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After NPR's Bias Exposed, Media Play the Big Bird Card

"The CEO of NPR submitted her resignation today, their chief fundraiser was also shown the door. They're casualties in a war over culture and spending cuts that threatens the very existence of public broadcasting, including Big Bird and Elmo."

— ABC's Jake Tapper on *World News*, March 9, talking about an NPR shake-up prompted by release of an undercover video showing a top executive disparaging Christians and the Tea Party.



"NPR says it gets only two percent of its budget from taxpayers. Most of the federal money — 71 percent — goes to local public TV and radio stations. Losing that would hurt.... Also at risk, programming like *Sesame Street*.... With American children already falling behind, public broadcasting supporters fear Bert and Ernie could become a casualty of the political wars."

— NBC's Lisa Myers on the *March 9 Nightly News*.

Circling the Wagons Around "Straight-Shooting" NPR

"I think NPR's done a good job over the last ten years of reducing that bias. I thought it was really biased ten years ago, but now I think it's pretty straight."

— *New York Times* columnist David Brooks, who has had a regular segment on NPR since 2004, on *The Chris Matthews Show*, March 13.



"What's gotten lost in this is the fact that National Public Radio journalists are in, in war zones all over the world, particularly in the Middle East. That nobody is suggesting that their journalism has been at all biased.... We're talking about only two percent of the NPR budget and journalism that has really not been criticized. It's unimpeachable, in terms of the work that's being done in war zones around the world. So why go after NPR, even with this current embarrassment?"

— NBC correspondent and MSNBC host Andrea Mitchell on her 1pm ET *Andrea Mitchell Reports*, March 9.

NPR's Nina Totenberg: "There is a reason that we are the only news organization, other than Fox, with a growing audience. It is because of our product which is straight-shooting, factual, and spends an enormous amount of money gathering news from all over the country and the world. Judge us by our product. The people in the newsroom were probably more mortified than Charles or anybody in the Tea Party, or any, any anybody else. I mean, we were just horrified, and not by the political incorrectness of what he said, but by the fact that he even thought this way."

Moderator Gordon Peterson: "Well, this plays right into the belief that you're a bunch of lefties."

Totenberg: "I know it does, but it's not true."

— Exchange on *Inside Washington*, March 11.

Newt Gingrich Grins Like Satan, "Looks Like a Car Bomber"

Chicago Tribune's Clarence Page: "Well this is Newt's time to run.... He has a good shot at winning the nomination. Winning the general is a whole different matter. But this—"

Host Chris Matthews, interrupting: "But he looks like a car bomber. He looks like a car bomber, Clarence. He looks like a car bomber. He's got that crazy Mephistophelian grin of his. He looks like he loves torturing. Look at the guy! I mean this, this is not the face of a President."

— MSNBC's *Hardball*, March 2.



ABC Exploits Tsunami to Lobby Against Budget Cuts

ABC's Clayton Sandell: "The quake has also triggered a tsunami of political bickering in Congress. Democrats accuse Republicans of being irresponsible for proposing budget cuts to NOAA, the federal agency that provides forecasts and early warnings of natural disasters. [to Congressman Thompson] If NOAA's budget gets cut, are people's lives more at risk?"

Representative Mike Thompson (D-CA): "Absolutely. This is important stuff. It's public safety. It's an investment in our everyday lives."

—ABC's *World News*, March 12.



"Consider Japan's state of the art undersea sensors and tsunami gates, protecting key ports, while just last month, our House of Representatives voted to slash funding for the Hawaiian tsunami warning center that issued last night's alarm. One more reason to look out for yourself...."

— Correspondent Bill Weir on ABC's *World News*, March 11. Republicans voted to cut \$365 million, or 7%, from NOAA's \$5.5 billion annual budget, but did not specify any cut for the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

Can't Let a Good Crisis Go to Waste

"Was this [the Japanese earthquake and tsunami] sort of a good opportunity for the President to remind everybody that he grew up in the United States and Hawaii? I mean, I thought it was — that's the first thing I thought of."

— MSNBC's Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, March 11.

Washington Post's Eugene Robinson: "What was interesting to me was the way the President noted his personal connection to Japanese culture, having been raised in Hawaii, which has a heavy influence of Japanese culture...."

Host Chris Matthews: "Gene, thank you for reminding us the President was raised in Hawaii! That the influence he felt was of the Japanese-Americans and living in Hawaii and not of the Mau Maus, which some of his more insane critics have brought up."

— MSNBC's *Hardball*, March 14.

Scolding a "Fascist, Totalitarian" "Outrage" in Wisconsin

"We turn now to that outrage, you just heard about in Wisconsin, where the Republican-controlled senate voted last night to cut collective bargaining rights for public employees."

— News reader Ann Curry setting up a segment on the March 10 *Today*. The on-screen graphic announced: "Outrage in Wisconsin; Senate Republicans Cut Union Rights, Bypass Democrats."



"This is not what the people, the good people of Wisconsin voted for when they voted for this governor. This is a governor that would not sit down at the table with these people, the Democrats, they walked away. Now he's doing whatever sleazy, end-run — this is not what this country is built on. This is a fascist regime. There's something wrong here. Very, very wrong....I think the tactics, the approach, the totalitarianism of this does not feel right."

— Former CNBC anchor Donny Deutsch on MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, March 10.

Suggesting Puny Budget Cuts Will "Stick a Fork in the Recovery"

Host Christiane Amanpour: "Up next, Washington's answer to the job crisis. Will the deep budget cuts on the table stick a fork in the recovery?...[Republicans are proposing] \$61 billion in budget cuts. [Economist] Mark Zandi says 700,000 jobs will be lost."

Thomson-Reuters editor Chrystia Freeland: "I think he's right."

—ABC's *This Week*, March 6.

"As we all know, nondefense discretionary spending is a measly 17 percent of the national budget. Republicans want to cut a lot of that. One of the things they want to cut is AmeriCorps, which actually supports programs like City Year and Teach for America which are designed to halt American decline. That's a tragedy."

— *Time* editor Richard Stengel on *The Chris Matthews Show*, March 6.

Hearings on Muslim Radicals = Joe McCarthy “Witch Hunt”

“The hearing hasn’t even started yet and already you are being compared to Joe McCarthy, hell bent on a witch hunt.... There are a lot of Muslim-Americans who are concerned about it. They’re gonna feel alienated because of it. They are fearful of it. They’re fearful of Islamophobia, more Islamophobia, in this country. How do you avoid that? Or do you care if that’s a byproduct?”

— NBC’s Meredith Vieira to Rep. Peter King (R-NY) on *Today*, March 9.



Clamoring for Higher Gas Prices

“The Republican approach is simply cut spending in meaningful ways that are not where we need to go. The real — [deficit commission co-chairman Alan] Simpson is right here about something, and that is go ahead and move Social Security to age 67. That would have a hell of an effect. Have a gas tax in this country. We could solve a lot of economic problems if we raised the gas tax. We’re not willing to do the things that involve sacrifice and hard work. What the Republicans are calling for is the elimination of programs, for the most part, that really help people.”

— Author and ex-*Washington Post* reporter Carl Bernstein on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, March 9.

Lauer vs. “Ultra-Conservative” Santorum: “Are You Barking Up the Right Tree?”

Co-host Matt Lauer: “For people who don’t remember, Senator, your time in the Senate, how would you describe yourself in terms of the political spectrum? Some have called you an ultra-conservative on social issues. Is that fair?”

Former Senator Rick Santorum: “Look, I’m a conservative. Yeah, I mean, I believe life begins at conception and I believe marriage is between a man a woman....”

Lauer: “In a recent NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll, 65 percent of people said they are most likely to vote for a candidate in 2012 who is strong on the economy, on the deficit, on jobs, not social issues. That’s not really what they are concerned about. So are you, are you barking up the right tree?”

— NBC’s *Today*, March 8.

Befuddled Brokaw Suggests GOP Lost Congress After ’95 Shutdown

“It’s a delicate game. You know, the Republicans remember what happened when they were swept in 1994, then shut down the government and were turned out not too long after that. John Boehner doesn’t want that to happen.”

— NBC’s Tom Brokaw on *Today*, March 3. After the 1995 government shutdown, Republicans maintained their Senate majority through May 2001, and kept their majority in the House of Representatives until 2007.

Obama: “Getting the Job Done With Grace and Integrity”

Q. “Which living person do you most admire, and why?”

Actress Gillian Anderson: “Obama, because against all odds, he’s getting the job done with grace and integrity.”

Q: “Which living person do you most despise?”

Anderson: “Toss up between Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck.”

— From *The Guardian*’s Q&A with the *X-Files* actress, March 5.



Became a Citizen Just to Vote for Obama

“I wanted to become a U.S. citizen so that I could vote for [Barack] Obama, that was really why. I had a green card for many years, and I lived here, I paid taxes here and I owned property here, but the only thing you can’t do with a green card is vote. I wanted to take part fully in the political process instead of just mouthing off as I do.”

— Actor Alan Cumming, who appears in CBS’s drama *The Good Wife*, in an interview with the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* published March 7.

Notable Quotables

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