

April 29, 2013

www.MRC.org

(Vol. 26; No. 9)

First Impulse: Blame “Right Wing” for Boston Bombings

“The list of potential suspects could be long because investigators know this stretch of April is one with a dark history. This Friday, April 19th, is also the anniversary of two of the most traumatic days in the country’s recent history. In 1993, a 51-day standoff between federal law enforcement and Branch Davidian leader David Koresh ended with 80 dead, including 25 children, when Koresh refused to surrender peacefully. On the same day two years later, Timothy McVeigh bombed the Alfred Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City killing 168, including 19 children in the building’s day-care center.”

— ABC’s Pierre Thomas on *Good Morning America*, April 16.



“The thinking, as we’ve been reporting, is that this is a domestic extremist attack. And officials are leaning that way largely because of the timing of the attack. April is a big month for anti-government and right-wing individuals. There’s the Columbine anniversary. There’s Hitler’s birthday. There’s the Oklahoma City bombing. There’s the assault on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco.”

— NPR correspondent Dina Temple-Raston on *All Things Considered*, April 16.

“Normally, domestic terrorists, people, tend to be on the far right — well, that’s not a good category, just extremists, let’s call them that. Do they advertise after they do something like this? Do they try to get credit as a group, or do they just hate America so much or its politics or its government that they just want to do the damage?... Would you as an expert be thinking domestic at this point? I don’t think Tax Day means a whole lot to the Arab world, or Islamic world, or the — certainly not to al Qaeda, in terms of their world. It doesn’t have any iconic significance.”

— *Hardball* host Chris Matthews on April 15, asking terrorism expert Michael Leiter about potential suspects in the Boston marathon bombings.

“Obviously, nobody knows anything yet, but I would caution folks jumping to conclusions about foreign terrorism to remember that this is the official Patriots Day holiday in Massachusetts, celebrating the battles at Lexington and Concord, and that the actual date (April 19) was of some significance to, among other people, Tim McVeigh, because he fancied himself a waterer of the tree of liberty and the like.”

— Former *Boston Globe* reporter Charles Pierce writing on *Esquire*’s politics blog at 3:22pm April 15, barely half an hour after the bombings occurred.

Hoping the Bombers Were White Americans

“Let’s Hope the Boston Marathon Bomber Is a White American”

— Headline over an April 16 Salon.com article by writer David Sirota.

Exploiting Bombing to Take Partisan Shot

“explosion is a reminder that ATF needs a director. Shame on Senate Republicans for blocking apptment.”

— *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof in an April 15 Twitter posting about an hour after the bombing. About 30 minutes later, Kristof apologized: “ok, that was low blow. i take it back.” (All punctuation as in the original.)

Aren’t Air Force Pilots Bigger Terrorists, Anyway?

“I send my deepest condolence to the victims and families in Boston. But President Obama said that what happened in Boston was an act of terrorism. I would like to ask: Do you consider the U.S. bombing on civilians in Afghanistan earlier this month that left 11 children and a woman killed a form of terrorism? Why or why not?”

— McClatchy reporter Amina Ismail to White House press secretary Jay Carney at the April 17 briefing.

“Shame” and “Outrage” Over Gun Control Defeat

“Defeated. The post-Newtown gun control legislation goes down in the Senate. There are cries of ‘shame’ from victims of gun violence watching from the Senate gallery, and the President reacts with anger.”

— Anchor Brian Williams opening the April 17 *NBC Nightly News*.



Anchor Diane Sawyer: “Voted down. A huge defeat for the big gun bill. Tonight, outrage from the families of the victims of gun violence.”

Newtown parent Mark Barden: “Our hearts are broken; our spirit is not.”

— Tease at the start of *ABC’s World News*, April 17.

Hitting Obama for Not Pushing Gun Control Earlier

“We began with the gun legislation before Congress that many say is now hanging by a thread.... [to Obama] You are asking Democrats in conservative states to take a tough vote politically, something you, yourself, did not do. You didn’t run on this in 2008 or 2012, not after Tucson, not after Aurora.”

— *NBC Today* co-host Savannah Guthrie setting up her taped interview with President Obama, April 16.

NBC Trots Out SNL Skit to Claim “Problem” Is Lack of Action on Gun Control

Moderator David Gregory: “We’re also talking about the gun debate this weekend. *Saturday Night Live* had a pretty pointed, with a laugh, criticism at what is being debated about these background checks. Here’s a portion of their open last night:”

Actor playing President Obama: “Good evening, my fellow Americans. As you know, over the past few months, I have made gun control legislation a top priority for my administration. Which is why I am so excited to announce that this week the Senate voted 68 to 31 to begin debating the idea of discussing gun control. Let me say that again: They’ve agreed to think about talking about gun control. Amazing.”

Gregory: “Senator [Kirsten] Gillibrand, isn’t that really the problem? Despite all the emotion, despite the push, despite the public opinion polls, not a lot is about to be accomplished here.”

— *NBC’s Meet the Press*, April 14.

Hopes “SOB” McConnell Gets “Stung Hard” on Guns

“I don’t know why it is — because I’m not always partisan — but I really do have a problem with Mitch McConnell. I would like to see him get stung hard on this one [the gun control vote]. So, why do I think like that? Because he tends to be an SOB generally? Does anybody like that guy?”

— Chris Matthews on *MSNBC’s Hardball*, April 24. A few minutes earlier, Matthews had recited new Gallup poll figures showing McConnell with the lowest “unfavorable” rating among top congressional leaders.



PBS Host Wants to “Throw Up” Over Gun Bill Failure

“You’re telling me on April 15, 2013, a few months after Newtown, it is possible, it is conceivable that this year might end without an assault weapons ban and without legislation that guarantees background checks?... That makes me want to throw up, but I can’t do that on national television, so I’ll keep it in until I get off camera in three minutes.”

— Host Tavis Smiley to socialist Senator Bernie Sanders on *PBS’s Tavis Smiley*, April 15.



Yearning for “Un-Freaking-Bearable” Delays to Force End to Sequester

“You know what? It’s gonna get worse and worse and worse and worse, and at some point Americans are gonna be down on their knees saying, ‘Please get rid of this sequester!’ It’s gotta happen; you cannot do these across the board mindless cuts without having impacts like we started to see yesterday. And you know what, I hope they continue. I mean, I’ve got a flight coming up to Las Vegas and a few other places, one out to the West Coast. I don’t want to have two- or three-hour delays, but I hope it becomes un-freaking-bearable in every way, and then let them cry uncle.”

— Left-wing radio host Bill Press on his *Full Court Press* radio program, April 23.

Denying Bias as Reason for Censoring Abortionists' Trial

Anchor Anderson Cooper: “There’s been a lot of criticism of mainstream media, Jeff, for not covering this in the same way they covered the Jodi Arias trial or, you know, it’s not front-page news in a lot of places. This is the first night we are covering it. Why do you think that is, that it hasn’t received the kind of front-page coverage of it?”

CNN legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin: “Well, the people making those criticisms by and large are conservatives, who are saying the liberal media is trying to protect abortion rights by not showing this horror show. I don’t buy that at all... We are not operating with a political agenda here. We pick stories, by and large, for reasons that we think people will be interested. I don’t think we’re covering this up. So, I just think that’s a way of trying to — of ginning up their supporters.”

— CNN’s *Anderson Cooper 360*, April 12.



“Martin Baron, the *Post*’s editor, offers a more mundane rationale for the newspaper’s lack of coverage: He wasn’t aware of the story until last Thursday night, when readers began e-mailing him about it. ‘I wish I could be conscious of all stories everywhere, but I can’t be,’ he said. ‘Nor can any of us.’...Added Baron, ‘We never decide what to cover for ideological reasons, no matter what critics might claim. Accusations of ideological motives are easy to make, even if they’re not supported by the facts.’”

— Quoted by reporter Paul Farhi in the *Washington Post*, April 15.

Boston Bombing = Perfect Reason to Start a Carbon Tax

“Until we fully understand what turned two brothers who allegedly perpetrated the Boston Marathon bombings into murderers, it is hard to make any policy recommendation other than this: We need to redouble our efforts to make America stronger and healthier so it remains a vibrant counterexample to whatever bigoted ideology may have gripped these young men....And the best place to start is with a carbon tax.”

— *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, April 21.

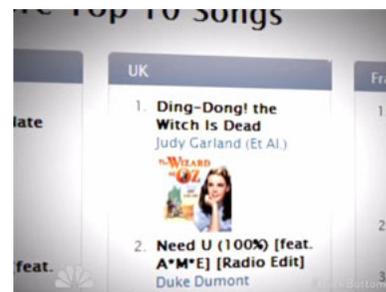
“Necessary to Report” on Tacky Anti-Thatcher Stunt

Anchor Brian Williams: “The music news this week actually has to do with Maggie Thatcher. This is sad but necessary to report.... Tonight, the number one song on iTunes in Great Britain is *The Wizard of Oz* classic, in this case celebrating the death of the Iron Lady.”

Clip from *The Wizard of Oz*: “Ding, dong, the Wicked Witch is dead.”

Williams: “For the woman who once said feminism was poison, the reaction to her death has been every bit as tough as she was.”

— NBC’s *Rock Center*, April 12.



Obama Doing “Wonderful Job” Despite Bothersome Media

Host David Gregory: “I know you’re politically conscious, politically active. What is your view of the state of things, and the state of the President’s performance?”...

Actor Harrison Ford: “Well, you know, it’s — I think the President is doing, you know, all things considered, a wonderful job. I wish that the country were not so fractious as it is at the moment. I blame a lot of that on the press and the news business. And I wish it wasn’t so. And I think it makes things very difficult, and I think we’re at a moment of real political malaise and it needs to be changed.”

— NBC’s *Meet the Press* online “Press Pass” segment, April 14.



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April 29, 2013 (Volume 26; No. 9)

Published bi-weekly by the
Media Research Center
325 South Patrick Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Telephone: (800) 672-1423

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