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## NBC Turns on Obama: Tax Deal a “Disaster in the Making”

“The President has said that he’s doing this for the good of the American people, but by some estimates this deal, this tax cut deal, could add another \$900 billion to a deficit that is already out of control. So why shouldn’t Americans look at this as a disaster in the making?”

— NBC’s Meredith Vieira to White House aide David Axelrod on *Today*, December 8.

“How do you, as a deficit hawk, justify going along with a larger tax cut for those who really don’t need it? And, it’s been argued, it’s not stimulative — the upper income people, it really doesn’t add to the stimulus that you get from the lower income people.”

— NBC correspondent Andrea Mitchell to GOP Senator Judd Gregg on MSNBC’s *Andrea Mitchell Reports*, December 7.

“Let me ask you about fiscal responsibility, because that’s something that’s very important to you. If you extend these tax cuts, we’re hearing that we’re gonna add, what is it, \$500 billion to the deficit. So how do you justify that? You said you opposed extending unemployment benefits because that’s gonna add \$55 billion, but that’s a lot less.... But how, how do you justify adding more money to the deficit? That much more?”

— Meredith Vieira to Republican Congresswoman Michele Bachmann on *Today*, December 10.



## Media Mantra: No Tax Hike = “Tax Break for the Wealthy”

“As the debate continues, we ask Jon Karl to tell us how much the tax break for the wealthy increases the deficit and what is the impact on small businesses.”

— Anchor Diane Sawyer setting up a story on the December 2 *World News*.

“Extending all the cuts means that someone making \$10 million a year will keep \$450,000 of their income that would have gone to Uncle Sam.... Keeping taxes at this level over the next 10 years could add nearly \$4 trillion to the national debt.”

— ABC’s David Kerley on *World News*, December 5.



“Brian, none of this is paid for. In terms of lost revenue for the government next year, it’s \$450 billion, nearly half a trillion dollars. To compare this, in comparison, the stimulus that President Obama put in, enacted back in early 2009, that cost on an annual basis, approximately half a trillion dollars. So the deficit in the short term is going up.”

— NBC White House correspondent Chuck Todd on the *Nightly News*, December 6.

## Jon Kyl Schools Schieffer: It’s Not a “Tax Cut” If No One’s Taxes Go Down

**Moderator Bob Schieffer:** “Now, Senator Kyl, is the Senate going to get down to business and resolve this whole business of the tax cuts?”

**Senator Jon Kyl:** “I hope so. We can. We should. I would just make one point. Nobody is talking about tax cuts. We’re talking about extending the rates that have been in existence for the last decade....”

**Schieffer:** “Why was it so important, why is it so important to Republicans to extend the tax cuts for the upper-income people?... [to Democratic Senator Dick Durbin] Would these tax cuts be temporary for everybody or would this be something permanent?”...

**Kyl:** “First of all, we’re not talking about tax cuts.”

**Schieffer:** “I gotcha.”

— CBS’s *Face the Nation*, December 5.



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## Imagine All “We” Could Do With Other People’s Money

**Co-host Meredith Vieira:** “Let’s talk about the price tag here. Tax cuts are gonna be financed by adding an additional \$900 billion to the national debt. You’ve been talking to the experts. Can we afford this?”

**CNBC’s Erin Burnett:** “The answer to that is no. We can’t afford it....[The] *New York Times* did a very interesting analysis this morning that said, Meredith, if we didn’t give people over \$250,000 the break here, we’d save \$60 billion a year. And for that we could have universal pre-school for free and provide free college tuition for half of the college students in this country....”

—NBC’s *Today*, December 7.



## “Pathetic” that Democrats Lost Tax Fight, but “Not Bad for the Economy”

“I think it’s pathetic the Democrats lost this fight. On the merits, they should have won it, but they lost it. And this is not a bad thing for the economy.”

— *Time*’s Mark Halperin on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, December 7.

## Uncompromising GOP Rebuffs Obama the Peacemaker

“Right after the election, the President invited the leaders here on November 18th. But the newly victorious Republicans said, ‘Sorry, we’re busy.’ The President ignored the rebuff and he is framing today’s meeting as the first step toward a new and productive relationship....But the newly-empowered Republicans, meeting with the President for the first time since the election, seemed in no mood to compromise.”

— CBS’s Bill Plante previewing the meeting on *The Early Show*, November 30.

## 2011 Preview: Cutting Budget = “Assault on the Poor”

“It seems to me there’s two arguments. There’s what you’re trying to accomplish and then there’s how you’re trying to accomplish, and there are, as you know, critics of what you’re trying to do. James K. Galbraith writes in the *New York Times*, ‘Bowles-Simpson proposal is an assault on the middle class, the working class and the poor.’”

— The only challenging question anchor Brian Williams posed to deficit commission co-chairmen Erskine Bowles and Alan Simpson on the December 1 *NBC Nightly News*.

## Brian Casts Tax Fight through a Liberal Prism

“Good evening. It’s a fair question to ask, and for a while now Americans have been wondering how lawmakers in Washington could possibly extend tax breaks for wealthy Americans while allowing benefits for jobless Americans to be cut off.”

— Brian Williams leading off the December 6 *NBC Nightly News*.

## Disguising Liberal Activist as Victim of Mean Republicans

**Correspondent Claire Shipman:** “Democrats say that millions of Americans are going to be affected in the next few weeks, and that not extending those benefits will hurt the economy. Republicans say those extended benefits are just too expensive unless they’re paid for. Edrie Irvine never thought her very livelihood would depend on a political debate in Congress.”

**Edrie Irvine, identified on-screen merely as “unemployed”:** “They are talking about tax cuts for the rich and are holding people like me hostage.”

**Shipman:** “But she and about two million other unemployed Americans are caught up in a Capitol Hill showdown.”

— ABC’s *Good Morning America*, December 2. Shipman failed to disclose that Irvine is a liberal activist who participated the previous day at a press conference by Nancy Pelosi and was a speaker at left-wing election rallies this fall.



## Democrat, Journalist – “Much the Same Thing, Isn’t It?”

**Host Craig Ferguson:** “You’re a Democrat, aren’t you?”

**MSNBC contributor and ex-*Newsweek* reporter Richard Wolffe:** “I am a journalist.”

**Ferguson:** “A journalist? Much the same thing, isn’t it?”

— CBS’s *Late Late Show*, December 8.

## WikiLeaks Mastermind: Anarchist “Who’s Also an Idealist”

“In some ways, he [Julian Assange] is a man of the times, in the sense that he’s anti-authority, anti-central government. He’s a kind of information vigilante. He’s a kind of anarchist, but an anarchist who’s also an idealist, who believes that what he’s doing — rather than damaging world security or individuals — is actually making the world more just, that he feels that there’s an information disequilibrium in the world and he wants to rectify that.”

— *Time* editor Richard Stengel on PBS’s *Charlie Rose*, Nov. 30.



## Stolen Document Double-Standard

“The *Times* believes that the documents serve an important public interest, illuminating the goals, successes, compromises and frustrations of American diplomacy in a way that other accounts cannot match....As daunting as it is to publish such material over official objections, it would be presumptuous to conclude that Americans have no right to know what is being done in their name.”

— *New York Times* executive editor Bill Keller in a November 29 “Note to Readers” about the paper’s decision to publish stolen U.S. diplomatic cables disseminated by the WikiLeaks site.

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“The documents appear to have been acquired illegally and contain all manner of private information and statements that were never intended for the public eye, so they won’t be posted here.”

— *New York Times* environmental reporter Andrew Revkin on the paper’s “Dot Earth” blog, November 20, 2009, talking about e-mails at the center of the ClimateGate scandal.

## Palin With a Gun Makes Meredith “Nervous”

**Matt Lauer:** “Sarah Palin welcomes Kate Gosselin and her eight kids to Alaska for a guest appearance on her TLC show *Sarah Palin’s Alaska*.... You don’t think she [Gosselin] is the ‘roughing it’ type?”

**Meredith Vieira:** “I don’t think she likes it.”

**Al Roker:** “Roughing it, to her, is a Holiday Inn without cable.”

**Vieira:** “Plus, you’re with a woman with a gun. The whole thing makes me nervous, you know?”

— NBC’s *Today*, December 7.

## Hah!

“*Hardball* is absolutely nonpartisan.”

— MSNBC’s Chris Matthews in an interview with local Washington, D.C. host Carol Joynt, as quoted by *The Politico*’s Patrick Gavin in a December 9 article.

## Not Even Mom Buys Dave’s Global Warming Blame Game

**Host David Letterman:** “How are things in Indianapolis?”

**Dave’s Mom, Dorothy:** “Things are very nice. It’s been unseasonably warm.”

**David Letterman:** “How warm. How warm has it been? Like 20 degrees warmer than it should be?”

**Dorothy Letterman:** “About, yes, and it’s very windy.”

**David Letterman:** “Well, that’s that climate change. It’s the global warming. You know that, mom? Do you believe in the climate change, in the global warming?”

**Dorothy Letterman:** “Not really.”

— Exchange via satellite shown on the November 24 *Late Show*.



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