

When Journalism Becomes an Obsession

I was approached by a gentleman in South Carolina recently by the name of Richard Minter, who is the CEO of American Media Institute. Without being prompted, Minter said to me that Dan Bice is *the* most dishonest journalist he has ever met. That is saying a lot when it comes from someone in the business. He relayed stories of Bice's wife and her employment in the Wisconsin Supreme Court and leaks about the John Doe investigations. I asked Bice if he knew Minter and if he wanted to comment, but Bice did not get back to me. I think I know why.

Keep in mind the context here. *Sentinel Journal* has been bought by the Gannett Company, which owns *USA Today* and a growing list of other papers, including the *Green Bay Press Gazette*. Their business model is one of downsizing and focusing less on local news in favor of national news. That could spell big trouble for someone like Bice. He has to prove to this new boss that his column has value, or he is gone. Bet he is having some sleepless nights. He can always find a job at Shepherd Express. His writing is more suitable for that rag.

Scott Walker is out of the presidential race, the Wisconsin primary is over, and there's not much juice to squeeze out of John Chisholm's attack on people's First Amendment right to engage in protected speech. So the *Sentinel Journal's* version of a tabloid writer - Dan Bice - has to find a relevant target in Milwaukee for his drive-by pieces to keep his gossip column interesting. Personally, I am flattered. The saying in politics goes that if the media is covering you, whether it's good, bad or indifferent, then you are relevant. My growing national profile must be bothering those at the *Sentinel Journal*.

Recently, paparazzi columnist Dan Bice contacted my office and asked if I would participate in a one-on-one interview that would last several hours streaming live. He said he did one with talk show host Charlie Sykes and it was well received. I politely declined, telling him that there was no upside for me getting into the mud with him, and that Sykes has a daily platform to use to retort against lies or biased columns. I was also not interested in being used to get ratings for Bice or his liberal employer.

What immediately followed was a series of open records requests, an obvious signal to me of his displeasure that I would not participate in helping him prop up his sagging ratings. He now plans to stalk me, as talk show host Mark Belling referred to this tactic recently. That is a good way to describe it - journalistic stalking. He is now stalking me on Twitter. I do not care what he or his paper, both suffering from Walker and Clarke derangement syndrome, write about me.

This lazy man's way of putting together newspaper columns uses tax-paid, government employees as pseudo-interns to help him gather information to write stories. This takes time away from public service employees who provide crash reports and other vital record information.

This approach is interesting coming from a newspaper that has no problem with John Chisholm's endless John Doe witch hunt against Governor Walker, Eric O'Keefe and the Club for Growth. It is staggering that Chisholm cannot tell taxpayers how many millions of dollars have been diverted from violent crime investigations to be used on this illegal investigation or for the lawyer's fees in endless appeals. The only difference here is that Chisholm is going after Walker, so looking the other way on costs to the taxpayers is convenient.

Another reason for their obsession is that I do not share their liberal politics. Can you say "hypocrites?"

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