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Obama's Best Route to Greatness: "Destroy the GOP"

"The President who came into office speaking in lofty terms about bipartisanship and cooperation can only cement his legacy if he destroys the GOP. If he wants to transform American politics, he must go for the throat....Obama's only remaining option is to pulverize. Whether he succeeds in passing legislation or not, given his ambitions, his goal should be to delegitimize his opponents."

— CBS News political director John Dickerson in a January 18 Slate.com article headlined: "Go for the Throat! Why if he wants to transform American politics, Obama must declare war on the Republican Party."



Celebrating "The Second Coming" of Barack Obama

"The Second Coming. America Expects. Can He Deliver?"

— Headline for *Newsweek's* "Inauguration 2013" cover, January 18.



Admiring Liberal "President with a Purpose"

"He is a president renewed in office by the votes of 65 million Americans. He is a president with a purpose....Change — this time around that word means something else to Barack Obama. He used his second inauguration

to make an audacious claim that the coalition that reelected him — younger, more diverse, non-native, more socially liberal — is the next America, the rising generation, and he spoke directly to and for them....A man, a president with a purpose and an agenda, a progressive agenda, no question about it."

— Co-anchor Terry Moran on ABC's *Nightline*, January 21.

Journalists Just as Thrilled the Second Time Around

"And as we've said, here in Washington the excitement is already beginning. Those marching bands getting ready for their parade, the caterers, 10,000 eggs for one hotel. And the whole city has a smile on its face."

— Anchor Diane Sawyer talking about Obama's inauguration during a live special report, January 20.

Correspondent Bill Weir to teenager waiting for Obama's inauguration: "Any regrets thus far?"

Sean Semler: "Not at all. Not at all. We got a little bit of sleep, but that's enough."

Weir: "Yeah. History is keeping you warm, right?"

Semler: "Yeah."

Weir: "Outstanding."

— Exchange during ABC News live coverage, January 21.

Why Can't Obama's "Super Brain" Fix Washington?

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd: "About five years from now, you guys are going to be here and you're going to be discussing Obama's memoir, which he will have written, and it's going to be the most brilliant political memoir outside of Ulysses Grant, and Joe, you're going to be saying—"

Co-host Mika Brzezinski: "Now, that's love!"

Dowd: "Yeah. And you're going to be saying, 'We still don't, we're still trying to figure out who this guy is. And he has these amazing insights. Why couldn't he have applied that super-brain to Washington and gotten it to work better?'"

— Exchange on MSNBC's *Morning Joe* on January 21.

Drooling Over 60 Minutes “Lovefest”

“Lovefest. The President and Hillary Clinton in a revealing and rare joint interview, has everyone reading the tea leaves.”

— Fill-in host Elizabeth Vargas on ABC’s *Good Morning America*, January 28.



“Fairness” = Don’t Make Obama Look Bad

Host Piers Morgan: “Let me ask you at the top, why do you think he [President Obama] keeps coming to you?...”

CBS’s Steve Kroft: “I think that, first of all, I think he likes *60 Minutes*....But I think it’s a question of fairness. I, we have not — I think he knows that we’re not going to play gotcha with him, that we’re not going to go out of our way to make him look bad or stupid, and we’ll let him answer the questions.”

— CNN’s *Piers Morgan Tonight*, January 28.

Run, Hillary, Run!

“If, in the course of the next couple years it appears, as it does appear right now, that you might be the person who could actually break through that glass ceiling and become the first female president of this country, would you feel a certain obligation to seize that mantle?...But there’s never been a woman who really had a credible chance. And it looks as if you might just be that person.”

— Co-anchor Cynthia McFadden to Hillary Clinton in an interview shown on ABC’s *Nightline*, January 29.

Applauding Hillary’s “Stellar Term” at Foggy Bottom

“It will be a grueling day, first in the Senate, then in the House. Not how the Secretary of State had planned to wind up what is widely viewed as a stellar term as the nation’s top diplomat.”

— Andrea Mitchell on NBC’s *Today*, January 23, previewing Hillary Clinton’s testimony on Benghazi.

Riveted by “Charming” Hillary’s “Fiery Emotion”

“Last stand. Secretary Hillary Clinton, filled with fiery emotion in her last appearance before Congress....The indignation. And then, the tears in her eyes....It was a valedictory that showed her indignation and emotion as she ends this tenure on the public stage.”

— Anchor Diane Sawyer opening ABC’s *World News*, January 23.



“It was truly a riveting day on Capitol Hill. We don’t say that very often, with Secretary Clinton as some have never seen her before. She was at times, combative, charming, disarming and clearly ready for a fight.”

— ABC correspondent Martha Raddatz on *Good Morning America*, January 24.

“After a fall, a concussion and a blood clot, Hillary Clinton showed rare public emotion, reflecting the toll Benghazi has taken on her....Parrying hostile questions all day, Clinton was also the political pro. Massaging big egos, sidestepping attacks when she could. When she couldn’t, giving as good as she got.”

— NBC chief foreign affairs correspondent Andrea Mitchell on the January 23 *Nightly News*.

Magnificent Hillary vs. Misogynistic Cave Dwellers

“I’m getting a little bit weary, I’ll be honest with you, with the relentless attacks first on Susan Rice and now on Hillary Clinton. There’s a whisper of misogyny to it, I think, and it’s getting pretty, I think, incestuous and very Washington-orientated, rather than in the national interest of America.”

— CNN’s Piers Morgan to ex-State Department spokesman PJ Crowley on *Piers Morgan Tonight*, January 23.

“That was kind of a pissant performance by that guy from Wisconsin [Senator Ron Johnson]....I had the image of these guys [the Republican Senators] going home tonight to caves. I thought they looked like guys who had come, ‘I’m sorry, I’m heading back to my cave where I live.’ The behavior of a couple of these guys like Johnson and [Senator Rand] Paul.”

— *Hardball* host Chris Matthews, January 23.

Self-Defense: “Irresponsible and Dangerous”

Clip of Milwaukee Sheriff David Clarke from ad: “Consider taking a certified safety course in handling a firearm so you can defend yourself until we get there. You have a duty to protect yourself and your family. We’re partners now. Can I count on you?”...

Correspondent/panelist Nancy Snyderman: “This is so irresponsible, it’s dangerous.”

Panelist Star Jones: “I think it’s so irresponsible....”

Panelist Donny Deutsch: “Politically, I’m surprised legally they were able to run that ad.”

— NBC’s *Today*, January 30.



Disparaging the NRA as a “Bunch of Crazyies”

“I think that the NRA still has a stranglehold on a lot of Democrats as well as, as well as Republicans. So it’s going to be hard. But the President can use the extremism of the NRA — who are acting like a bunch of crazyies these days — to help sell the rest of his agenda.”

— *Time*’s Joe Klein on *The Chris Matthews Show*, January 20.

Obama Both a “Racial Pioneer” and a “Religious Pioneer”

“It’s part of what makes Obama exceptional. We think of him as a racial pioneer, the first African-American President, but I think he’s also a religious pioneer. So to have a same-sex marriage, to talk about that in such a public way at the National Cathedral, to also support it as a President — that’s never been done before.”

— CNN BeliefBlog writer John Blake on *CNN Newsroom*, January 22, talking about the President speaking at the traditional post-Inauguration national prayer service.

Classy MSNBC Host: “I Thank God” for Abortion

“This week brought us the 40th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* and made me reflect on a moment from 15 years ago, when I was in a committed relationship with a woman who I knew was just not the one. She also knew it probably wasn’t going to work out, and then she got pregnant, and I was terrified....I thank God and country that when I fell into a bad situation, abortion was there to save me.”

— Co-host Touré on MSNBC’s *The Cycle*, January 25.

Journalists “Swoon” Over Obama

“‘The behavior of the assembled press corps was telling. Everyone, myself included, swooned. Swooned! Head over heels. One or two might have even lost their minds,’ [Buzzfeed’s Michael] Hastings writes, as each reporter had a chance to speak personally with the President. ‘We were all, on some level, deeply obsessed with Obama, crushing hard, still a little love there. This was nerd heaven, a politico’s paradise, the subject himself moving among us — shaking our hands, slapping our shoulders!’”

— *The Washington Examiner*’s Charlie Spiering on January 18, relaying Hastings’ account of a moment when President Obama rubbed shoulders with journalists in an off-the-record event.

Buzzfeed’s Michael Hastings: “The presence of Obama, even on the press corps, even on the people who follow him every day, when they’re near him, they lose their mind sometimes. You know, they start behaving in ways that are juvenile and amateurish. And they swoon.”

Martin Bashir: “And, of course, you don’t.”

Hastings: “Oh, I do. No, I do, I do, I do. Oh, I totally, oh, man....”

— Discussing Hastings’ book about the 2012 presidential campaign on MSNBC’s *Martin Bashir*, January 24.

Notable Quotables

PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell III

EDITORS: Brent H. Baker, Rich Noyes, Tim Graham

DEPUTY RESEARCH DIRECTOR: Geoffrey Dickens

TIMESWATCH: Clay Waters

NEWS ANALYSTS: Scott Whitlock, Brad Wilmoth,

Matthew Balan, Kyle Drennen and Matt Hadro

INTERNS: Jeffrey Meyer, Matt Vespa and Paul Bremmer

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Media Research Center

325 South Patrick Street

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