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## THE PORN INDUSTRY'S HIGH-PRICED AD CAMPAIGN

When the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography issued its report in early July, it was greeted by an avalanche of press attacks raising the cry of "censorship," interferences with the First Amendment and our "right to read," "banned books," and other cliches designed to trigger emotional opposition to the report.

Did you think those were reasoned reactions by people who spontaneously responded in righteous indignation? Well, they weren't. They were part of a clever advertising campaign orchestrated by the largest public affairs firm in Washington, spending a first-year budget of nearly $900,000, provided by the pornography industry.

We know this because somebody leaked the winning six-page bid prepared for the "Media Coalition" by Gray and Company of Washington, D.C. "Media Coalition" is the consortium of pornographers who feel threatened by any proposed crackdown on pornography.

Gray's proposal starts with a short-term strategy to "discredit the Commission on Pornography," even though the Commission's "findings and recommendations will likely find widespread public acceptance." Indeed, even the new Time magazine poll shows that 72 percent of the American people want aggressive law enforcement against pornography.

Gray promises to create a "front" for the pornographers made up of a "broad coalition of individuals and organizations." Gray plans to conceal its real purpose under some title as "Americans for the Right to Read" or "The First Amendment Coalition."

This front will refocus the public debate away from pornography and toward a defense of the First Amendment. Gray says he will select people for this front who are not currently on the payroll of the porn industry in order to avoid the charge that they have a commercial interest in the subject.

This Gray bid is especially interesting because Bob Gray, the chairman of Gray and Company, is a personal friend of the President and was the chairman of Reagan's 1980 Inauguration. With that in mind, reflect on the deviousness of this sentence in the bid: "Quiet efforts should be undertaken to persuade the Attorney General, the White House and

*the leaders of both political parties that the forthcoming report of work of the Commission is so flawed, so controversial, so contested and so biased that they should shy away from publicly endorsing the document."*

*Gray and Company plays both sides of the political street. The bid brags that the company's Public Relations Division is headed by Frank Mankiewicz, who was press secretary to the late Robert F. Kennedy, and its Government Relations Division is headed by Gary Hymel, former top aide to House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill.*

*Gray's "long-term strategy" is a plan "to convince the American people that campaigns to ban certain books, magazines, newspapers, movies, television shows, speeches and performances threaten everyone's freedom."*

*The scope of Gray's campaign is not only extensive and expensive, but unpleasantly personal. Gray intends to go after anyone who opposes pornography. "A way must be found," the bid states, "to discredit the organizations and individuals who have begun to seriously disrupt the legitimate business activities of publishers, distributors and sellers" of pornography.*

*Gray promises to use its team of skilled writers and impressive Washington contacts to "launch a series of pre-emptive strikes against the Commission's report, using advertorials in major national newspapers and magazines, placing spokespersons on national and local television and radio news, public affairs and talk shows, holding a series of news conferences in major cities across the country, and meeting with government leaders and politicians."*

*The main advertising themes devised by this high-priced PR outfit to protect the pornographers are: (1) There is no scientific basis for saying that pornography causes violent or criminal behavior. (2) The opposition to pornography just comes from "a group of religious extremists whose tactics and goals are clearly not representative of mainstream America." (3) These "extremist pressure groups" are secretly trying to "impose their narrow moral and social agenda on the majority."*

*So, any time you see a news release or editorial or advertorial (advertisement-editorial) attacking the report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, or attacking anti-pornography efforts by citizens groups, it's probably a paid political advertisement planted by the public affairs firm retained by the profiteering pornographers.*