterans are deeply disturbed – this group of

get away with a similar line of attack.

During the Fox News' Special Report on May 3, guest host John Roberts announced that a group called Veterans for a Strong America had released an ad “accusing President Obama of spiking the football over Osama bin Laden.” Fox aired part of the ad that claimed “heroes don't spike the football.”

Fox contributor and Washington Post columnist Charles Krauthammer said on the program: “It isn't just that Obama has managed to turn a positive, something he did well, into

a negative by attacking, using it as a partisan weapon which diminishes him, also it diminishes the solemnity of the event, which was a national event, and he used it, he appropriated it for himself. It is the narcissism, and that is the deeper issue here, how they quote Obama again and again, using the first personal pronoun in his announcement of the event. It's all about me, I, commander-in-chief, I ordered, I did this. What about the guys out there who did it and who risked their lives?”

As Media Matters points out, the personal references by Obama were taken out of context and the president has often given credit to field operatives. In his May 2, 2011 announcement that Bin Laden had been killed, the president said, “A small team of Americans carried out the operation with extraordinary courage and capability. No Americans were harmed. They took care to avoid civilian casualties. After a firefight, they killed Osama bin Laden and took custody of his body.”

He also stated, “We give thanks for the men who carried out this operation, for they exemplify the professionalism, patriotism, and unparalleled courage of those who serve our country. And they are part of a generation that has borne the heaviest share of

the burden since that September day.”

In a rare dissent from Fox News orthodoxy, host Megyn Kelly said in an interview with the founder of the veterans group, “He [Obama] did give thanks to the others, and of course had to mention the first person in discussing how things went down.”

Neither Kelly nor anyone else at Fox News disclosed that Joel Arends, whose group created the veterans' ad, is a longtime Republican operative. He worked on the presidential campaigns of George W. Bush and John McCain and is chairman of the Lincoln County, S.D. Republican Party.

Fox News was created by Roger Ailes, a former media adviser to Richard Nixon and other Republican figures. He supported the 1988 scheme to link Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis to Willie Horton, a Black convicted felon. Ailes told the New York Times, “The only question is whether we depict Willie Horton with a knife in his hand or without it.”

There is no question that Ailes' network is using a knife this time – to stab Obama in the back.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of Emergence magazine, is editor-in-chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service.

Mitt Romney Leads ‘Circle of Clowns’ in Republican Primary Stand-Up Routine

I recently saw a fascinating commentary where a right-wing pundit, while discussing the purported strengths of Mitt Romney, indicated that Romney had no strongly held beliefs. He went on to say that contrary to other candidates who have been described as flip-flopers, Romney did not change from one strong view to another strong view. He never had a strong view in the beginning.

My mouth dropped. I could not believe that this right-winger was trying to portray the fact that Mitt Romney, the presumptive Republican nominee for president, essentially believed in nothing – this was a good thing. This has turned the Republican primary race, which had been described as a “circle of clowns,” into a stand-up comedy routine. Can they possibly be serious that the candidacy of someone who believes in nothing should be supported by the electorate?

On one level, this should not surprise any of us. Romney has been lusting for the nomination and clearly has been willing to say or do anything in order to secure it. This has to be linked with the manner in which both ignorance and irrationality are being cele-

brated by the Republican Party's staunchest supporters. Attacks on



TRANS AFRICA

Bill Fletcher Jr.

President Obama for suggesting that it would be great for U.S. children to attend college matched with continual denial of climate change (have you checked the

Political leaders, particularly on the right, will appeal to the worst instincts within the electorate and play on fears or prejudices in order to win. And if that means shifting one's opinions, so be it. It just helps, I suppose, when shifting one's opinion is not particularly painful since one's original ideas were not that important in the first place.

The November elections hold many potential perils. Disappointment with what Obama has not done; disagreement with some of what his administration has done; and unease over our economic situations, all of which could lead many voters who

only that someone as vacuous as Romney could be elected, but in some ways, more importantly, it could mean that very bad and bankrupt right-wing politicians at the Congressional and local levels could also win. For this reason, while you may be tempted to laugh at Romney and his emptiness, you do so at your own peril.

While I am certainly one who has had significant disagreements with the Obama administration, the question I keep asking is: What would a Romney administration look like? I am not as comfortable as former President Jimmy Carter who recently suggested that he could be content with a Romney presidency. It seems to me that a rich man who has no significant or strongly held views is the equivalent of a cartoon character. In this case a cartoon character waiting for someone from corporate America to prepare his script. We have too much to lose to let that happen.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is a senior scholar with the Institute for Policy Studies, the immediate past president of TransAfrica Forum, and the co-author of Solidarity Divided.

Not only could someone as vacuous as Romney be elected, but in some ways more importantly, very bad and bankrupt right-wing politicians at the Congressional and local levels could also win

weather recently?) all points toward an enhanced cynicism that has entered the electoral realm.

would otherwise vote in a liberal or progressive direction to sit out the election. This could mean not