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Rush Limbaugh: American Hero

From Here & Back Again



By Jim Coufal

(Cazenovia, NY – Oct. 2012) I had not thought to write a piece about Rush Limbaugh until a relative posted the following on Facebook, referring to critics of Rush.

"I wonder if your friend who dislikes Rush Limbaugh actually listens to his show or just believes the crap written and said about him by media and Democrats. I first listened to him as a joke to hear the ramblings of a racist, bigot, homophobe moron and was astounded to hear the complete opposite. He espouses the wholesome and positive beliefs and values of traditional America and our parents and grandparents."

First, I have listened to his show enough to have a reasonable understanding of Rush, and I'm a registered Republican. Second, be clear about what was said above, that Rush is the "complete opposite" of a "racist, bigot, and homophobe." The complete opposite of a racist is not just one who is tolerant, but one who fights for the rights people of all colors and ethnicities, perhaps best called an antiracist. The complete opposite of a bigot, which refers to one who stubbornly adheres to his/her own opinions and prejudices, and doesn't easily tolerate new thoughts or ideas, is a freethinker, often known as, yes a foul old liberal. And the complete

opposite of a homophobe, or one who, based on irrational fear or aversion sees homosexuals as evil and perverted, is probably best described as a humanist.

If you have listened to Rush, what of the above best describes him? Below I let him speak for himself.

On the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Rush "joked" about tricking the poor in New Orleans. especially poor Democrats, into drowning themselves. Of course, most such people are blacks, but Rush doesn't have to say that out loud. And that he was just "joking" is what he often offers as an excuse when he responds to criticism.

On his May 6, 2010 radio show Rush criticized Obama for condemning the immigration law that was abusing civil rights in the state of Arizona. Rush suggested that "once again we have the race card being thrown down," and Obama "is siding against the American people." An interesting tactic, accusing others of what you are doing.

In various statements Rush touted slavery (it had its "merits"), praised M.L. King's assassin, suggesting James Earl Ray be awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor, said of Jesse Jackson that pictures of wanted criminals looked just like him, suggested that the NAACP get a liquor store and practice robbery, and said the National Football League looked like a thug league with a game between the "Crips and Bloods". Perhaps these were all jokes. Likely they seeped into the minds of the unthinking.

In his fair and honest way he calls liberal and progressive women "feminazis." He demeans powerful women as by calling Hillary Clinton "Sex-cretary of State,;" and Kathleen Sibelius as ""Sex-cretary of Health and Human Service." He conveniently forgets such stupidity could just as easily be applied to men because they are of a sex too.

Rush called Georgetown University student Sandra Fluke a "slut," among other things, because she had the affrontery to have a different (liberal) viewpoint than his. When there was a public outcry and his sponsors began to drop him, he made an apology, which like his other "apologies" was a half-assed, self-serving continuation of his point of view. His listenership, by the way, is going down.

Among other comments about women, Rush has said, "Feminism was established to allow unattractive women easier access to the mainstream." In fact, this is #24 of his 35 "Undeniable Truths about Life." His item #16 is, "Women should not be allowed on juries where the accused is a stud." He says nothing about allowing men on juries where the accused is a hottie. It's as if he doesn't know anything about history or the current state of affairs; ready, shoot, aim.

A study from August 2012, done by the National Hispanic Media Coalition and UCLA Chicano Studies research Center (and here's where Rush lovers will cry, "Liberal researchers" without dealing with the substance of the research), analyzed the themes and content of Rush's show, along with those of other right-wing pundits, and found that listening to conservative talk radio directly contributes to hatred against minority groups, including gays. Rush may have a point here, these are historical (traditional) American values despite our beloved all men (not women?) are created equal. They are receding in the march toward complete human rights for all.

As an aside, but related to what has been said so far, there are a variety of studies that indicate the least informed Americans are those who listen to Fox radio and watch Fox television. But this doesn't matter to "true believers", because facts don't matter unless they agree with what one believes, and that is often what one is told to believe by the Limbaugh's, Coulters, and others.

As so often in his commentary, Rush skirts the illegal and unethical. Here is one of his comments on the edge of inciting to riot: "I have to say, though, folks, terrorism is the greatest threat, because we can still defeat liberals without violence. So terrorism still, of course, represents a greater threat than the

Democrat Party. We can handle them without violence. So far " (emphasis added). When this, and other commentary about Obama being against "Americans," is taken in by the unwashed, violence looms not far away. Bit it won't be Rush's fault. He'll apologize and say it was all a joke."

Rush is first and foremost an entertainer. He is not a philosopher, an ethicist, and economist, or even a political pundit. He plays to whatever will sell, and laughs or cries all the way to the bank.

Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but not to their own facts.

"Wholesome and positive beliefs and values of traditional America and our parents and grandparents?" Indeed not.

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