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Scolding “Harsh Rhetoric” of Tea Party “On the Fringe”

ABC’s John Berman: “The business of this first ever national Tea Party convention is the nuts and bolts of politics, like voter registration....But barely scratch the surface, and there’s a tone of anger and confrontation....When we asked delegates what they thought, their feelings about the President were almost universal.”

Unidentified Man: “I believe he is a socialist ideologue.”

Unidentified Woman: “You just read his history, he’s a Marxist.”...

Berman: “One of the goals of this convention is to turn this movement into a political force. The question is, does the harsh rhetoric keep them on the fringe?”

—ABC’s *World News*, February 5.



Nothing but a Bunch of Racist McCarthyites

“What does Margaret Chase Smith have to do with the next two segments on *Countdown* — one of them about the Tea Klux Klan?...It was Maine’s Republican Senator who said, and I’m quoting here: ‘I don’t want to see the Republican party ride to political victory on the four horsemen of calumny — fear, ignorance, bigotry and smear.’...[In 1950, Smith was] pushing back against the fear and bigotry and smears and ignorance being practiced by her own party by, in particular, the Wisconsin Republican witch hunter, Senator Joseph McCarthy....Today, the GOP has plenty of McCarthys, an entire wing of them in the Tea Party.”

—Keith Olbermann on *Countdown*, February 9.



“Times are tough, the future is confusing, the threat from those who would dismantle our way of life is real, as if we weren’t to some extent doing it for them now. And the President’s black....I know phrases like ‘Tea Klux Klan’ are incendiary, and I know I use them in part because I am angry that at so late a date, we still have to bat back that racial uneasiness which has to envelop us all.”

—Olbermann in a “Special Comment” on *Countdown*, February 15.

Trashing “Simple-Minded” Sarah Palin

“I watched her speak at the Tea Party convention, then I listened to the interview that followed with the Tea Party chairman and it was embarrassing at points, to the point where you just want to avert your gaze when she starts to talk. Simple, simple thoughts, very simple-mindedly expressed....Just as the Supreme Court nominee who was defeated said, you know, ‘Everybody needs to have a little mediocre representation and that’s what I am.’ That’s what she is.”

—*Washington Post* columnist Colbert King on *Inside Washington*, February 12.



“We see a lot of preposterous things in American politics....Sarah Palin’s entire career would be eliminated, would pass out of history if preposterousness were somehow disqualifying, but it’s not.”

—*The New Yorker*’s David Remnick, formerly a *Washington Post* reporter, on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, February 9.

“What she said was drivel. No, let me amend that: it was anti-intellectual drivel....Those who celebrate Sarah Palin’s lack of knowledge as a form of ‘authenticity’ superior to Barack Obama’s gloriously American mongrel ethnicity and self-made intellectuality are representatives of a long-standing American theme — the celebration of sameness, and mediocrity, in a country that has succeeded brilliantly because of its diversity and restlessly eccentric genius.”

—Political columnist Joe Klein on *Time*’s “Swampland” blog about Palin’s Tea Party speech, February 7.

Claiming Success for Obama's Big "Stimulus"

"Many economists agree that the \$787 billion package of infrastructure spending, tax cuts and aid to states has created jobs and helped pull the economy out of a deep recession. Three economic research firms estimate that 1.6 to 1.8 million jobs have been created so far, with more gains projected this year."

— NBC's Lisa Myers on the February 17 *Nightly News*, reporting on the first anniversary of Democrats' \$862 billion "economic stimulus" spending package.



White House correspondent Chip Reid: "In Washington, D.C., about 20 people are working on this road project. Manager Matthew Johns calls the stimulus a lifesaver. [to Johns] So it's certainly possible that you and these guys would be without work right now if it weren't for the stimulus package?"

Matthew Johns: "Absolutely."...

Reid: "Many independent economists put the number of jobs saved or created at about 1.8 million, but to the great frustration of the White House, most Americans simply refuse to believe it."

— CBS Evening News, February 17.

George's Prescription for Democratic Revival: Pass a Big Health Care Bill

Anchor Diane Sawyer: "Which leaves about ten months to turn it around before the mid-term elections. What are they going to do in the White House?"

George Stephanopoulos: "Well, it's not going to turn around completely. Democrats and Republicans agree that Republicans are picking up seats in the mid-term elections. What the White House can do — what they're trying to do — is to achieve a health care bill. People still want that."

— ABC's *World News*, February 10, discussing ABC's poll showing Democrats trailing in congressional races.

Don't Worry: Anti-Democratic Backlash Just a "Tempest in a Teapot"

"While analysts expect Democrats to lose some seats in 2010, more Republicans [than Democrats] are retiring.... The sense of dramatic change is more about who is leaving — high profile Democrats like Patrick Kennedy and Chris Dodd — than how many.... In politics, the nine months between now and November can amount to a lifetime. But, for now, despite all the passionate, anti-incumbent tea parties, the math suggests limited changes on Capitol Hill — a tempest in a teapot."

— ABC's John Hendren on *Good Morning America*, February 14.

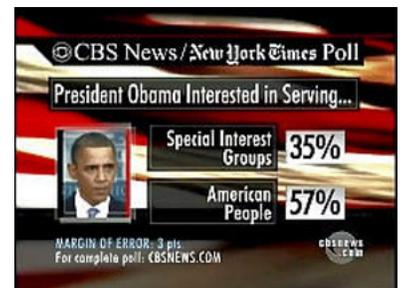
Putting a Positive Spin on Obama's Sinking Polls

"At a time of deepening political disaffection and intensified distress about the economy, President Obama enjoys an edge over Republicans in the battle for public support, according to the latest *New York Times*/CBS News poll."

— Chief political reporter Adam Nagourney, February 12 *New York Times*.

"In a CBS News/*New York Times* poll just out, 70 percent say they are dissatisfied or just plain angry about the way things are going in Washington. 80 percent say Congress is more interested in serving special interests than the voters [13%], but the President gets better marks on that score. Most think his priority is serving the people [57 to 35%]."

— Katie Couric talking about the same poll, February 11 *CBS Evening News*. The subsequent story failed to mention how those disapproving of President Obama's job performance had reached 45%, the highest since he took office.



Dick Cheney and the GOP: Giving Aid and Comfort to al Qaeda?

"Don't you think when the former Vice President says America is weaker than it has been that you are giving aid and comfort to the enemy, that you are encouraging another attack?"

— FNC's Geraldo Rivera to conservative author Ann Coulter on the February 14 *Geraldo At Large*.

"Terror Begins at Home; Fearmongering politicians are scoring cheap political points at the expense of the American people."

— *Newsweek*'s headline and subheadline over story by managing editor Dan Klaidman about Republican criticism of President Obama's policies, February 22 issue.

Barack Obama Got Best Press “In History of Civilization”

George Stephanopoulos: “Tina, for the longest time, comedians couldn’t find the funny in Barack Obama.”

Daily Beast’s Tina Brown: “No, he got the best press known to man. Let’s face it.”

Washington Post’s Howard Kurtz: “In the history of civilization.”

Brown: “In the history of civilization. Incredible.”

— Exchange on ABC’s *Good Morning America*, February 5.



Blizzard or No Blizzard, Don’t Mock Global Warming!

“The anti-science crowd in the Republican Party is saying that the snow storms we’re having are evidence against global warming. These guys, these clowns — go to high school!...It isn’t something to laugh about, gentlemen, unless you don’t care about what happens to this planet down the road. And I suspect that some of you folks, sadly, don’t.”

— Chris Matthews on MSNBC’s *Hardball*, February 10.

Fox News Not Staffed With Real Pros — Like Us at MSNBC

“When a news executive goes out there and states a crazy accusation like that, that it ends up, it only ends up probably hurting what they’re trying to do, but it creates, it only denigrates all of us....And, I’m sorry, there are certain news organizations out here whose agenda is to undermine the 90 percent of journalists who are just simply trying to cover stories out there.”

— NBC White House correspondent and MSNBC daytime host Chuck Todd on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, February 8, reacting to Fox News Washington managing editor Bill Sammon’s statement the previous day that “the mainstream media hates the Tea Party movement almost as much as it hates Sarah Palin.”

GMA’s Valentines for Democratic “Love Stories”

“Ahead this morning, John F. Kennedy’s secret love letters. They were written to a mysterious Swedish woman in the early days of his marriage to Jacqueline Kennedy....We have a story about the family that’s been called American royalty, the secret love letters that have been kept under lock and key since they were first sent....”

— ABC’s George Stephanopoulos setting up a report on the February 15 *Good Morning America*.

Co-host Robin Roberts: “Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill. Real-life Valentines, 35 years and counting. How they keep the romance alive.”...

Co-host George Stephanopoulos: “They don’t often talk about it, but their decades-long marriage is a famous Washington love story. And, Juju, they are clearly best friends.”

News anchor Juju Chang: “They really are. And we know there’s been a lot of cynicism about political marriages, right? But the Bidens have a genuine love and respect for each other. ... [To Joe Biden] Politics famously wreaks havoc on political marriages. Yours is not only a strong marriage but a true love affair.”

— ABC’s *Good Morning America*, February 12.



Canadian Star Touts: It’s “Hip” to Be Socialist

“As a Canadian, when I travel the world I find that people find being Canadian to be very hip because we have been progressive in health care, and we have been progressive in environmental issues. And I think that we now wear that with great pride.”

— Actor/impersonator Martin Short in soundbite shown in a pre-Olympics story, February 11 *NBC Nightly News*.

Notable Quotables

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