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The Budget: Democrats' "Big Heart" vs. "Meanie" GOP

"All over Capitol Hill, general anxiety about spending cuts and the political consequences. The President called Republicans' budget bluff with his big proposal to slash spending....If the Republicans embrace the role of meanie money enforcer, it gives Democrats an opening to show a big heart."

— Anchor Contessa Brewer during the 12pm ET hour of *MSNBC Live*, February 16.



Time to Trot Out Shopworn Liberal Clichés

"Big Bird on the Chopping Block? House GOP budget takes away federal funding for public broadcasting."

— ABCNews.com graphic teasing a February 15 article by ABC News digital media producer Huma Khan.

It "Could" Also Part the Red Sea or Cure the Common Cold – But It Won't

"Obama budget plan could create millions of jobs."

— Headline over February 15 *USA Today* "Money" section article.

CBS Touts New Spending "Investments" in Obama's Budget

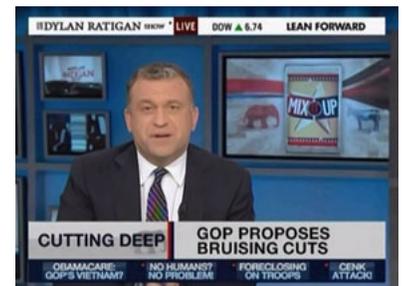
"The President unveiled his budget at a technology school to highlight new investments, especially in education and innovation, including funding for 100,000 new math and science teachers, \$32 billion for biomedical innovation and a doubling of funding for green energy research."

— CBS's Chip Reid on the February 14 *Evening News*.

Oppressing the Poor While Funding \$1.5 Trillion War Machine

"How can you be serious about cutting spending when your spending proposals are truly a flea on a dog's ass? These people [House Republicans] come out with a few billion here and a few billion there. We'll just get rid of all the food for poor people. We'll just obliterate any subsidies for heating oil for the most desperately poor. But we'll continue to account for nearly half of the \$1.5 trillion that's spent globally on defense."

— MSNBC's Dylan Ratigan on *The Dylan Ratigan Show*, February 9.



Great Obama More Skillful than Any Potential Challenger

"It was brilliant performance. This guy has game. If you want to add, make a long list – what are all the reasons Barack Obama is favored for being re-elected? Forget the Electoral College, forget the unemployment rate and earnings and all that. That performance has a level of sophistication and skill that not one Republican on the field right now can duplicate."

— *Time* magazine and MSNBC senior political analyst Mark Halperin on MSNBC's *Hardball*, February 3, talking about Obama's remarks earlier that day at the National Prayer Breakfast.

Now Chris Gets a Thrill Over Bill

"Bill Clinton has taken the prestige of his time in office, his relationships with other heads of state and forged something never known before, a global force for good. He's fighting AIDS in Africa, the devastation of floods and earthquakes, and nearly every other challenge facing mankind on the face of the globe.... We've never had a world leader like this before! Bill Clinton: President of the World."

— Chris Matthews on the February 9 *Hardball*, touting his upcoming MSNBC documentary on Clinton.

Crediting Obama With Inspiring Egypt's Revolution

“Speaking of President Obama, you know, in a way, he fueled this uprising in Egypt. When he came to Cairo, let us remember, and he spoke of, ‘Listen, we stand for freedom and democracy and listening to people.’ The Egyptians believed his rhetoric.”

— Ex-CBS *Evening News* anchor Dan Rather on CNN's *Piers Morgan Tonight*, January 31.

“Don't forget, this began when the President gave his speech in Cairo, at the beginning of his administration, calling for democracy.”

— Former *Newsweek* reporter Howard Fineman, now a Huffington Post columnist, on MSNBC's *Hardball*, January 28.

“Barack Obama, he goes to Cairo, he gives a speech, and he inspires — perhaps he's the one who inspires a lot of these Egyptians to get out into the streets.”

— MSNBC's Joe Scarborough on *Morning Joe*, January 31.



Uprising Proves Bush Didn't Need to “Lie About Weapons of Mass Destruction”

“Leading off tonight: Unrest in Egypt. Proving the Iraq war wasn't needed, these protests in Egypt, as well as in Yemen and Tunisia, are all aimed at dictators supported by the U.S. The demonstrations have not yet turned anti-American, but they could. These are the events the Bush administration hoped to encourage by lying about weapons of mass destruction and invading Iraq.”

— Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, January 28.

Chris Claims Muslim Brotherhood “a Parallel” with the Tea Party

“So the Muslim Brotherhood has a parallel role here with the Tea Party, they're the ones who keep you honest and decide whether you've stayed too long? Whether you've got a 'sell by date' looming?”

— Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, February 1.

Not Even Maher Buys Norah's Claim of “Centrist” Obama

NBC's Norah O'Donnell: “He's [Barack Obama] a pragmatic centrist, I mean that's who he is.... They hired Bill Daley as the chief of staff, someone with business ties. They brought in the CEO of General Electric, Jeff Immelt, he gave a speech before the Chamber of Commerce. So I think, you know, they're trying to make inroads, but that's a specific community, the business community. But other than that tonal switch, he's still the same centrist he's always been.”

Host Bill Maher: “But he's not really. If you woke him up in the middle of the night, of if you gave him sodium pentothal — I think he's a centrist the way he's a Christian — not really.”

— HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher*, February 11.



Even More Delusional: Obama a “Fairly Conservative Democrat”

“The President escalating the war in Afghanistan. He cut corporate tax rates, kept Guantanamo open, didn't push for the public option. Now promising to cut taxes even more, fewer regulations for businesses. I mean, I could go on and on. Wouldn't this be a definition of a fairly conservative Democrat or at least a definition of a centrist?”

— Midday anchor Thomas Roberts on *MSNBC Live*, February 8.

Amanpour: Kennedy Assassinations “Relevant” to Today's “Political Atmosphere”

“John F. Kennedy was assassinated less than three years after his inauguration, in November 1963. His brother, Bobby, in 1968. Two acts of political violence so traumatic that the country has never fully recovered. It's an episode eerily relevant today in the wake of the assassination attempt against Gabrielle Giffords less than two weeks ago. [to Jean Kennedy Smith] A congresswoman was targeted. No matter what the reason, how would you describe the atmosphere, the political atmosphere today in the country?”

— ABC's Christiane Amanpour to JFK's sister Jean Kennedy Smith in an interview shown on *Nightline*, January 20.

Lauding Obama's "Reaganesque" State of the Union

"Full of sunny optimism, very Reaganesque, on and on about American exceptionalism in many, many instances and full of Kennedyesque encouragement to break a new frontier. That Sputnik moment was remarkable...."

—ABC's Christiane Amanpour during coverage of the State of the Union, January 25.

Anchor Katie Couric: "In many ways, you felt this speech tonight was almost downright Reaganesque. There have been some comparisons made in recent days about how this could be his Reagan moment. Do you think it was in any way?"

CBS's Jeff Greenfield: "I think there was certainly an effort on several grounds....He kept talking about winning the future and that was always a big theme about Reagan....He was clearly striking rhetorical notes that reminded me of Mr. Reagan."

—CBS's live coverage, January 25.



Glad the Gipper's Gone

"Basically we have a President [Ronald Reagan] who treated the poor poorly, did not tend to the sick, broke laws, committed nearly impeachable offenses by your own reporting. Why should we be lionizing him in the broad public domain? You certainly don't."

—Ex-Newsweek editor Jon Meacham hosting PBS's *Need to Know*, February 4, talking to filmmaker Eugene Jarecki, whose HBO documentary *Reagan* debuted February 7.



"Rich Grew Richer... Disenfranchised Sank Further"

"After serving two terms, Reagan retired to the ranch. He rejoined a private citizenry that was much changed. Reaganomics had started a shift that would continue through the 1980s, a realignment under which America's rich and powerful grew richer and more powerful, as the disenfranchised sank further. In 1987, 20 percent of U.S. children lived in poverty, representing a 24 percent increase during the Reagan years. In 1989 the wealthiest 40 percent of U.S. families controlled 68 percent of the wealth, while the poorest 40 percent controlled 15 percent: the biggest gap in four decades for which statistics were kept."

—Robert Sullivan and the editors of *Life* in a special February 2011 "Ronald Reagan at 100" issue.

Great "Wizard" Obama = "Master of Warm Healing"

"Obama is...rebooting his operation to what he knows best: wizard of all things to all people and master of warm healing. He is acting as a multi-hued, but blank, canvas upon which a swath of Americans can project its diverse hopes and dreams. President Barack Tabla Rasa."

— "Demos" Senior Fellow Rich Benjamin in a February 11 *USA Today* op-ed.

Sarah Palin = "The Glamorization of Dumbness"

"Sarah Palin needs a therapist, okay. We need the smartest guys, the best PhDs around to be solving these problems. I don't have any patience for the glamorization of dumbness."

—Director Aaron Sorkin on CBS's *Sunday Morning*, February 6.

A Speech So Good, It Made Him Weep

"It brought tears to my eyes to see a black man in charge of the country and doing it so well."

—Actor/comedian/ex-CNN host D.L. Hughley on HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher*, January 28, talking about Obama's State of the Union address.

Notable Quotables

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