

Editorial

Outing the Manchurian Candidate

By A. Linn Wyllie
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Methinks that there is a sleeper agent out there, one who has infiltrated the highest levels of government, and who has recently been activated to fulfill his secret and until now covert mission - to introduce legislation of Orwellian totalitarianism into American law.

This agent has been far from innocuous, however. In fact he's a high profile Senator who enjoys the admiring worship of the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Washington Post*, and other mainstream media propaganda outlets. His once patriotic actions and heroic deeds are overshadowed by a single theme that he has made into his personal mantra since the 2000 presidential elections.

This theme was presented to the American people during that campaign, and it was a non-starter. People didn't care about that issue - if fact, Americans didn't even consider it an issue. But he pressed on. His mission must be completed. And now, just two years later, his programming is complete and the unimaginable has happened: the beginning of the end of one of America's most cherished rights has been legislated away. On Wednesday, 27 March 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA), effectively quelling political free speech for dissenting voices.

Our sleeper agent, the once-hero Senator John McCain, co-sponsored the BCRA bill with Russell Feingold, an ultra-liberal Senator from Wisconsin. Now that the bill is law, it makes it a crime for grassroots organizations to raise money and buy television or newspaper ads within 60 days of an election. That leaves only the established elite media, unquestionably hostile to conservative principals to say the least, the only source of information concerning issues and candidates going into an election. The media enthusiastically support this law, because they are able to propagandize freely without fear of rebuttal from grassroots organizations like the National Right to Life Committee, the National Rifle Association, Americans for Tax Reform, or any of a host of such organizations, on the left or right side of the political spectrum.

How did all this come about? How could the once

conservative war hero John McCain even entertain the notion of something as un-American as the effective repealing of the First Amendment, let alone fight so hard to destroy it?

Let's review. During the Vietnam War, John McCain was shot down, captured, taken prisoner and held in the infamous Hanoi Hilton, where he languished for five long, tortuous years. The story goes that when the Vietnamese learned that McCain's father and grandfather were high ranking Navy Admirals, they offered to let McCain go free. But McCain refused, telling his captors that unless everybody went home, nobody went home. As a result of this stance, John McCain remained a prisoner. But what if something more sinister was going on? What if the Chinese and their Vietnamese allies were investing big in America's future - one that was more suited to their ambitions? What if John McCain was brainwashed, became a real Manchurian Candidate, and was tasked to destroy America from within?

McCain ran for the presidency in 2000 stumping for campaign finance reform. It didn't hit a chord with the American people - it was a non-issue - and he lost the 2000 Republican primary. I wrote about this issue in these pages in December 1999, and noted that should it ever become law, the first amendment would be shredded.

True to its word, the National Rifle Association filed suit to challenge the law just hours after its signing on Wednesday. Other watchdog and legal groups have indicated that they too will join in this legal battle to defend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Most constitutional scholars think it is unlikely that the law will prevail in the courts, but the risk is always there.

But a larger question remains: why did the majority of the congress and the president himself - all sworn to uphold and defend the constitution - not adhere to the founders' first and simple dictum: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech?"

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