

American newspapers, networks suppress exposé by British Observer

## Why is the US media silent on the conspiracy behind the Starr investigation?

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On August 2 the *Observer* newspaper published an extraordinary report detailing the ultra-right forces who have conspired to destabilize the Clinton administration, and their connections to Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr.

The *Observer*, the Sunday paper published by the daily *Guardian*, one of the most established newspapers in Britain, highlighted the role of white supremacists in Arkansas in the network of ex-Reagan administration officials, TV evangelists, Republican dirty tricksters and ultra-right multi-millionaires who have laid the groundwork for Starr's offensive against the Clinton administration.

A front page article ('Exposed: Plot to Smash Clinton, *Observer* Reveals Right-Wing Conspiracy') and a lengthy report on the inside pages sketched the personal ties that connect veterans of Arkansas' White Citizens Council from the 1950s and 1960s and supporters of the Nicaraguan contras from the 1980s to leading figures in the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit, the producers of the notorious 'Clinton Chronicles' videotape, the former chief investigator for the House Whitewater committee, an ex-Reagan official who went on to become a law partner and close friend of Starr, and various organizations and publications financed by Richard Mellon Scaife.

An accompanying editorial ('Grave Threat of the Fanatical Right') expressed shock and concern over the ability of a cabal of ultra-right forces to destabilize 'an elected President of the richest and most powerful country on earth.' It warned that should the conspiracy succeed 'democratic politics in the US will have been

brought to a new low ebb with incalculable implications for the US and the world.'

Five days after the publication of the *Observer* articles, not one mass circulation news outlet in the US has even taken note of their appearance. Why the silence? Why, for example, have the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, ostensibly newspapers of record, failed to report the powerful evidence assembled by one of the world's most acclaimed bourgeois newspapers, or comment on its editorial warnings?

The American airwaves and print media are replete with speculation about the grand jury testimony of Monica Lewinsky, focusing obsessively on the details of her alleged sexual encounters with Clinton. The possibility that more profound social and political issues underlie the lurid scandal that has convulsed Washington for the past seven months is dismissed out of hand.

When facts, names and dates--already by and large well known to media commentators and editors--are brought together to demonstrate the undeniable connection between the activities of right-wing fanatics and the Starr inquisition, they are simply ignored, and suppressed. Thus, what is presented by Starr and his media acolytes as an almost holy pursuit of the 'truth,' (which boils down to the private relations between two adults and the genetic markings of a dress stain) amounts to collusion in concealing from the American people a vast assault on democratic processes.

The role of what in the past was considered the liberal media is one of the most significant aspects of the

decay of American democracy revealed in the Washington crisis. The enthusiastic support of publications such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* magazine for the destabilizing operation headed up by the independent counsel has been a critical factor in its success. These pillars of bourgeois journalism have lent Starr's operation an air of legitimacy without which it could hardly proceed.

See Also:

*British newspaper warns of 'grave threat' to democratic rights in US*

*Observer* details right-wing conspiracy behind Starr investigation

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Kenneth Starr, the American media and the pursuit of 'truth'

[31 July 1998]

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[6 June 1998]

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