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## “Voters Will Punish” GOP If They Pursue Obama’s Scandals

**Co-host Savannah Guthrie:** “I read a headline yesterday that said Republicans see blood in the water, that they see a president who’s very vulnerable politically. Is there a danger that they will overreach?”

**Correspondent Chuck Todd:** “There is. I mean, that’s what happened to Republicans in 1998 with Bill Clinton. And if all of Congress is focusing on hearings to do scandals, the voters will punish them. They’ve done it in the past.”

— NBC’s *Today*, May 16.



“The Republicans are pushing forward on this. Is it possible they may overplay their hand and somehow squander what they think is opportunity?”

— Co-host Charlie Rose to White House correspondent Major Garrett on *CBS This Morning*, May 17.

“Republicans on Capitol Hill, they’re pursuing several investigations right now. You’re even hearing talk of impeachment from some of them. Are some of their leaders worried that some of the Republicans may be overplaying their hand?”

— Co-host George Stephanopoulos to reporter Jonathan Karl on ABC’s *Good Morning America*, May 17.

## Never Heard of Fast & Furious? Solyndra?

“All of this comes as a White House that takes pride in being scandal-free has been hammered by a series of controversies....”

— Correspondent Jonathan Karl on ABC’s *World News*, May 14.

“This administration has been described, I don’t even know how many times, as remarkably scandal-free. But when you get into the second term of an administration, there’s often some dirty laundry that comes out.”

— Host Steve Inskeep on NPR’s *Morning Edition*, May 13.

“What’s so sad about it is the President has been very rightfully proud of the lack of scandal in his administration so far.”

— *Time* assistant managing editor Rana Foroohar on MSNBC’s *Now with Alex Wagner*, May 13.

## “Unfortunately,” GOP Has Real Case Against Obama

“It’s like fingernails on a chalkboard, but listening to some of the Republicans who have spoken out about this, they have something to work with here, as opposed to other times. And so, I mean, I’m mentioning Marco Rubio, who got up and was just, you know, extremely, how do I put it, was almost like a minister up there talking about what has happened. And you know what? Unfortunately, the information and the guts of the story are there, and it’s an opportunity. It’s red meat.”

— Co-host Mika Brzezinski on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, May 16.



## Sycophantic Chris Advises Obama: “Stop Taking Advice from Sycophants”

**Host Chris Matthews:** “President Obama has got to stop taking advice from sycophants who keep telling him he’s right and only they can be trusted. He needs to act. He needs to fire people....”

**Bloomberg’s Jonathan Alter:** “A lot of them [Obama’s aides] are young. Some of them are very smart and talented. But they’re all in awe of the President. They have an unhealthy love for him.”

— MSNBC’s *Hardball*, May 14.

## MSNBC Host: “Nothing Wrong” About IRS Targeting Tea Party

“I do not believe what the IRS was reported to have been doing is an outrage. I believe the IRS agents in this case did nothing wrong. Let me say it again. You won’t hear it anywhere else. The IRS agents did nothing wrong. They were simply trying to enforce the law as the IRS has understood it since 1959.”

— Host Lawrence O’Donnell on MSNBC’s *The Last Word*, May 15.



“And it is very clear that if the words ‘Tea Party,’ or the name of any political party at all appears in the title of your 501(c)(4), you absolutely do not qualify for 501(c)(4) status under the law, and you should be challenged.”

— O’Donnell on the same show the next night.

## Worst Part of IRS Scandal: “Right-Wing People Love This Story”

“There are the right-wing people out there. They love this [IRS] story, this baby. They always expect the worst. They get up in the morning figuring, well, they’re about to be picked up by the FEMA workers and taken to concentration camps or the black helicopters of New World Order, they’re coming to take their guns.”

— Host Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, May 13.

## Scandals Just Fuel for “Racist” Conservative “Haters”

“The problem is there are people in this country — maybe 10%, I don’t know what the number, maybe 20% on a bad day — who want this President to have an asterisk next to his name in the history books, that he really wasn’t President.... They can’t stand the idea that he is President, and a piece of it is racism. Not that somebody in one racial group doesn’t like somebody in another racial group. So what? It is the sense that the white race must rule. That’s what racism is. And they can’t stand the idea that a man who is not white is President.”

— Chris Matthews appearing as a guest on MSNBC’s *PoliticsNation*, May 15.



“Now they’ve got the ‘lamestream media’ also reporting on these stories, they are so excited. They’re in hog heaven. They think this is the end of Barack Obama, and they’re going to ride it for all it’s worth.... This is about gut instinct and feeling and emotion. And the only thing that conservatives and Republicans are sure of is that they hate Barack Obama, that their base hates Barack Obama, and that up to now, the media has refused to see the monster that is Barack Obama.”

— Joy-Ann Reid, editor of the NBC-owned TheGrio.com, on MSNBC’s *The Last Word*, May 16.

## Case Closed: CBS Declares No Politics at Local IRS Office

**Correspondent Dean Reynolds:** “Few workers know the IRS Cincinnati office better than Bonnie Esrig.... [to Esrig] Do you understand how it could be perceived, though, out there in the country that the administration was using the IRS to beat up on its political opponents?”

**Retired IRS employee Bonnie Esrig:** “I can see why people who would like to believe that could believe that. I just don’t think that it was realistic, and I feel certain that didn’t happen.”

**Reynolds:** “She also told us, Scott, that in her 24 years here at the IRS in Cincinnati, under two Democratic and two Republican administrations, she never heard anyone say the words, ‘the President wants this done.’”

— *CBS Evening News*, May 20.

## Real Scandal Is Voting Down ObamaCare

“You’ve got to hand it to the Republicans. In a week when they’ve obsessed over scandals, they’ve managed to miss an actual scandal. That’s their 37th vote to repeal the President’s health care law. Trying to deny a law that would literally give health care to millions of Americans is not just a waste of time, it’s an outrage.... They just want to play the political game of repeal, repeal, repeal that will go nowhere. It’s ugly politics, and it shows the continuing power of Tea Party extremism governing today’s Republican Party.”

— Host Al Sharpton on MSNBC’s *PoliticsNation*, May 17.



## Lying About Benghazi = Trying to “Control the Message”

“It’s obvious that someone mishandled something. It’s obvious, but it is looking pretty partisan when you look at all of the talking points that are being used. And let me ask this question, because the accusation is that the Obama administration in some way tried to change the talking points or water them down. And my question is, and I’m being honest about this, what administration, Ana, doesn’t try to control the message, no matter what it is?”

— Anchor Don Lemon to GOP strategist Ana Navarro on *CNN Newsroom*, May 12.



## Which Way Is It?

“Poll: Scandals threaten Obama’s agenda”

— Teaser graphic at the top of *USA Today’s* front-page, May 21.

“Poll: President holds firm amid controversies”

— Front-page headline in the *Washington Post*, same day.

## Matthews Sobers Up: Obama “Crazy” to Blame Press

MSNBC daytime host Alex Wagner: “I think his [Obama’s] own personal distaste for Washington, and his sense that the media, the right, the, sort of, chattering class has been unfair about his legislative record and accomplishments, sort of makes him want to flip the off switch sometimes, and sort of just turn the lights out for the room and say, ‘I’ve done so much for this country. Why do I need to get involved in the mud pit?’”

Host Chris Matthews: “Let me tell you something. The press has generally been pro-Obama. That’s a fact. If he doesn’t think he has gotten good press, he is crazy... This guy has probably gotten the best press since Reagan... I look at the major networks, broadcast nets. I look at us. I don’t see a lot of CNN. Where’s all this antipathy towards Obama?”

— Exchange on MSNBC’s *Hardball*, May 15.



## Blaming “Right Wing” Excess for Liberal Media’s Benghazi Failure

Howard Kurtz: “Five or six days ago, Steve Hayes of the *Weekly Standard* had much the same story, not quite in the same detail as Jon Karl did, about changes in the White House talking points, or the administration talking points, I should call them. He had examples, he had quotes. It didn’t get anywhere near the attention that it did when ABC News reported it.”...

Bloomberg’s Margaret Carlson: “Because the right wing went so far on this story — ‘it’s Watergate, it’s impeachable’ — we couldn’t hear Stephen Hayes in the *Weekly Standard*. It did take somebody [ABC’s Jon Karl] who is just a meat and potatoes reporter.”

— Talking about media coverage of the Benghazi scandal on CNN’s *Reliable Sources*, May 12.

## Failed Magazine Dares to Declare the “End” of Rush Limbaugh

“El Rushbo is still a giant in the industry, but the impact of slamming Sandra Fluke on his radio show one year ago persists.... ‘We’re watching the end of right-wing conservative talk radio,’ says Jerry Del Colliano, publisher of the radio-industry tip sheet *Inside Music Media*. ‘The genre is dying among ratings and dying among advertisers... Rush is at the end of his career.’”

— *Newsweek/Daily Beast* political director John Avlon in a May 7 article. In 2010, liberal billionaire Sidney Harman bought the flailing *Newsweek* for \$1; its final print edition was in December 2012, and the magazine now exists only as a Web-only hybrid with The Daily Beast.

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