

# Liar Beware!

By Bruce A. Love

The Internet gives us access to an enormous amount of information. We can find things on the Internet that we will never read, see, or hear about, in the mainstream media.

Without the Internet, I would not have learned that members of Congress continue to receive the same pay after retirement until the day they die. Some receive enormous pensions (over \$7.8 million) and are never required to contribute to the Social Security fund. This is an outrage! No wonder our Social Security system is broken!

I have also discovered some amazing stories on the Internet that you just don't get from traditional news sources. For instance, I learned that chapter 9, verse 11 (9:11) of the Koran reads, "The wrath of the Eagle would be felt throughout the lands of Allah and lo, while some of the people trembled in despair still more rejoiced; for the wrath of the Eagle cleansed the lands of Allah; and there was peace." If our mission in the Middle East was not obvious before, reading these prophetic words should make it crystal clear!

I am so grateful that my friends and relatives forward all this information to me via e-mail. I know that the mainstream media wouldn't have the guts to report any of it (with the possible exception of 60 Minutes). The only problem with the above stories, and hundreds of others that are circulated on the Internet, are that they are completely false! We are inundated with news, accusations, and stories every day. Sometimes it is hard to know what to believe.

Liars Beware! Help is on the way!

There are several reliable websites that have emerged to set the story straight. One favorite site is [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com). Snopes lists, describes, and determines the validity of stories, and provides verifiable sources of information they use to do so. To the best of their ability, they even determine the

origin of rumors, and admit when they cannot confirm nor invalidate stories. Consider the following:

- Subliminal advertising was once used at a movie theater to substantially increase sales of popcorn and Coke. (FALSE)
- George Bush once said, "They underestimate me!" (TRUE)

If you were watching the Vice Presidential debate this week, you heard Dick Cheney refer to a website after John Edwards began to echo an advertisement currently being broadcast in a Kerry-Edwards political advertisement. Factcheck ([www.factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org)) is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. Their mission states in part, "We are a nonpartisan, nonprofit, 'consumer advocate' for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics." Their nonpartisan stance is substantiated by the numerous references to inaccuracies and distortions on all sides of the political spectrum. (Incidentally, Cheney mistakenly referred to it as a ".com")

Regarding the flawed Kerry-Edwards ad, it implies that Cheney has a financial interest in Halliburton and is profiting from the company's contracts in Iraq. It goes on to announce that Cheney got \$2 million from Halliburton while he was Vice President. The truth, according to Factcheck, is that Cheney earned about \$1.6 million before becoming a candidate, and received that in January 2001 before becoming Vice President. Since then, he has received nearly \$400,000 from Halliburton while serving as Vice President because he chose, long before he became a candidate, to have some of his bonuses distributed over five years. He has no other interest in the company.

Did you know that red food colorants cochineal and carmine come from pulverized beetles? I'm sorry to tell you this, but that one is true! Visit [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com) to check all the outrageous stories that you hear about. Also, visit [factcheck.org](http://factcheck.org) to verify political claims, accusations, and "facts."

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