

# The End of Times?

The nation's largest left-wing newspaper and the bible for network news producers and bookers may be going under. This week, the *New York Times* announced more staggering losses: nearly \$75 million dollars in the first quarter alone. The *New York Post* is reporting the Times Company owes more than one billion dollars and has just \$34 million in the bank. A few months ago, the company actually borrowed \$225 million from a Mexican billionaire, Carlos Slim, at a reported 14% interest. With things going south fast, pardon the pun, Mr. Slim might want to put in a call to *Times* publisher Arthur Sulzberger, Jr.

The spin from Sulzberger is that the Internet is strangling the newspaper industry, and there is some truth to that. Why read an ideologically crazed paper when you can acquire a variety of information on your PC? But other papers are not suffering nearly as much as the *Times*, so there must be more to this.

There is no question that the *Times* has journalistic talent. This week the paper won five Pulitzers. It's true the Pulitzer people favor left-wing operations (the past eight Pulitzer prizes for commentary have gone to liberal writers), but good reporting is often done by *New York Times* journalists.

The problem is that, under Sulzberger and his editor Bill Keller, the *Times* has gone crazy left, attacking those with whom the paper disagrees and demonstrating a hatred for conservatives (particularly President Bush) that is almost pathological. The *Times* features liberal columnists in every section of the paper and they hit low, often using personal invective to smear perceived opponents.

That unfair and unbalanced approach has alienated a large number of readers and advertisers. According to a recent Fox

News/Opinion Dynamics Poll, 46% of Americans define themselves as conservative. Just 34% say they are liberal. In this very intense marketplace, insulting half the country on a daily basis may not be a great business plan.

The New York Times Company also has a major problem with the *Boston Globe*, which Sulzberger bought back in 1993. That paper is on the verge of bankruptcy and recently told its employees that it will cut their pay and health benefits. Since the *Times* and the *Globe* are big on "universal" health care, that caused some giggling in anti-*Times* precincts.

Over the past few months, newspapers in Chicago, Seattle, Minneapolis and Denver have either folded or filed for bankruptcy. With the exception of *The Rocky Mountain News*, all the papers were committed left-wing enterprises. The truth is that most Americans are traditional-minded folks; they believe their country is noble, they want respectful discourse. Fanaticism of any kind is not the American way.

The *New York Times* is most definitely a committed left-wing concern that is openly contemptuous of the conservative, traditional point-of-view. That is the primary reason the paper may soon dissolve. And all the cash in Carlos Slim's fat wallet is not going to change that.