

What Happened to Tucker at Fox Proves Mencken and Liebling Right



by Roger L. Simon

Two of my favorite American journalists of the past, H. L. Mencken and A. J. Liebling, wrote substantially the same thing, Mencken first, then Liebling in the then worth reading *The New Yorker* of 1960.

“Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one.”

If you need proof of this evident truth that deserves to be in boldface, look no further than Tucker Carlson, seemingly by far its most valuable personality, being summarily

defenestrated by Fox News.

Whether this was because the Murdoch scions, Lachlan and James, want to sell the network or whether father Rupert did it all out of pique, some version of Trump Derangement Syndrome once removed, matters not. It could have been anything. What matters is they were able to do it with impunity over a weekend.

The Murdoch family, as most know, are the major shareholders of Fox Corp., but worth noting is that uber-woke investment colossi Vanguard and BlackRock have been amassing significant holdings in the media giant. Something's afoot there too if you look at what's become of Fox News in recent years.

But again, no matter. Those are "*Les règles du jeu*," the rules of the game, as director Jean Renoir told us in his classic film of that title. And one of those rules is, to repeat, "Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one."

Most journalists, whether they support the First Amendment or not—most still do, I would guess, but a rapidly diminishing number—understand the validity of what Mencken and Liebling wrote.

They live and work under it. They all live in fear of being fired and act and write accordingly, even the celebrity ones with the mammoth salaries, maybe especially the celebrity ones.

I lived under it in my way for years, even when I was CEO of PJ Media. Although I was titularly in charge, the man who owned the company had final say over what I did. I didn't have real freedom, and for the most part it didn't matter, but I was ultimately subject to the Mencken/Liebling rule, and I knew it.

So, this gives me a small (small should also be bolded) amount

of sympathy for my colleagues in the mainstream/legacy media. They also serve somebody—and it ain't the Lord of Bob Dylan's [great song](#). (“Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord/But you're gonna have to serve somebody.”)

The problem with serving the devil (or lies in journalistic terms), as the MSM does, is that you may not believe him at first, but after a while you will. Another way to put it is you start by playing along because you can think you can slip in your best, most honest, work between the lines, but soon enough the ideas and perceptions that person (you) had no longer exist.

They are serving somebody, alright.

Even Fox, who many of us at first thought was our champion, turned out not to be serving the Lord, what we might, in the journalistic world, actually call truth. Or they did so less often.

You may be wondering how that fits in with my experience of *The Epoch Times* where I have been working for more than three years now. This newspaper is rather extraordinary in that it does serve the truth, not just in its “truth and tradition” watchword.

It feels as if you are serving the truth here, difficult as it is sometimes to find. It's a good feeling.

As for my friend Tucker, it appears, from a [video](#) many of you may have already seen he put on Twitter Wednesday with five million views in the first hour, that he is more than fine.

I can't say I am surprised. Fox made a mistake; he didn't. He undoubtedly feels liberated. He should. If anyone has the world as his oyster, it's Tucker. Whatever he does, we will be following on.

It should also be a lesson to us, whatever our fields, nothing

is more valuable than our freedom. Like Dylan, we know who to serve. Getting fired is only an opportunity to do something better.

In the I Ching, they write change/opportunity.

As for Fox, they seem to have made themselves into the new Budweiser, consumers fleeing. Many will not soon return.

As they say in French, *Tant pis pour eux*. Too bad for them.

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