

Introduction by Robert G. Ingram (RI)

Thank you all for coming to this, the final event of the year sponsored by the George Washington Forum. We're very pleased this evening to host Roger Ailes, CEO and chairman of Fox News Channel. I want to thank Roger and his wife, Beth, for making the trip back to Athens, and for taking the time while here to meet with faculty and students. I also want to thank President Davis for helping to make this event happen in the first place, and Andy Alexander, for serving as our moderator this evening.

For many of you here tonight, this is your first time at a Washington Forum event. So I'd like to explain at the outset what we are and why we exist. Perhaps the easiest way into an explanation is by way of an e-mail I received this weekend from a well-known professor here at OU. It was short and to the point. "Sponsoring a parade of conservative scholars and writers with some academic cred is fine, but providing this bucket of bluster a forum goes beyond the pale. You should be ashamed of yourself." Here in plain view isn't just the unchecked id of one dyspeptic faculty member. On view, too, as any faculty of openly conservative or libertarian leanings can tell you from experience, is the raw expression of how many faculty respond when faced with the mere presence on campus of anyone with whom they have profound philosophical or political disagreements. We praise diversity to the hills, but when confronted with actual intellectual diversity the faculty response too often begins in incomprehension, accelerates through condescension and ends up at bald ad hominem. The aim, sadly, isn't to seek or interrogate the truth; it's to silence it. And for that very reason the George Washington Forum isn't just a salutary presence on campus, it's an imperative one.

For the Washington Forum exists to foster genuine intellectual diversity at Ohio University and to promote civil and forthright debate about difficult issues and politics, culture, philosophy and history. To do that means first that we actually have to bring to campus people who hold views not always given a voice here. And it means—just as importantly—that we have to provide a forum where discordant views can be presented, questioned, defended, and interrogated civilly, rationally, and directly. "The virtues we first get by exercising them," Aristotle reminded us long ago. And the Washington Forum is committed to the idea that civility in debate is a virtue, one that can and should be modeled and habituated.

We have tried to help that cause in the past few years by bringing to campus serious, consequential, and at times controversial figures, many of them, yes, conservatives or libertarians. While they've been here they've spoken their minds freely and defended their views politely against all comers. Tonight will be no exception, and I appreciate Roger Ailes for accepting our invitation to come back to OU to present to the Washington Forum.

Ailes is the Chairman and CEO of Fox News. A native of Warren, Ohio and a 1960 OU alumnus, he served as WOUB's radio student manager for two years before embarking on a career as a television producer and executive. In 1996, he oversaw the creation and launch of Fox News Channel, the top-rated news channel in America. Prior to Fox, he was president of CNBC, making it the fastest growing major cable network in America, and a leading source of business news, tripling ratings and increasing profits from \$9,000,000 to well over \$100,000,000. In 2003, he was named broadcasting and cable television's first television journalist of the year, and in addition to his media work he served as advisor to the campaigns of Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, and as a trustee of the National Trust for Historic Gettysburg.

I'm not letting slip some great secret if I tell you that not everyone has approved of Roger Ailes' work at Fox News. Indeed, some vilify him. And that's fine: it's a free country. What isn't fine, though, is arguing as my faculty colleague did in that e-mail, that it's somehow illegitimate or wrong to have him present at the Washington Forum. For one thing, is there an OU alumnus who's been a more consequential figure in American political life than Roger Ailes? If so, I'd like to meet him or her. Moreover, Ailes is game for debate. And he's game for vigorous and civil debate that actually produces light rather than mere heat.

In order to maximize the light produced tonight we'll follow National Press Club format. Ailes will speak for 20-25 minutes on the history of Fox News and the purpose he sees it playing in American political life. Afterwards, he'll sit down up here on stage in a conversation with Andy Alexander, another notable OU alumnus. This year, Alexander is a Scripps Howard visiting professional in our School of Journalism. During his time as an undergraduate he edited *The Post*, after which he went on to spend almost his entire career in the Fox—in the Cox, excuse me, sorry Andy, I didn't want to slur you-- Newspaper chain, eventually running their Washington Bureau. After leaving Cox, he served as the Washington Post's ombudsman, a position that required him to look at all issues from all angles, because he was getting complaints about all issues from all angles.

Everyone here tonight will find a 3" x 5" index card in your seat. Just write your question on it and we'll pass each and every one of them along to Alexander. There will be no videotaping tonight, but a full transcript will be available soon on the Washington Forum's website.

To coin a phrase, let me be clear: there are no out of bounds topics, no proscribed areas of discussion that Alexander and Ailes are going to have. The only thing I've asked both to do is to shoot straight and to be civil. In other words, model what honest debate should look like on a college campus.

I hope it goes without saying that audience members are asked not to cause inconvenience, annoyance or alarm to others; to prevent or disrupt the lecture from continuing; to create a risk for harm to themselves or others; to contradict direction of University officials or law enforcement officers. If you can't do that, then you may be removed from the hall subject to criminal prosecution and/or University sanctions.

I hope you'll join with me now in welcoming Roger Ailes back to his alma mater, and to the Washington Forum.

Roger Ailes: (RA)

Good evening and thank you for that warm welcome and overly-generous introduction. Just the way I wrote it. Andy actually never worked for Fox; he did work for Cox. So, just so you know he's not a former employee. I didn't realize we were going to have to be civil, but now I'll shift here. We'll do the best we can. You know, when I left OU I went to work for the *Mike Douglas Show* and then I became a consultant and for a long time--your mother never understands when you say you're a consultant. Your mother always thinks you don't have a job! And, you know, you have no place to go. So, I tried to explain what a consultant was. And the best definition I ever heard was two old maids had a big old black tomcat named Sylvester. And Sylvester became an annoyance because he would go scratch on the door at 11 o'clock at night and insist on going out into the night and doing what tomcats are famous for and then come back at 5 in the morning and wake them up and scratch on the door again. Finally the old ladies decided to have Sylvester fixed in the hopes that it would stop his night time meanderings. So they had him fixed but it didn't work. Sylvester still goes out at night but now

he goes out as a consultant. So I stopped being a consultant and decided I'd get a real job and create a news channel and work at CNBC and so on.

50 years ago, I was the MC of the OU Follies over in (unintelligible), and around that time Norman Thomas came to the campus and there was a lot of buzz. Now, I'm not sure if he was here making a presentation or whether he was here for a meeting, or what. As you know, he was the premiere Socialist probably of the 20th century and that was pretty frightening to people 50 years ago – that a real open Socialist would show up on campus. Sort of the same reaction you get when a Conservative shows up today. But he came and OU lived through it, and I have one wish for OU: that it continues to be a place for open debate where people from different points of view and various opinions can meet and discuss these things openly because there will be no progress and American will not survive if we don't allow that open debate.

So with that I'd like to say it's an honor to be back here at my alma mater. I'd like to thank Rod McDavis, who's been very open and generous with me. Dr. Robert Ingram has done a magnificent job. This George Washington Forum is a great idea and I support it completely, and I think everyone here should as well. The George Washington Forum reflects something that I believe in. America is a great nation and its traditions and institutions should be studied and even celebrated. That can be somewhat controversial today. It's amazing how much heat we take not only from people around the world, but from ourselves. We're the most self-critical country in the world. That's okay. That's good. But don't throw the baby out with the bathwater because it's really not bad. And when we take a national poll and ask people if they'd rather live somewhere else about 14% of the people say, "Yes, I don't like living in America and I'd like to live somewhere else." And I always wonder what those 14% would do if I pulled up with a moving van. Where would you like to go exactly, that's better than what you have? I'd like to make one disclaimer and that is I speak only for myself. I don't speak for News Corporation or for Fox News. I alone am responsible for my opinions and nobody else wants to take responsibility for them anyways, so it works out perfectly for everybody this way.

In 1996, when I started the Fox News Channel, I had six months to get it done. We were going up against CNN, which had a 17-year head start, was fully funded and was a worldwide brand. We also were against GE and Microsoft, the #1 and #2 companies in America, unlimited resources, unlimited amount of money and they were going to launch – I joined in February of '96 – they were going to launch MSNBC in the summer of '96 and it was my belief that we

couldn't wait until '97 to launch Fox so I had to work with what I had. What I had were no studios, no talent, no programs, no news gathering, no offices, no control rooms, nothing. An empty room. Today that asset value of that empty room is \$13 billion dollars. So in 15 years we transformed that situation. It was difficult, it took us six years to pass the competition to build up to the point where for the last 10 years we've been the #1 cable news network in America. Now that is not because of some trick or political ideology or anything else. It goes out to people in their homes and they have a right to choose it or not choose it. We just don't have enough staff to go around and hold a gun on people and say you have to watch Fox. They actually watch it because they want to watch it.

We just completed 58 quarters of operating profit growth, double digit operating profit growth. This year, I think our profit will be roughly a billion dollars in profit – because you have to make a profit, otherwise you can't employ people and you can't employ journalists. 124 months through April, 41 quarters, we have held the #1 position in cable news, about 10 years. Fox News Channel has six shows that have maintained the #1 position for 100 consecutive months. You all remember when the Pittsburgh Steelers won four Super Bowls in a row. I've talked to guys who wondered why they couldn't win the fifth and they said you couldn't get guys to show up at camp at time, they wouldn't hit the sled; they give up when you win too much, they back off and don't have the same intensity. So maintaining the intensity is one of the things that I'm charged with doing.

We had the top 13 shows in cable news in April. To give you a rough idea of the ranking of all the cable channels – this is you know, 200 or whatever number, top 200 cable channels. In prime time CNN is #33, MSNBC is #23, and Fox News is #2. In total day, taking in all day parts, in April CNN was 34, MSNBC was 27 and Fox News Channel was #4.

Now there are two parts to all news channels. One is the news, that's Shep Smith, you know, Brett Baier, and what we do during the daytime when we're doing the news. Every channel also does talk shows, opinion shows. And so you have to separate those in your mind because they are different. You know, Rachel Maddow has a talk show, Sean Hannity has a talk show; they have different points of view. The only difference between Fox and the shows on CNN and MSNBC is we invite liberals to participate constantly. Geraldine Ferraro was a contributor to Fox News for 10 years. Bob Beckel and Juan Williams, and many of the people, Dennis Kucinich is a frequent guest on Fox News. And you can ask them what they think of Fox

News, because they come there and they have to deal with Fox News. So I'll get into a little bit of why we're perceived somewhat differently later.

I wrote the mission statement 16 years ago. I said we're committed to providing views with as much factual information as we can in a balanced and fair way. We believe viewers should make up their own judgment on important issues based on facts. Our motto is "We report, you decide." Our job is to give the American people information they can use to live their lives more effectively and our job is to tell them the truth wherever the truth falls, and we will investigate anything finding the truth if it's corporate or government or Republican or Democrat, or UN, we try to put the news out. We have not been guilty of suppressing the news one time in all those years.

We do believe that individuals are innocent until proven guilty. Perhaps we believe that we should give our country the same right so we're not quick to condemn America, we want the same rights for the country that we insist on as individuals.

We think there are obviously many problems with America. Racism still exists, anti-Semitism, class warfare, poverty, many of these things exist. We believe this country has done more to confront most of those issues than any other country in the world. We have freedom of speech and freedom of press. So these problems are not hidden problems in America. It's because the press does its job that these problems are known. They are somewhat depressing because you think, gee why can't we fix that? Part of the reason is politics. When is the last time you saw a Senator or Congressman show up at a podium and say thank you for sending in \$17 trillion dollars; we actually fixed something and we're going to move on and fix something else? They want you to send them more money but they haven't necessarily fixed the problem. So holding people accountable, sort of as you would in a business – the greatest business consultant once said it's about results, not activity. And most people want activity; they want to look like they're doing something. And I can tell you people succeed when they get results; it's that simple. People pay you for results.

In 200 years, America has fed more and freed more people than all other countries on the Earth. So from time to time you see that reflected on Fox News. We don't think that's a bad thing. We don't mind when Abu Ghraib happened in the Bush administration. We carried that full pictures, full bore, 17 times. Now *The New York Times* had it, I believe, 44 times on their front

page. And I went to the editorial meeting one morning and I said to the head of our news division, "Why aren't we doing Abu Ghraib today?" And he said because there's no news. I said, "Well *The Times* has got it on the front page." They said it was a political agenda for *The Times*; for us we're waiting for more news. Every time there's news we put it up full screen and lead the news shows with it. It's just a different philosophy. Don't cover it up but don't push it if there's no news.

Sometimes I've been criticized for being too pro-American; sometimes for too pro-Israeli, sometimes too pro-Democracy. But I do believe this is a country that is great because everybody's trying to get in and nobody's trying to get out. And that impresses me. I don't see people trying to break out of America. Part of it is we put an extremely high price on freedom. And I believe journalists have tremendous responsibilities. Their job is not to invent and support positions but be skeptical of everyone. A few things I try to tell my journalists are that nobody is wrong all the time, not even Americans. You should treat capitalism as fairly as other philosophies because it's how we get paid. Keep an open mind from the time you file your story you still don't know all the facts. Be a big enough person to include the point of view you don't agree with if it's true. Our job is not to be a lap dog or an attack dog, but to be a watch dog. And as a matter of fact, the press was set up to keep an eye on government because our founders all came from countries where the government got a little too aggressive. Professional detachment from a story is different from you actually being God, because there is a tendency for people with power of the pen and camera or anything else to think they know best. That is a very dangerous problem.

The Constitution actually only protects one profession: the press. Why does it do that? It does that because they all came from countries where the government eventually took over the press. Andy just got back from Russia where, you know, a very good female reporter got into a tussle with the leader of that country and I guess just coincidentally ended up with a bullet in her head in her apartment. They play rough with some of these people. We have free press. So we have the responsibility to do the right thing with it.

After the invasion of Iraq I tuned to one channel and a reporter said we've been at three days now, we're bogged down like Vietnam. So I switched to another channel and they said we were moving way too slowly and weren't being sensitive enough. You know, George Washington in the beginning fought for two years and I don't think we won a single battle.

Finally, and he had the government, the generals, the public, the press all trying to fire him for incompetence, George Washington, this guy. Incompetence. So he took a desperate gamble. He crossed a river on an icy night in a storm, took 2600 men most of them with no shoes, marched them south 7 miles in the dark and they attacked at dawn and he won his first battle. And I'm told the press in Philadelphia and New York attacked him for doing it on Christmas Eve. So, my point here is you have to be careful of the press. The press – be careful of Fox, criticize whatever you want; write in; raise hell; it doesn't matter. It's important because the one thing that has never been anticipated – they always thought the government might try to take over the press – the worst thing that can happen is the press surrendering to the government, to a party, to a group of people in Washington. That would be bad. We don't want that to happen.

By my count, the Bill of Rights enumerates many freedoms. All important. Our founders understood that a broad range of rights were guaranteed to essential liberty. People who know me know that I'm a big fan of freedom of speech; many believe I should be the one exception.

Freedom is linked to another good word: diversity. But I believe diversity is not just skin color, language, culture, economic status, geography or religion. I believe it's diversity of thought. Any newsroom that doesn't have diverse thought is in danger of failure. And so, that's another great reason for this forum.

Keep in mind that bias is not just putting in a story what you believe in, and leaving out what somebody else believes; it can be in what story is selected in the first place. There are a thousand stories today and 12 will make the news. And so that starts there. Why did you pick it? Sometimes economic reasons. Something may be important in Estonia. You know they're beating us in math and science. You've got to watch those Estonians; they're creeping up and it's going to get rough here. But that's rarely reported because we don't have enough crews we don't have enough money to put people in Estonia every day.

Freedom of the press is key; freedom of the press is the life blood of journalism. It's always been controversial. A 19th century etiquette book said it's improper to kick a newspaper man down the stairs simply because he's chosen to make his living in a disagreeable manner. General Grant wanted all newspaper people shot as spies because he would pick up the paper and see where his troop's movements were going because some reported and put in those days

you moved troops and it takes a long time to move then 10 miles and you don't really want the enemy to know where they are and so he was looking at it from his point of view.

I sometimes remind my colleagues in journalism that while freedom of the press is the central pillar of democracy, freedom of the press did not invent democracy. Democracy is the structure, support, cradle of freedom of the press. Democracy depends on freedom of the press. But freedom depends on fairness in the press. A second point of view. And so, you know, I stand by that and usually when I go to a cocktail party, which we try to avoid – my poor wife has to go through this. Somebody will come over and poke me in the chest and say you work for that Fox? Isn't that a conservative channel? And I say, well let me ask you if you're comfortable with CNN? They say yeah. I say how about MSNBC? They say great. I say NBC, CBS? Terrific. NPR, PPS okay? Yep. *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *LA Times*, fine? Yep. I say so what you're trying to say is this little cable channel over here sometimes does stories you don't like; doesn't line up with your world view. I say there are a couple of totalitarian states somewhere that tried that. So, you want people who will take the different direction sometimes.

As we enjoy this evening, some people believe we're in a fight for civilization itself. But in that fight we have rules. Our opponents do not sometimes. We accord rights to them; they give us none. So do we have one hand tied behind our back? Or is this the structure of why we're a great nation? A nation that will defend not only our rights but the rights of others we don't even know. Why do we try to free others when we're already free? Why do we impose rules on ourselves when terrorists don't care? Why does our Constitution reign supreme for citizens and non-citizens? Why are we constantly critical of ourselves trying to do better when other countries criticize us so vocally? Why do we believe we can ultimately win without giving up our laws or values? Because we're Americans! That's why. It's different.

A few years ago a man in Iran said not only should Israel be wiped off the face of the Earth but that we must imagine a world without America. So I ask you tonight. Imagine the world without America. All I can say is if that were to happen, God help the world.

I thank you for your time and for listening and I'll take questions from Andy.
[applause] A pretty quiet bunch. Pretty frightening.

ALEXANDER (AA) Well, Robert said nothing is out of bounds, so buckle up here.

- AILES (RA) It doesn't mean I'll answer everything.
- AA That's true.
- RA One of the first things I teach is that you can ask whatever you want and they can answer whatever they want; that's what America is all about. So you're about to see that in action. I happen to know Andy's background; I know where the questions will come from and I know which ones I'll answer, okay?
- AA Okay; it's America. Yeah. Let's start with something fairly simple. You gave a very interesting interview today with WOUB talking about your background here, when you first came to WOUB and how that sort of gave you your start in broadcasting. I was wondering, however, when did your – what was your ideology at that time when you came here? Or did you even have one?
- RA Well, I grew up in Ohio. Ohio was sort of Taft Republican's country although I guess Eisenhower eventually won out at the time. I think Eisenhower is probably a boyhood hero. I didn't have many thoughts about politics. I certainly didn't in college. My beliefs I think grew out of living in the world, particularly after I got out of college. You know, life changed. And you know I'm not sure what my ideology is today. I mean, you give me the issue and I'll tell you what I believe, but I can only tell you what I believe.
- AA Would it be safe to say you're more conservative than liberal?
- RA Well
- AA Oh, come on.
- RA It's a broad; I'm more conservative than you are.
- AA Okay.

- RA Sure I'm more conservative because there are more issues I'm conservative on. But conservative, as you know, those labels are traps. I'm sure you, as a former *Washington Post* employee have labeled as liberal, sometimes rebel against that. There may even be some, as an ombudsman conservative positions that you've had to espouse that you weren't all that favorable to, but understood to be true and right, so I try to keep an open mind but I have, I know how to vote but I don't think it's anybody else's – I don't think it's my business how anybody else votes.
- AA You, I think you were thinking about writing a book, or are you writing a memoir now?
- RA I am starting to write one, yes. But only because other people are writing about me and I decided I might as well – you know, one of the chapters is for my 12-year old son and it says, "Don't believe the New York Times, Daddy was actually in the room." So I want to make sure he gets the real story.
- AA Well are you writing it for any other reason other than other people doing books?
- RA No, I'm doing it more for my son so he gets the perspective of what actually happened because many people write about me and you know, at least three times, four times a week we read something on the Internet that simply never happened or isn't true. And, it has my name on it but you can't believe what it's like to get up in the morning and read your name and see you did something or said something that just didn't happen. There are cases when I wasn't even there.
- AA You recently had a birthday. Happy birthday. About a week ago.
- RA I'm 37---
- AA You're 72 years old.

- RA ---I just look bad because I work hard.
- AA And I wondered with that, and the book thing, is this because you're winding down? I mean is there ---
- RA Well that's the hope of all liberals. That this must be the end for the old guy; he's going to give it up, we don't have to shoot him.
- AA You have a 5-year contract that ends next year though, right?
- RA Yeah, it does end in— my actual contract ends in June of '13.
- AA So that's the plan? Do you want to keep going?
- RA I haven't announced it and I'm not sure I even know it. My wife and I are discussing it. I'm happy at Fox News. I think we're providing a service that sometimes is not being provided by some of the other networks. I would love to see that continue forever. But I haven't made definitive plans. I have options. I've actually had people try to hire me. So far not for great jobs. I started digging ditches in northern Ohio. I worked for the County Highway Department and the State Highway Department and my job was putting in sewer pipes and making enough money to come to OU, which was a state school and relatively cheap and also had to accept me because I lived in the state. So I was able to come here. So I've been working hard since I was 10 and I don't know that stopping is a good idea.
- AA Most corporations have a line of succession or a succession plan. Is there one at New Corp or Fox News?
- RA Absolutely. At Fox News there is.
- AA At Fox News. And is there a chosen successor?
- RA No, there's been no announcement about it. I don't even have it written down. I think my wife's the only one who knows it so if I get run over by a bus, an envelope will arrive and it will say this is what I

would do if I were you poor fools; now you don't have me to kick around anymore. Do whatever you want. But no, I have a plan that I think would work. But once I'm not running the company it won't be my decision necessarily. So I will only make recommendations.

AA Yeah. You have a tough guy image. But most people who know you and have been around you also say you're a genial guy, which everyone can see. And I'm wondering, however, if – my sense in reading a lot about you and in talking to some people who know you that you really enjoy the jousting quite a bit. And I was reading this story that *Esquire* did on you a couple years ago, and there was a line in there that says, "He makes sure that you cannot deal with him without having to contend with him." And I wonder if you enjoy the tough guy persona regardless of the loveable character you are.

RA You can't create your own persona anyway. The guy who wrote that article is a little bit of whack job. But he's a nice guy, but you know, his father left the family and he thought I was his father I think, and he started writing strange stuff that didn't make any sense. He's a nice fellow, but he fell in love with his own writing, if you go read the article. And pretty soon you get lost in it and you can't quite figure it out. Keep in mind that what people write is their view of what they think your view is. And they don't know you. So, you know, it was fine, but no I don't try to create my own image, I react to situations or I cause situations when I need to get something done. If that creates a certain image so be it; I can't do anything about it.

AA Does the public persona, the tough guy image; does it get to you ever?

RA Not much gets to me; I've been doing this for 40 years and I've been standing alone a lot of that time.

AA Um-hmmm.

RA It would have been a lot easier; I was once offered a lot of money to change my position and stop being effective in political media and stop being effective and go do entertainment. And I needed the money at the time, and it was a lot of money. And I just said no, I'm just going to do what I do.

AA Tell us about that. Who was that?

RA No, I won't tell you. I won't tell anyone.

AA That's fine.

RA And I'm not even going to put it in my book. But, I will tell you that there have been plenty of times that I thought maybe I should just get out. But then I see something happen in America that I don't get and I see an interpretation of something that is wrong. I've been in meetings in Washington, gone back to the hotel to get a phone and somebody in the meeting's already leaked and when I read about the next day in the papers it's not actually what happened in the meeting. And that's frustrating to me so I stay in the game and you know, fight back and that gives me a tough guy image. But, it's not because I'm looking for a tough guy image, it's because somebody's got to fight back.

AA You have said to a number of people, and said just recently here that one of the reasons you keep going with Fox News – and I don't know if you're saying this jokingly – but you said you need to save America.

RA No, I'm ---

AA Are you ---

RA --- save it. Americans are going to have to save it. I joke about that because you know, they'll say you're conservative or this or that or you know. No, I just believe that we're distancing ourselves too far from our love of country. You know, if we don't love it who is going to? And, we provide so many services to the world and we are so

necessary as a beacon of light to the world that allowing that to diminish I happen to believe we've become too much of an entitlement society. I know that's a hot button for politics – it's not, it's not just politics, you know. It's actually real. I mean there's a finite amount of money in the world. There's only one place our government gets money: your wallet. Printing it just diminishes the value in your wallet; borrowing it just means you've got to pay back more. So you have to use the resources you've got. We've been blessed with the greatest set of resources in the world but we've been intimidated into not using our own natural resources. I find that odd. I'm not suggesting we shouldn't use alternative energy or try to get to the bottom of it and figure out how to make it work. And you know when you'll know it works when there's a Bill Gates of green. Because if it works somebody's going to get rich on it in America. And when they do you'll know it works because everybody will rush out and buy it.

AA Let's stick with a few more personal things. Just because we know so much about you publicly.

RA But I'm trying to use that as an example, why I'm seen as a guy who fights or fights about America. These are real issues and I believe in them and I will fight over them.

AA Let me go back to this image of you being sort of a controversial person. Any number of people who have written about you, and some very favorably, have used the word paranoid. And basically they talk about the security apparatus you deal with and the fact that you have guards and I'm wondering about how many threats you get. I mean, are they serious things or is it just that you're sort of built that way and normally suspicious.

RA Well, first of all, the word paranoid came from me. I said that everybody needs to be a little bit paranoid and I'm 72 and I'm still alive, so hey!

AA It works.

RA It's actually working! I have a 12-year old son, I have a family; I don't want to talk too much about it. But what I can tell you is that the articles you've read both—I'm sure you've read *Rolling Stone*, you would like that. The ---

AA Actually, I don't. But ---

RA ---*Esquire* magazine article and so on, wildly exaggerates and distorts that whole issue. Now I don't want to say exactly what I am, but it is nowhere near that. Now do I need it? Yes. I get death threats on the Internet. Most of them are baloney. The day we invaded Iraq I got 30,000 e-mails from Muslims. Some of the security people said, "Ah, 12 or 13 of these know too much about you personally; one came from a Riad Café. I don't worry about that but I worry about it for my family. We've had people try to break into our house. When we left the hotel tonight we got a call that some guy had been arrested in our home town. And he was ranting about the government stealing everybody's money and he apparently has what they call emotionally disturbed - EDP—person. And in the middle of the rant he screams that he went over to Roger Ailes' house and he wasn't home but I heard the dog barking and so on. So, I don't want my son to open the door and have that issue.

AA right.

RA Okay. So does it happen? Yeah, it happened tonight.

AA Okay. Let's talk about your image a little bit. You seem sensitive about it in one sense. You, for instance, your people in planning this thing made it clear that this could not be videotaped and I wondering why is that?

RA Because Websites that are pornographic and otherwise have used videos of me. I don't care if Jon Stewart does it; I don't care if he makes

fun. I don't care if Jay Leno does it. I don't care. But I happen to believe that Fox is serious business. And I don't care; I was gonna even film it myself, but I don't think what I have to say is all that important. If it is important it's important to a small group of people. It doesn't need to go out over the Internet and I'm not a big fan of Websites.

AA But you're a pretty big public figure. And if Fox News were covering a public figure – I'm not saying a public official, but a public figure like you – and someone said at a taxpayer supported institution you can't videotape, what would the reaction of Fox News be?

RA I wouldn't cover it. I'd say all right.

AA You would give up that easily?

RA No, I'd fight. But then I'd say okay. I mean the point is I don't have to be here tonight. I agreed to come. I get to set certain rules. I don't give a damn whether you tape it or not tape it. I don't give a damn whether or not. If I came because the school invited me and I like this idea, and I like Rod McDavis and I like OU, but you know, to be honest with you I'd rather be at a Yankee game. So you don't have to play by my rules; do whatever the hell you want; get whoever you want to sit here.

AA So if we were doing this over again, we could easily videotape and you'd live with it?

RA I would either live with it or I wouldn't show up. I'd make a decision to do what I wanted.

AA Okay.

RA Because that's one of those things about freedom.

AA Yeah. Let's go a little bit, before we get to the audience questions here, to some of the counter views of Fox News. We all understand what you've said about the division between commentary and (unintelligible) ---

- RA Right.
- AA ---but Bill Keller who is a former executive editor of the *New York Times* had a piece recently which you obviously read. And basically, one of the things that Keller said was that partisan press in America is not new and we know that.
- RA God knows he's knows it. He got fired because he was putting the editorials on the front page as news, so ---
- AA Actually I think he resigned.
- RA That's what we all say. More time with the family.
- AA What do you ---
- RA It usually means you got your butt fired; that's what it means.
- AA Okay. You're not confusing him with his ---
- RA I know Bill well. In fact, I e-mailed him afterward and I said, "Bill, your article..." what I find amazing if you read the article very carefully, he's quite critical of the mainstream press for being too biased. And I said that commentary would never have been written if Fox News didn't exist. We have made people aware that bias can work from a lot of different directions and God knows *The New York Times* is one of them. So the fact that he wrote that showed me the influence on Keller of Fox News. Now I wrote to him and I said, "You know, I actually think you're more biased than you think I am, but I'll buy you a drink." He offered to buy me a drink and I'm going to call him next week and we'll get together and talk.
- AA For the benefit of the audience, can I just read one of the key things ---
- RA Sure.
- AA --- which I think is what you're responding to. Keller wrote, "My complaint is that Fox pretends very hard to be something that it is not.

And in the process contributes to the corrosive cynicism that has polarized our public discourse. I doubt that people at Fox News really believe their programming is fair and balanced. That's just a slogan for suckers, but they probably are convinced that what they have created is the conservative counterweight to a media elite long marinated in liberal bias. They believe that they are doing exactly what other serious news organizations do; they just do it for an audience that has been left out before Fox came along." I wonder how much of that you really disagree with.

RA I disagree with it in the sense that we really believe when a Shep Smith does our hard news at night, you know, my suspicion is that Shep's a Liberal, but he actually works at trying to put it over the plate and right down the center. So does Brett Baier. Does Sean Hannity? No. He announces —

AA Commentator.

RA --- he's a commentator. So I disagree with that. What is amazing is that he's finally admitting the *New York* is a cesspool of basically biased.

AA He — admitting that because my reading of that column was he was very clear in saying that we make our own mistakes and that we ---

RA But he's writing his off as mistakes and we're determined evil people. Let me tell you, let me give you an example. What if you got up on a Thursday morning and the front page of *The New York Times* said you were going to be indicted on Monday. How would you feel about that? Let's assume you hadn't done anything and don't know anything about it. That happened to me. I got up on a Thursday morning and it said Roger will be indicted on Monday.

AA And what ---

- RA And do you know what they used for their source? They said somebody was overheard in the waiting room of a Barbados airport saying it. That was their source for that story.
- AA Did you call them on it?
- RA No.
- AA Why not?
- RA Because they're a bunch of lying scum and they're not going to do anything about it. They did it on purpose, they did it deliberately and they didn't have anything. I'm sure they couldn't produce the guy in the Barbados airport.
- AA One of the things ---
- RA So, do I take on *The New York Times*? Yes. Yes, I do, because somebody should.
- AA Now speaking of the lying scum here, another line in Bill's column was basically he says that Fox handles stories this way. Control it, spin it or his — meaning yours--segmented audience of believers and demonize anyone who sees things differently.
- RA Fine. Give me an example. Let me hear what you've got as an example. That's his opinion as a far-left wing editor, writer, reporter, journalist so called, and he has a right to that position. Don't get me wrong. I mean, I think Bill's a very talented guy; I'm told he's a pretty nice guy, I intend to find out because I'll sit with him and have a drink. I don't have any problem with him having it, but you have to understand that is his view of Fox News, primarily because we're winning. One of the things that is really, you know, we've moved into a society that thinks everybody ought to get a trophy. That's not the way it works. Somebody's going to win. And let me tell you when they win, when you win they don't like you. Particularly if you go into their turf.

Newspapers are dying, their profits are down, they had to go to a guy in Mexico to cough up enough cash to keep them running. They're a far-left wing newspaper. They have an absolute right to be. And I don't have any problem with that other than the fact that I have a right to present what I view to be an alternative point of view to *The New York Times*. So I don't have a fight with Keller. I don't even have a fight with left-wingers. But I do have a fight with people on the left who have a problem with Fox.

AA Okay. You mentioned some of your news talent. And I'm wondering, when you select news talent like Shep and other people like that, do you screen them for ideology in any way?

RA No.

AA Does it ever come up?

RA No. Never has. They've all been asked, of course every reporter asks---

AA They have been asked the same question I'm asking you.

RA Exactly. They said did Ailes or anybody ever ask you what you believe or what you think or --

AA I read in a book that you wrote many years ago called *You are the Message* that you often in evaluating talent, you will turn the sound down and simply look at people, not hearing what they're saying, but looking at their engagement with the camera. Do you still do that?

RA Some. That's part of the process. I wrote that book 25 years ago called *You are the Message*, and I said that if you turn the sound down and somebody is not interesting enough to be on television then they can go to work at MSNBC. They'll still have some place to go; it's just that I don't have to hire them. Now I also turn the sound up and see what they say but part of the process is to just see; do they believe what they're saying? Is there an organic drive inside this person to gesture

and to sell their point of view properly? Because otherwise they're going to put people to sleep and part of television is it's a visual medium and you've got to be able to engage the audience. You've got now a lot of screens up there. And if your screen isn't winning you're losing money. And if you're losing money you've got to fire people.

AA Do you ever do that with your current talent? Not looking at prospective talent but actually turn the sound down and get rid of somebody because they're not engaging?

RA Well I'll tell you what I do. Yeah. I do look at it; I don't necessarily get rid of them. But I call them in and say you're angry. Why are you angry? And they say how do you know I'm angry? And I say I've been watching you for two days, I turned the sound down; you're angry. You never smile ever.

AA Notice I'm smiling right now.

RA That's right. So I do, I'll see certain things out of the corner of my eye and say, "Uh-oh, something's wrong there. That person's off a bit. Why is that happening?" Because I believe you know, it's sound, it's motion, it's ideas, it's pictures, it's all of that. And I've been trained to look at it and assess it and so I do.

AA You, on your interview today at WOUB you made one reference to the Associated Press because you're negotiating a new contract with them which is very lucrative to them, obviously.

RA I'm not sure if I got that number right. That number stuck in my head---

AA But it's ---

RA ---I'm wondering it's, it's a lot of money.

AA ---we would agree it's millions and millions of dollars because you're an enormous news organization. But, you said, AP quote, "used to be

neutral news source but it's not as neutral today." What do you mean by that?

RA It tips left all the time now. Now, it ran for a long time with a, what was his name?

AA Lou Boccardi.

RA Lou Boccardi. Lou Boccardi. I sat next to him at the Al Smith dinner, so I know he's a liberal Democrat. Okay? Okay, I can tell because he would only laugh at Al Gore's jokes, he wouldn't laugh at the other guys. So I said okay I get it, I got it. Because I figured Al Gore's jokes are (unintelligible). So I grew to love Lou, but Lou was a real journalist. I never had the slightest fear of him running AP because he honestly worked at trying to balance it. So even though I knew, just as a personal guy sitting next to me, he's a little too fond of Al Gore for me, he never let that get in the way of his journalism. Then another guy took over who was from marketing or something and they shifted down to the ---

AA Tom---

RA ---editorial (unintelligible) and now they've got some new guys coming in. And for a while they were going to put out two feeds. I don't know if you remember this. They were going to put out their normal old-fashioned neutral feed, and they were going to do a special feed for special customers, which meant left-wing headlines and left-wing news.

AA Now how do you know that?

RA Because I read the copy. I'm smart enough to read the copy. What else would they do? What they figured out is all of their customers except Fox loved the new one. So why do two? It cost too much.

AA But I think what they said was they were going to put out a second feed that was analysis.

RA Well, but it was put out as news. And, and they still started to tip their copy and their headlines so they were essentially writing, because you know what it's like in news rooms. If you get something into you you can use, you use it. You don't invent work for yourself so they're smart enough to understand that. And so I would love for AP to go back to being a neutral news source. I don't want them to tip right. I think that would be a disaster and a tragedy.

AA But is there a specific line of coverage that you think is liberal? I mean---

RA Well, we'd have to sit down and look at the stories. But right now, for instance, there's a real discomfort on Middle East coverage because of Israel. Okay?

AA Yes.

RA This Administration has been back and forth on that particular issue and a lot of coverage has been back and forth. Because I know people high up in Israel I understand what their concerns are. When people announce, who have the ability to do it, that they're going to wipe you off the face of the Earth, and you realize you're surrounded and you rely on your relationship with the United States to stay alive, this becomes really important how you report it. And, you don't want to tip the coverage to just track and administration or track anybody. You've got to stay pretty straight on the coverage. And I think they've, I think there's been less than adequate coverage from the Israeli perspective on that particular topic. That's life and death. Life and death for a country. It's as important for America because we can never be known as a country who gives its word and then doesn't keep it. You just don't, you just don't want to go there. So I do watch that coverage.

AA And you have made these views, you've made AP aware of your views on their coverage?

RA I'm meeting with them soon.

AA Yes.

RA This is the reason I'm not signing the contract. And I may not sign the contract. We may, CNN dropped AP. Now they didn't drop it for that reason.

AA They dropped it for other reasons, right.

RA They weren't left enough. No, just kidding, that's a joke. But, CNN is not that left. MSNBC actually is out of the news business now. Even their own news people at NBC won't go on MSNBC generally. I mean, you know Brian Williams doesn't want to be caught dead over there, because it's all opinion and it's all far left. And he's you know got to maintain he's basically a Democrat who worked for Jimmy Carter, but he wants NASCAR image and he understands he's got to stay broad-based. And Brian is by and large a fair, I think sincere newsman. But CNN actually works at, I mean, they tend to hire only liberals because only liberals work for the news business. But they try to stay a little more neutral. They've got some very good people. Candy Crowley, great journalist. Wolf Blitzer, excellent journalist. I mean these are people who are really good. So they have, I joust with them because we're in competition and we're beating the hell out of them. But, but I don't dislike them. Nor do I want to leave the impression that they're so far over there. You know. MSNBC is out where the buses don't run. I mean, it's, you don't know what the hell's going on there. But CNN is okay.

AA Let me ask you a few more questions here before we get to the audience questions here.

RA Sure.

AA You obviously have a very well known and respected background as a political advisor serving a lot of different Republicans, going way way back to Nixon. I wonder if during the last primary season if you gave any private advice to any of the candidates who were running.

RA I'm not allowed to. I broke my own rule once. I don't give political advice. You can't pay me to give political advice. I don't give it. But when Bob Dole was running, one day he was at the office and said, "Come on, Ailes, give me advice." Now I have a fondness for Dole, he's a war hero, a great American and a wonderful guy. And I said, "Look I can't give political advice." And he said, "Give me some advice." I said, "All right. Here's the advice. You are Bob Dole. Stop saying Bob Dole is over here, Bob Dole thinks. You're always saying stuff like you're not there. I mean you're actually there. It's you." So, I did break the rule one time, but I said, "Bob, you're it. That's it." So that was it.

AA After 9-11 though, you gave some advice to the Bush Administration.

RA I wrote a letter as a citizen. I was trapped in my office; figure out where we were. We're 9-11 and downtown Manhattan. We don't know if the attacks on the World Trade Center are the end of it. We don't know if more terrorists are coming. We don't know where they're going to hit. We're sitting at Rock Center, in the diamond district. I have a block in Times Square and we assume if there are targets we're in the middle of it. The island shut down. I can't go home. I've got my family in New Jersey. I decided to stay there and go down to the newsroom and walk around the building and make sure everybody feels; I'm staying if they have to stay. I went back and about two in the morning I penned a note to the White House. It wasn't political advice, because what I have always said is I did not give up my citizenship to take the job at Fox News. That's my job; I do it. But I consider being a citizen of the United States of America a more important job. And I wrote a note as a citizen that was the same kind of advice any of you

would have given. The problem is, of course, somebody leaked that who didn't like me. I don't care because I always assume that if I write something it's going to end of on the front page of *The New York Times*. And it was fine, but I don't disavow it. I'm not apologizing for it and I never will. I did what I thought was right at the time and I did it as a citizen of the United States and I don't take it back.

AA Let me ask you one final question before we get to the audience questions here. There is a view on the other side; your critics say basically that on the news side of Fox---

RA I have critics?

AA A few, yeah.

RA Geeze.

AA On the news side of Fox News, that basically you are a propagandist for the Republic party. Now you of course disagree with that. But I wonder in disagreeing with that, what in your mind would qualify as being a propagandist? Not just Fox News but MSNBC. Where would you say when, what ---

RA If you're sitting in the meetings trying to elect somebody or trying to elect a party or trying to push a party. I did kill one story in 15 years.

AA Which was?

RA When Howard Dean's kid got arrested during the campaign, somebody in the news ran down to my office and said we're going up, we've got an alert, the kid's been arrested. I said, "Why are we doing this? How old is he?" They said "he's a teenager, we're not sure." I said, "Do you have a police report?" They said, "No." I said, "Look, everybody's going to assume he's not doing his job at home and his kid's in trouble and this is terrible and he's a terrible candidate and a terrible man." And when I was 17, I was deliberately trying to roll cars.

So, I don't think we ought to go out there picking on people's kids when we don't, we don't have any facts. All we have is a headline that's going to get everybody excited. We can break it first. We'll be the first out with the story. Everybody else is going to have to follow. And I just said you know, that to me it is not a story we should break and we don't need to be first on this. We need more information. I mean, you know. And eventually. But we never carried that story. But yeah.

AA But that didn't get into the realm of allegations of propaganda though.

RA No, but what I'm saying to you is ---

AA Other than the ----

RA ---the idea that we're trying to only help Republicans. No, we're trying to be good citizens, honest people and you know, because some of the other net -- look, they say we're too conservative. We have 24 liberal contributors, okay? That looks ---

AA How many of a stature of Hannity or Bill O'Reilly though? These liberals are basically plugged in; they're not, they're not---

RA Well I'm not giving them shows because I need audience flow. You want a show you've got to go to MSNBC or CNN because they're all Liberals. 100%. Plus---

AA Again, we're talking on the commentary---

RA ---they don't have any contributors who are Conservatives.

AA Right.

RA So there's no view over there that, but I have Bob Beckel and Juan Williams and people who are really quite good, I just hired a woman named Sally Kohn---

AA But what I'm saying is that the critics would say that's a false equivalency.

RA No; what the critics should say is there are no Conservatives on the other two networks and at least Ailes has 24 Liberals on Fox. But that's not the way they write it. Because that's not the way they want it. It's the truth but they're not going to write that. You see my point?

AA I do.

RA And, you know, until the press starts acting normal and telling the truth then I'll fight. And if that looks combative, it's combative.

AA Okay let me get to some of these questions. Here's one that says, "How did serving as media advisor for the Nixon campaign affect your approach and view of the media and the news?"

RA Well, I was never a, this is a good time to clear this up. Of course *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* and so on wants to pretend that I was somehow a political advisor to Richard Nixon and I personally developed the southern strategy. I was a television producer. My job was to figure out where the backlight was and the key light and make sure the microphones worked and the staging was good because I was a TV producer. They didn't hire me at 28 years old because I was a genius on world affairs or politics. I didn't know anything about any of it. So for about four or five months of my life I actually worked as a television producer for the Nixon campaign. Now they hate that because it's the truth. They want me in some, in fact some nutty Website came out and said Richard Nixon and I sat out in the 60s and designed Fox News. No we didn't. No. We actually didn't. You know, that's that's what I tell you when you read this stuff, just you know---

AA But you advise him in other ways.

RA I'll advise you on the debate. Speak up, don't look stupid, hold your cards over here, look at the camera. Yeah, I advised ---

AA On things, not quite as benign---

- RA I didn't know anything about politics.
- AA So you were simply offering interview---
- RA I was a television producer in that era. If you read Joe McGinnis' book, which was probably the best book of that era---
- AA Boys on the ---
- RA No, *The Selling of the Pres*---
- AA Selling the ---
- RA He's not in there saying I gave political advice.
- AA Okay. Here's another one. "When you started Fox News did you believe that a Conservative mindset was or would be profitable as a media outlet?"
- RA What I believed was all the media, and we looked at the polls, and somewhere between 72 and 78% of the America people believe the media tips to the left. And the reason is because the media tips to the left. So, as a television producer I realize that there's a marketing niche in the center right, where most Americans live, that was relatively untapped. So the next question is, well aren't you worried that somebody else, one of the other networks will do that? No, because one thing about Liberals is they really believe they're right. So they're never going to move into that niche. I believed it was an underserved niche in America. It was. It still is. So, we're doing fine and, yeah, I thought it was underserved and I thought there was more than one point of view that should be presented and I offered to present it.
- AA Just let me follow up that with my own question. You said earlier in your remarks that you, I think you're going to end the year with a billion dollar free cash flow. Some of that, of course, has to go back to investors. But what do you plan to do with all that money at Fox? How do you want to ---

RA Well, we've launched the Fox Business Channel, which is in its infancy. We're in about 58,000,000 million homes; we need to be in 90,000,000 homes. We've launched FoxNews.com; we've launched Fox News Nation on the Internet. I'm looking at turning Internet into additional channels somewhere down the line. We have FoxBusinessNews.com that we operate. Those kinds of profit are generally plowed back into the company to create more value and to pay for a lot of the things you want to do.

AA Any ---

RA And I want to expand foreign news, for instance. So I'm going to have to invest some money in foreign news.

AA Where do you think the biggest growth area is in all those things you mentioned? Or anything else you might be contemplating?

RA Well, the Business News Channel is going to be a big success. We've already cracked through at 7:00. We're cracked through in the morning and we're starting to crack through the CNBC line there. So I think that's a big, big area for us. The Internet is quite interesting because everybody thinks that the next big thing. And it is, however other than Facebook and Google most people in the Internet get killed financially. It's just not, you know, every time you do something it's very labor intense, you have to hire 100 people. So nobody's quite figured out to monetize it as sites. Now everything that I run, everything that I run is in the black. I don't run things in the red. Run short time, set up a business plan and say I'm going to hit that target and I hit it, because I was an entrepreneur and I ran my own company. And I turned the lights off at night and counted the paperclips. I understood how to run a business. Many people don't do that in media. They think – you know it's in the early days of news it was really a public service and many old time journalists are people who are purists wish those days would come back where you could just spend any amount of money

and it didn't matter. But businesses are running tight, the economy is bad and it became a profit center 30 years ago, and an important profit center. I mean, *The Today Show* is an extremely important profit center to NBC, that show. They'd like to do it as public service but it really has to be run like a business today. I don't know, I think the Internet is going to roll out and convergence will come. NBC built MSNBC on the premise that the convergence between the Internet and television was already there, so they started doing these shows, *The Sight from Washington*, and they were in bed with MSNBC with; they were doing Internet shows on television and people still wanted to go home and have a beer and watch the game and not look at the computer. So I think that day is coming but it's coming more slowly than people think. So I'm watching it. I try to let CNN buy all the new gizmos and I see if they work. If they work I buy one. If they don't work I let them lose. I give them three months to screw it all up and let them. They've got walls that move. You know, I told Wolf Blitzer, I saw him at a dinner. I said it's a great set but they have you standing with your back to the camera and the walls are moving. Now it's expensive to make walls move. And I'm not sure anybody says, "Helen step on the gas we've got to get home; they've got walls that move." I just don't think that's what people are watching. So I try to find good people and present them with good ideas and win and that's what I do for a living.

AA What was your biggest mistake at Fox?

RA Coming here.

AA You kind of enjoy this, don't you? Come on.

RA Well, I enjoy being back. Coming in flying over the rolling green hills and meeting a lot of people. This is a wonderful, wonderful place and a wonderful experience. My wife's thinking about it for our kid because you can't get too far out of town. You can't get in; you can't go

burn down the town next door. I mean, you're stuck here on the campus. So you can't get loose. And it's probably a good place. But I don't know. I mean I've made a lot of mistakes; I make mistakes every day. I'm not going to announce them because that just gives my opponents too much pleasure. But, you know, I've made mistakes on talent and then had to change it. But I've changed it. The secret to being any good at managing anything is being decisive. Not to make a decision is a decision. It's always a bad decision. I mean, eventually you've got enough input to make your decision. If you make a bad one, make another decision and get out of it. And so the real problem often comes where you'll make mistakes when you fail to make a decision. And that's probably the—sometimes I do that, I should fire somebody, I don't because I feel bad. I've never fired anybody that I didn't think geeze why didn't I do that three weeks ago because this is awful. I would always try to delay it, figure out some reason why it wasn't a good idea.

AA A member of the audience asked, "What is the one thing you wish would be changed in the country, if anything." And secondly, "What is the one thing you hope will never change?"

RA I hope the absolute love of country will never change, that people understand that the greatest entitlement is being born here. You can have all kinds of entitlements but being born in this country and being part of America, or moving to this country and being accepted as an immigrant is the greatest entitlement you're ever going to get. Now that entitles you to work hard, to achieve, and so on. But you'll never beat that entitlement. That's a great one. You're very lucky to have that one. As far as what I'd change about America. I would change the political system. The first thing I'd do is insist that we pass a law that all Congressmen and Senators have to live under the same laws we do.

AA Can you be a little more specific?

RA During the – remember the gas crisis during the Jimmy Carter era? I said why don't these guys do something? They said they're not going to because they have a gas pump in the basement of the House office building. They pull in every morning and their gas tank gets filled up. People are standing in lines in New York shooting each other and trying to get gas and our guys are down in the basement filling their tank. So I find that offensive. Now here's the problem. It's never going to get changed because they have to introduce it and pass it. I don't see that. And a lot of them are friends of mine. But that really irritates me. Not to be realistic about energy is stupid. We are in a clash of civilizations. We have got to understand that about 1.3% of our energy comes from alternative energy. 1.3%. You know what that means? And it's all subsidized by the government. Do you know what that means? It doesn't work yet. It's not effective. It's not efficient because the day it is somebody's going to get really rich on it. So we need to invest, we need to look at it. We need to keep working it. But lying to people about where the energy's coming from, and put everybody out of work in West Virginia, Kentucky and Pennsylvania is stupid.

AA Okay. But, going along with that. How much investment should come from the government to try to spur the kind of research that led us there?

RA Less than is being done because private industry will always fix these problems. But you have to get regulations off of them and you have to get obscene taxes off of them while they're experimenting. If they invest in a business we need to leave them alone so they can get it done. Now, if it becomes really successful we ought to tax the hell out of them, and we do. You know. But doing it while they're trying to create a solution. Let me put it this way. Everything the government does is broken. Medicare is broke. Social Security is broke. The United States military is broke. Everybody's broke. Now, if somebody came into you and said, "I'd like a job." I say, "What's the last seven things

you did?" "Well, I ran Medicare, I ran Social Security, I ran the military." So everything you ran went broke? Why would I hire you? Why would I want to give you more to do? That's the question. We have to be realistic about what's going on. So, I don't mind. I think the government has to have a hand in and an interest in – for national security purposes if nothing else – and interest in energy. But the whole idea that we're going to use more tax dollars to throw at something like Solyndra or some other half-baked idea where the government is actually trying to set up supply and demand. What they're doing is they give money to Solyndra; they make solar panels that nobody wants to buy. Then they pass a regulation over here to force you to buy it and they run control, supply, and demand. And they don't work. In Ridgewood, New Jersey they just put solar panels on every telephone pole. Why do they want to warm these telephone poles? We don't know. So I sent a crew out to interview people and say has it dropped your energy bill? They said no it actually went up. Why? Because they listed it as green jobs, the guys who came out and put the solar panels on the telephone poles. I said, "What are they doing?" They said it didn't matter because, "We get a lot of snow and ice in New Jersey. They're going to start falling off and killing people and then they're going to pay people to come out and take them down." That's what the locals told us. We have the video. So, I'm not sure that's a good – I think a private businessman would not have done that.

AA Another question here. "Do you think the news media gave Obama a pass in the last election?"

RA I wish Hilary were here to answer that question. I think that the ---

AA How do you think she'd answer it?

RA She'd answer it of course they did. I happen to know a lot of the Clinton people, and they believe he got a pass.

- AA Do you?
- RA Well, look, Tiger Woods gets hit with a four iron and we know every girlfriend within 12 hours. We know everything the guy ever did. We still don't know anything about the President or his background. So I don't know. Maybe.
- AA What do you think you don't know about Obama?
- RA Well, everybody, well I'm not going to get into it because this is too political and I'm not going to touch it. I'm just saying that I believe the Clinton people believe he got a pass in the last election. And I believe some Americans believe that. And, I think, look there are a lot of good things about the President. I've met him, I know him a little bit. He certainly wouldn't know me enough to run out of here if he saw me. But—and it's a hard job—and he did inherit a recession. All that's true. But there's still an uneasy feeling.
- AA Without being specific, because you made it clear you're not going to go there. What—I want to know about the nature of what you think we don't know. Are you talking about something in his personal life, or something we don't know about his positions? I mean, you sort of ---
- RA I mean both. I don't know much about him. I don't know---was he a good student? I don't know.
- AA You don't think this is all out there? That people have written books about him?
- RA Nobody's ever seen it. Nobody's ever seen the transcripts. Nobody's ever seen the grades.
- AA And is Fox News trying to get that?
- RA No.

- AA Why not?
- RA It's not relevant now. He's President.
- AA Well, he's running for re-election.
- RA That is true. But his grades in college now don't matter. He's got a four-year record as President so you have to look at the four-year record and say am I really looking forward to another four years?
- AA Audience question here. "Do you feel there was a clear difference in Fox News' portrayal of the Tea Party Movement versus the Occupy Wall Street Movement? If so, what was the difference and why?"
- RA Well, the difference was the Tea Partyers weren't rioting and crapping in the street and hitting police officers. The Occupy people were. So, we covered what was there. We went to the Tea Party movements and we saw women get out of cars with the baby buggies and go up and yell about the government spending too much money, get back in their cars and go home. I went to one near us and I went to look at it live. And you know what they did when they left? They cleaned up the parking lot. It was cleaner than when they got there. That is not true of the Occupy Movement. They made it a lot dirtier. So if you just looked it at on the merits and you didn't have any editorial comment, but you just put a camera on a hill overlooking the site of a Tea Party rally, and on the site of an Occupy rally you would see two different things.
- AA I'm guessing, I don't know this. But I think the person who wrote this was not getting so much at the cleanliness of the Occupy ---
- RA Well, also what they were doing.
- AA ---but more, more of what ---
- RA Well the difference was the Tea Party Movement was trying to tell the government to quit spending their money and the Occupy Movement was telling you to give them half your money. We offered – it's true.

We offered an Occupy guy a job. Said he wouldn't take it, but would consider a job between \$80-100,000 per year. No credentials for doing this job, by the way. Offered – if it was between \$80-100,000 a year and had benefits and a retirement package – he would consider but he wouldn't take a job. So you know, I just find that bizarre. Okay.

AA Another question, "Do you think that there will ever be a time when reporters politicians can have a civil discourse?" Or do you think we do now?

RA I think we have too much now. I think they ought to cancel the White House Correspondents dinner. I think there's too much---

AA Of course, you go to these dinners.

RA I didn't go, I haven't gone in the last couple years.

AA Radio ---

RA Well, I used to go to the correspondent's dinner.

AA But you went to the Radio TV dinner. And of course, Fox News buys tables at all these things.

RA That's true. We do, because I do it to reward my journalists because everybody's going. But the night Obama said "I know you voted for me," and 1,000 people in a ballroom stood and applauded him, that was the day I decided the media is too close to politics.

AA So would you favor *The New York Times* policy, which is not to allow your reporters to attend these events?

RA I believe in freedom. And I don't believe in me telling – for instance, after 9-11 some of our reporters had flag pins on. And I went to the Museum of Broadcasting, where I was roundly criticized and harassed by other journalists in New York for having a flag pin on. And, they said that's editorializing. And I said I actually didn't want the

terrorists to win. Okay. I'll just say it right out loud I'm not really interested in having these guys win. And I said, "I'll tell you something else. I'm very squishy about killing babies, but I'm pro-choice on flag pins." Oh. That would really make everybody uncomfortable. So my view of that is I don't order them not to go. Look, I understand it's part of the game and they get to go see their friends and take their wives and everybody buys a new dress or take their husbands and they get a new tux or whatever. I don't really care. But after I saw 1,000 people stand and applaud when the President said, "You all voted for me," I thought—oh, at the end he said, "Except you guys over at the Fox table," and I felt very proud of my group. But I said you know, maybe there is too much fraternization because the real purpose is to keep the government honest. And if you're sucking up to power to get the right interview or get inside the secret room, you know, I don't know, it makes me uncomfortable. I'm going through a transition. I did used to go to the party. I stopped after that year. I didn't go this year to either one. And I'm in a transition period of that.

AA

Let's take the flag pin thing again. I wonder, you are a network that has influenced beyond our borders. We certainly know the polls and the attitudes of Muslims around the world after the World Trade Center tragedy. I wonder when Muslims look at a Fox News anchor, or any anchor with an American flag in that period after that—let's say the years after that—and they think of that in the context of our ability to be fair, in say the Palestinian question, fairly reporting the Palestinian/Israel issue. Does it sway them? Do ---

RA

The Palestinians didn't hit the World Trade Center.

AA

No, but I'm talking about the perception of those. Did ---

RA

Will it make them uncomfortable? Yeah. But you know what makes me uncomfortable? People who won't stick up for their own country. I

mean, I don't blame Muslims for sticking up for their country. I don't believe Italians, I think they can use the flag and march in the streets. It's fine. I mean, national pride is not something that – and togetherness – after 9-11 it was really Americans pulling together and saying look we're in this together. We got hit and we've got 3,000 dead people on American soil you know, two miles from my office. I think it was time to come together as a country so I, you know ---

AA Why do you need a flag pin to do it?

RA I don't need a flag pin to do it, but I don't feel I have the right to tell you to take your flag pin off if that's how you feel.

AA But you run a network that is trying to be fair and balanced.

RA Right.

AA So I'm wondering as we edge into Iraq – which ended up to be a controversial war even in the United States – not everyone thought it was a good idea. Does not a flag pin in some people's minds say my country right or wrong?

RA No. I think that's a wild extension of what it says.

AA Um-hmmm.

RA It's says I'm an American, I love America. Sorry. I don't hate my country and I'm not over here to kiss your rear end and make you think I love you better than my people. I'm not – I don't see – it doesn't mean America right or wrong, it means I'm proud of my country. And so I think the hostility toward people showing pride in America is why we've been intimidated into not using our natural resources, not standing up when we should. And I think that's a mistake, because we actually have been a beacon of light for the world in many ways. We're the most generous. I mean who shows up when the tsunami happens? Who shows up with the money? Who shows up with the ships? It's

always us. They all know that. Ariel Sharon once said to me – we had dinner with him right before he had a stroke – and I said what about the anti-Americanism? He said, “Don’t worry, every leader in the world carries one phone number in his wallet and it’s the White House because we know you guys show up.”

AA Here’s an easy one. “I love your book, *You are the Message*. What’s your favorite book?” Other than that one.

RA *The Bible*. I know that sounds – that will be, but I like *The Bible*. I still sit around and read Proverbs to my son. In terms of books that you read, I read history. I’m actually reading Chernow’s book on George Washington, which I think came out in 2010. It was interesting because I didn’t realize, I mean I guess I knew that his father died when he was 14; his mother was very tough. And he chiseled himself out of the marble that we see him in today, but he was actually a guy with sort of a violent temper. There was a lot of richness to that particular book. So I like whatever book I’m reading at the moment and that’s one that I happen to be reading.

AA You mentioned *The Bible*, and I just happened to pull up a question here. It says, “Were correspondents Bill O’Reilly, Sean Hannity, Glenn Beck and others chosen for unbiased reporting of their political ideologies? Did religious views play a part as well?” and I’m wondering, in hiring them?

RA No. No.

AA But that sort actually gets to another question I had. “Are you a religious person?”

RA Not in the – I’ve been kicked out of most churches. I mean my wife is Catholic and I go to Mass every Sunday. My son’s a Catholic. We’re raising him Catholic. I was – I was actually an evangelical when I was very young. My grandfather died when I was 9 and we went to a

Presbyterian church, I belonged to a Presbyterian church until they started giving money to the Angela Davis Defense Fund and I explained to the minister that I actually wanted to give the money to help the poor people lying out in the snow and wasn't all that interested in helping a woman who'd helped blow the head off a judge with a shotgun. This, of course, was somewhat controversial so I stopped going. And as I moved around the country in my career I went to whatever church was available when I had the opportunity. And then when I married Beth I said, well we'll go to the Catholic Church, which I like. I enjoy it and they've got a nice priest and life is good.

AA Here's a stupid question, somewhat personal. "Graduating on June 9 with a media management degree from Scripps College. With the economy should I look for a job or continue in grad school, and what would be beneficial? If you say grad school, what program would be beneficial?"

RA I don't know that much about education. I mean, I think that understanding history and English and things like that area really important. So I would do that. I'd look at both. I'd look at grad school and try to start working on a job right away. But we are living in a situation where one out of two kids getting out of school cannot find a job. And it's going to be -I think it takes, I think the length of time is about a year of looking before you actually land a job, so that is a whole time in and of itself. You can go to grad school while you're looking. If I had a job offer that was decent I'd drop grad school in a heartbeat. But I might try to educate myself while I was looking.

AA Another question somewhat along those lines. "I'm majoring in journalism; is it a waste of time?"

RA Well I always get criticized for not having a journalism degree; how could I dare run a news organization because I don't have a journalism

degree and I always say there are two things that quality me for running a news organization. One, I don't have a journalism degree. And two, I've never wanted to go to a party in this town so there's nobody's rear end I have to kiss and I can put on there whatever I feel like. And there's some truth to that, because once you start caving to the powers that be, you can't necessarily make the right decision. No, I think journalism school is fine. We had a young woman, who you would know, who wanted to get her degree in journalism because she wanted to be an anchor. So she went to Columbia Journalism School and five weeks in she called me and said, "What should I do?" I said, "What do you mean?" She said, "Should I just go along with the professor and get grades and get my degree, because I can't argue with him. I can't present a second point of view. He has no interest in any thought except what he believes. And I either have to write the reports the way he wants or I'm going to flunk." So I said, "Get your degree. Shut up and study outside of what you're learning in the classroom and then when you get out make your own decisions. But if you want a job in journalism it will help you to have a Columbia journalism degree even though you don't believe a word of it." And that's what I told her. I thought that if that was a real issue with my daughter that's what I would have said to her.

AA Here's another one that gets back on Fox News Fair & Balanced. "How can you claim Fox supports free speech from the government when one of your news anchors on air and out loud read his notes starting with, "Talking Points for TV Pundits" as these notes came directly from the Republican National Committee? Do you refute that your station is told what to discuss by the Republican Party?"

RA Absolutely. I've never – I've been there 15 years and I've never see a so-called talking point. I actually have never seen one. Doesn't come into my computer. I don't know where that story came from, or who did it. I'd have to hear the name, the context and figure out what

happened. But, you know, every anchor I have has said things that are inappropriate. And you can't lynch the whole division or whole network on one guy saying something stupid on the air. But that sounds pretty stupid. As far as I know, nobody reads talking points of any---

AA So basically you would deny that there is ---

RA Oh, yeah.

AA ---any coordination---

RA First of all, most of the talking points are badly written I'm told. They're all stupid stuff. I mean both parties put them out, they feed them into everybody. I don't know whether you know this, but Media Matters, this left-wing group, claims that they write all the prime time programs for MSNBC. And that is in a recent book. Not only talking points, they write the entire Prime Time.

AA Whose book?

RA I'm trying to remember, but it came out. You can research it. Look at it. MSNBC Prime Time written by Media Matters. You'll find it. And it's, it's there and it's never ---

AA I'm a little bit confused. You're claiming that Media Matters for America writes the ---

RA Scripts, intros and ideas for MSNBC. I'm not claiming it. I'm claiming that's what somebody said and NBC has never disavowed it nor has Media Matters.

AA All right. Here's a question that I know President McDavis will love. "What do you think of Ohio's party school image?"

RA Well, it's dropped. I'm really disappointed! You know, I think we were maybe third back when I was here. I mean it's like fifth now. And you

people need to be ashamed of yourself and get back in the game here. That's one of the reasons for college. I mean, it's a maturing process; it's you know, you learn some things. I learned more after college when it really counted and I had to make a living from it. But, I don't, I try not to interfere with people's lives. If they want to have a party, it's their business.

AA Let's try two quick ones, because Robert is standing there. "Where do comedy shows come in? Colbert and Stewart? How do they fit into the news?"

RA Well, they're not news programs. And some young people actually believe they are. I know Jon and I know Steve Colbert. In the sense – I mean one's a comedy actor. Colbert is actually a comedy actor. Stewart's a comic; he's got 12 writers writing gags. So there is a difference in the two in terms of – because I've worked in the comedy field and I know a lot about it. They're both very talented. They make, you know, Jon Stewart would go out of business without Fox News. I mean he'd have to go back to doing standup in clubs.

AA Colbert would have trouble, too, right?

RA Well, he'd have a little trouble, too. So they get their material because they're Liberals and they have liberal audiences they understand this is how to do it. Jon actually believes it. He's admitted to me he's a Socialist. I don't know what Colbert is. I think Colbert---

AA Jon Stewart has admitted to you that he's a Socialist?

RA Well, he told – I met him in a bar once in Philadelphia and I said, "Who would you vote for?" meaning the current crowd? And he said, "Norman Thomas." And I said, "Oh, I got it."

AA He is a comedian though?

RA Yeah; he is. He wasn't laughing at that time. Maybe it was because he just ran into me. But Jon, a few months ago he was over at Fox on our air with O'Reilly and I invited him up to my office and he and I had a spirited debate for about an hour. So we all sort of know each other and we all understand the game. But they would go out of business without Fox so I always tell them I'm just trying to keep them employed by doing what we do.

AA And finally, and I'm sorry we didn't get all these many, many other questions. But, "What's your one piece of advice for becoming successful?"

RA I once asked my mentor, who was a fellow that passed away a few years ago, Chet Collier, who was at one time chairman of Westinghouse Broadcasting. He said how did I end up here because I was sort of a – came out of OU I got a job as a gopher and a production assistant in a Cleveland television station. Chet happened to be the general manager of that station so he was instrumental in being a mentor. One of the things you want to do is get somebody who will mentor you who has ideas and so on and likes you. But he said your success comes from two words. This was his – his said those two words were "Get Ailes." And he said all my career heard that if the situation was bad, he said I heard it from people who hated you, Roger. But somebody would say, "Get Ailes"" And I said what does that mean? He said, "You would work harder, longer, get better ideas, never quit, never give up, didn't suck the air out of the room, didn't step on anybody else's air hose, you went in to fix it and you fixed it." And so people got used to saying, "Get Ailes." So if I had one piece of advice, if they're putting "get" in front of your name, you're going to be a success; you're going to make money. If they're not saying then you're sucking the air out of the room and you need to stop that.

AA Thank you very much.

RA Okay.

RI I wanted again to thank Roger and Andy for a great conversation. And I'd like to thank the audience, too, for showing up. We'll see you next year. Thanks, Roger and Andy.

AA Thank you.

---end of audio---