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The Media Are Unanimous: Obama Is “Brilliant”

Pentagon reporter Jim Miklaszewski: “This is nothing less than a stunning development, Brian, and quite frankly, at a quick glance, almost brilliant...”

White House correspondent Chuck Todd: “Politically, in this town, it’s going to be seen as a brilliant choice by the President.”

— Comments during NBC’s live coverage of President Obama’s June 23 announcement that he was replacing Afghanistan commanding General Stanley McChrystal with General David Petraeus.



“It sounds like a pretty brilliant decision, really.”

— White House correspondent Chip Reid during CBS’s live coverage, June 23.

“Politically, a very brilliant move to tap General Petraeus.”

— CNN’s Wolf Blitzer during live coverage, June 23.

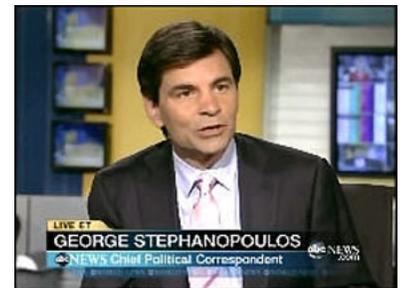
“That pick really seems to have been the political master stroke that got President Obama out of the tight box he was in.”

— Co-host George Stephanopoulos on ABC’s *Good Morning America*, June 24.

Fearing Obama Would Either Look “Petulant” or “Weak”

“A debate has been raging inside the administration since this article hit last night, and the President has really been put in a real political box. If he fires [General Stanley] McChrystal after this, he risks looking thin-skinned and petulant. But if he accepts these words, which some consider insubordination, then he risks looking weak. So it’s a very painful political position right now for the President.”

— George Stephanopoulos, June 22 *World News*.



Anchors Claim Arizona Law Is “Harsh,” “Anti-Immigrant”

“There’s been a stir this week over something Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in Ecuador earlier this month. She suggested the federal government would sue Arizona over its harsh new immigration law designed to identify and deport people here illegally...”

— Fill-in anchor Lester Holt on the June 18 *NBC Nightly News*.

“An update on Arizona’s controversial new anti-immigration law...”

— Anchor Diane Sawyer on ABC’s *World News*, June 18. The Arizona law does not target all immigrants, just those in the country illegally.

Fretting Over Obstacles to Installing Even More Liberal Judges

“So far he [President Obama] is setting records for the number of women and minorities nominated to lifetime appointments.... Yet as Obama tries to make gains in diversity among judges, he faces a deeply polarized confirmation process in the Senate. During his first 18 months in office, his administration has been thwarted by unprecedented delays. The situation, which has received little notice against the backdrop of a pending Supreme Court nomination and the administration’s complex legislative agenda, could undercut Obama’s effort to significantly infuse the federal courts with more women and minorities.”

— Supreme Court reporter Joan Biskupic in a front page June 16 *USA Today* article, “Push for court diversity hits snag: Partisan rancor ties up action on Obama nominees.”

Couric Hides Tough Numbers on Obama's Oil Leak Response

"In a CBS News/*New York Times* poll out tonight, 43 percent of Americans approve of President Obama's handling of the spill. Only 13 percent approve of BP's efforts....More than three out of four Americans [on-screen graphic shows 76%] believe oil companies should be subject to more government regulations...."

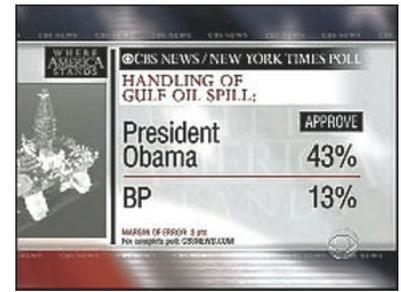
— Only findings from poll cited by Katie Couric on the June 21 *CBS Evening News*.

vs.

"Poll: Most Say Obama Lacks Clear Plans on the Oil Spill, Energy or Jobs"

"Most Americans do not believe President Obama has a clear plan to deal with the oil spill in the Gulf, according to a new CBS News/*New York Times* poll. Just 32 percent say Mr. Obama has a clear plan to deal with the oil leak, while 59 percent (including 64 percent of Gulf coast residents) say he does not....A majority of Americans — 61 percent — say the President's response to the oil spill was too slow."

— Headline and first paragraphs of a June 21 CBSNews.com "Political Hotsheet" article by Brian Montopoli, showcasing the findings Couric skipped.



If You're Not for a Big Welfare State, You Don't Deserve Disaster Help

"When he [President Obama] sees people like [Louisiana Governor] Bobby Jindal, you know, standing up, screaming about more federal action, more federal aid, well, six months ago, that's not the person that Bobby Jindal was. He was a small-government, no federal aid kind of guy. And the President is calling out those people for hypocrisy."

— *Politico* chief political columnist Roger Simon on MSNBC's *Andrea Mitchell Reports*, June 15.

Scribe Off to Do "Lord's Work" of Passing Cap-and-Trade

"My regret over leaving one of the world's largest — and certainly the most ambitious — news organizations is offset by a sense of urgency in resuming doing the Lord's work, particularly after the BP oil spill. That debacle was a divine signal to redouble my efforts to help clean up the environment, help America kick its petroleum addiction, and help public officials find the wisdom and courage to do the right thing to combat climate change before it's too late."

— Bloomberg White House correspondent Ed Chen announcing he was going to work for the Natural Resources Defense Council, in a June 11 e-mail quoted by *The Politico*.



Obama Should "Overstep" In Commanding Private Sector

Host Chris Matthews: "Harry Truman, the coal miners wouldn't mine coal after World War II. He, he conscripted them all. He drafted them....Will this president be that tough? Will he threaten, really threaten BP with all the actions of an executive?"...

Newsweek's Howard Fineman: "If you don't use it, you lose it. Barack Obama should overdo. He should overstep."

Matthews: "Even at the risk of being called a socialist again?"

Fineman: "Even at the risk — yeah, even at the risk of having a lawsuit filed against him."

— Exchange on MSNBC's *Hardball*, June 14.

Enchanted by Obama's "Martial Language," "Feel of FDR"

"Tonight the President used martial language. He talked about a 'siege,' the 'assault on our shores' and his 'battle plan' to fix it. And he said we have to 'rally together.' And I think what the White House was reaching for tonight is the feel of Franklin Roosevelt during World War II and those fireside chats."

— George Stephanopoulos on ABC immediately after President Obama's June 15 address on the oil spill.

Only "Nutty, Far-Right Circles" Think It's Bad to Be a "Socialist"

"Incidentally, not that the President is one, but how does it defame a person to call him a 'socialist' (outside of nutty far-right circles) — a set of ideas many advanced Western democracies find congenial, what with the accessible health-care, affordable higher education and good public transportation?"

— Randy Cohen, author of "The Ethicist" column in *The New York Times Magazine*, responding to a teacher complaining about anti-Obama images on a colleague's door, June 20.

GOP Women Victories = “Blow to Feminism”

“The only trouble with this one is, it almost feels as if all these women winning are kind of a blow to feminism. Because, each one of them, really, most of them, are, you know, very much, uh, uh, you know, against so many of things that women have fought for such a long time.... Women, too, can be wing nuts, is the point.”

— *Daily Beast* publisher Tina Brown on ABC’s *Good Morning America*, June 10, talking about primary victories by women Republicans.



Trashing “Too Conservative” Tea Party Candidate

“Now, you know Democrats are licking their chops. They look at [Nevada GOP Senate nominee] Sharron Angle’s record. They say she wants to do away with Social Security, the Department of Education, the Environmental Protection Agency, the IRS, make alcohol illegal. And they say that sure is too conservative. Are you concerned that some of your new candidates, especially those who have been backed by the Tea Party, may make it harder to win those seats in November?”

— ABC *Good Morning America* co-host George Stephanopoulos to Governor Tim Pawlenty (R-MN), June 11.

“Ms. Angle — the Tea Party-blessed candidate who bested her two better-financed competitors in Tuesday’s primary — is an untested statewide candidate whose positions as a lawmaker put her firmly to the right of most mainstream Nevada voters.... Among her detractors and her supporters she is known as a far-right conservative and a thorn in the side of both parties, routinely voting no on almost everything that came before the Legislature.”

— *New York Times* reporter Jennifer Steinhauer, June 10.

Tea Party & Talk Radio Churning Up Mad Bombers

“What’s scary today is the language being thrown about. Words have consequences. You can not call a President’s policies ‘un-American,’ as Sarah Palin has done; or refer to the elected government as a ‘regime,’ as Rush Limbaugh persists in doing; or the President as a foreign usurper, as the birthers do; without giving license on some day to real trouble. This April was the 15th anniversary of [the] Oklahoma City [bombing]. It is well to consider what happens when people act on what they hear, when the hatred of our own elected government becomes explosive. I’m Chris Matthews. Thank you for watching.”

— MSNBC’s Chris Matthews concluding his *Rise of the New Right* documentary, June 16.



Polls Showing Democrats Losing Must Be “Sorcery”

“[Pollster Scott] Rasmussen said he is simply a ‘scorekeeper,’ but his spike in clout has sharpened skepticism about how he tracks the dip in Democratic fortunes. Frustrated liberals suspect sorcery. Markos Moulitsas, the creator of the Daily Kos blog, has accused the pollster of ‘setting the narrative that Democrats are doomed’ with numbers that fuel hours of Republican-boosting on talk radio and cable.”

— *Washington Post* writer Jason Horowitz in a June 17 “Style” section profile of Rasmussen.

Maher’s Latest Conspiracy: “We Need a War All the Time So We Can...Buy Oil”

“The United States Defense Department is the largest procurer of oil in the world, it uses more oil than anywhere else to kill people in the Middle East to get fuel to fight wars. It’s sort of a cycle of life thing. Now, I’m not trying to be a conspiracy theorist. But I do think there’s something — just the way the pharmaceutical companies sometimes come up with a pill before they come up with the disease — I think maybe we need a war all the time so we can wear out equipment and buy oil.”

— Bill Maher on his HBO show, *Real Time*, June 11.

Notable Quotables

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