

Wayne Hoffman/Idaho Freedom Foundation comments on Marty Trillhaase's Lewiston Tribune criticism of Idaho Reporter:

Guess it is time for me to weigh in here:

1. I didn't know about the Minnick franking story until I read it on the IdahoReporter.com site. So blaming me for not insisting that Bill Sali be mentioned in the Minnick story is like blaming the Lewiston Tribune's publisher for a story that runs in that paper. I don't handle the day-to-day reporting.
2. Should the story have mentioned Sali? Maybe, maybe not. A little context would have been useful (comparing Minnick's spending with Sali's, for example). I would have been supportive of that.
3. The story was about what Minnick said vs. what he does today, and so I can see how ANY reporter would have focused on that and not on Sali. In fact, were I not the publisher of IdahoReporter.com, I doubt anyone would have even raised the question of what Sali spent.
4. The real criticism should be on how the mainstream media have ignored coverage of Congress. We're trying to make up for that by writing stories on the votes and positions of members of Congress. Jeers to mainstream media for doing so poorly monitoring public policy and politicians who vote on it; cheers to us for filling the gap in news coverage.

I'm going to add two more things:

Every day in every newsroom in every state across the nation, reporters and editors look back at the stories they wrote and edited and second-guess their good work. Should they have conducted an interview, added this, subtracted that, said something, said nothing? This story is not unique in that reflection. Every story could always use just one more angle and one more element.

But I'd ask this: If this story appeared in the Spokesman or in the Lewiston Tribune, would anyone be asking the Sali question? Answer: Probably not.

Finally, prior to today, certain people have been "concerned" that Wayne Hoffman would exert too much editorial influence over the coverage at IdahoReporter.com. Now, they're saying that I need to exert more editorial influence, stand over my reporters and have them write according to my whims. So which is it, guys?
