

November 2, 2009

www.MRC.org

(Vol. 22; No. 23)

As Voters Move Right, Media Advise GOP to Move Left

“As *Politico* reported, there’s growing concern among some GOP leaders that controversial commentators and far-right conservatives have hijacked the message. People like Rush Limbaugh and Sarah Palin appeal to the base, and you certainly need that base to win elections. But in an age when 42% of Americans call themselves ‘independents,’ you can’t win with just the base, either... [A]s the number of declared Republicans hits a 26-year low, according to a poll in the *Washington Post*,... Republicans need to get the focus back onto the Big Tent where all are welcome and off the sideshows that are popping up along the party’s fringe.”

— Katie Couric in her “Katie Couric’s Notebook” video posted on CBSNews.com, October 27.



“If a new poll from the *Washington Post* and ABC News is any indication, the GOP is in the worst shape it’s been in nearly three decades. Asked which party they identified themselves with, 33% said Democratic while just 20% said Republican. Perhaps more telling, 42% said Independent. So what does it all mean? Have centrists been frightened away from the Republican Party by the right-wing birthers, tenters, and town hall screamers?”

— Co-anchor David Shuster on *MSNBC Live*, October 20. The same *Washington Post*/ABC News poll found 38% of Americans identified themselves as “conservative,” a six-point increase since January. Just 23% called themselves “liberal,” a drop of one point since January.

If Five Liberals Agree, It Must Be True

Host Chris Matthews: “Will the Republican Party be seen as a party of fiscal principle that opposed big government, or be seen as a party that’s insensitive to the health needs of regular Americans?”

NBC’s Kelly O’Donnell: “Well, the branding of calling them ‘The Party of No,’ has been really sticky-paper for them....”

Ex-CBS anchor Dan Rather: “I think they’re heavily branded as ‘The Party of No’....It hurts.”...

New York Times correspondent Helene Cooper: “I’m with these guys on it. I think they’re gonna be in a really tough spot.”

The Atlantic blogger Andrew Sullivan: “The town halls clearly hurt them....They are drowning, not waning.”

— *The Chris Matthews Show*, October 18.



Let’s Put Government In Charge of Everybody’s Pay

“The top executives of some of America’s biggest bailed out companies are about to see much smaller paychecks if the Obama administration gets what it wants....What about the suggestion... [that] if we can do this with these people that we, you know, bailed out, why wouldn’t we make this law across the board and put a governor on compensation for everybody in private enterprise?”

— CBS’s Harry Smith to Elizabeth Warren, chairman of the congressional oversight panel for TARP funds, October 22 *Early Show*.

“Clean White Suit” Obama a Victim of His Own Virtue

“The President is coming under some criticism for tonight’s big-ticket events because they are taking place just a stone’s throw away from Wall Street....One Democratic strategist said that part of the President’s problem is simply his own expectations. Some of the rhetoric he said on the campaign trail made it seem as if he was coming into office in a clean white suit. So now any speck of mud — like raising money from Wall Street donors — shows up a lot clearer than if he came in just as another politician wearing just another gray suit.”

— NBC White House correspondent Chuck Todd on *Nightly News*, October 20.

Public Perceptions of Media Bias = Fox News Spin Job?

“What gives this dust-up [with the Obama White House] special irony is that Fox News’ success comes in no small part from its ability to convince its viewers that the ‘mainstream’ media are slanted to the left.”

— CBS’s Jeff Greenfield on the October 23 *Evening News*.



Fox News: “Hateful Crap” Bordering On “Sedition”

“Let me be precise here: Fox News peddles a fair amount of hateful crap. Some of it borders on sedition. Much of it is flat out untrue. But I don’t understand why the White House would give such poisonous helium balloons as Glenn Beck and Sean Hannity the opportunity for still greater spasms of self-inflation by declaring war on Fox.... The best antidote to their garbage is elegant, intelligent governance.”

— *Time*’s Joe Klein on the magazine’s “Swampland” blog, October 23.

Bush White House “Like the Mob” in Freezing Out Reporters

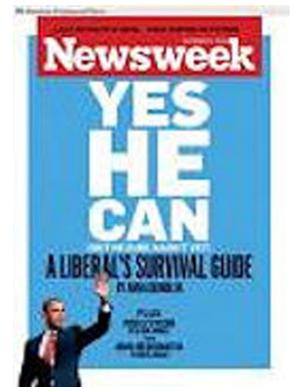
“People in administrations make short-term decisions, and I think the one to sort of go on the offensive publicly against Fox was not too bright. Now, the Bush White House did that, it just cut people dead, it froze them out, you know, it froze whole institutions out, didn’t talk about it. It was much more like the Mob. When you talk about it, you diminish your influence.”

— NPR’s Nina Totenberg on *Inside Washington*, October 23.

When “News” Mags Let Liberal Columnists Write Cover Stories

“It is dispiriting to watch the cheerleaders of American exceptionalism pound their chests and insist that our citizens do not need the kind of system that virtually every other developed nation finds workable. (By the way, if you’re confused about the public option, just ask yourself this question: would you like to be eligible for Medicare at 40 rather than 65?) As elected officials posture and temporize, families are bankrupted by health-care costs and forgo treatment they can’t afford. Statistical measures of the national health, from life expectancy to infant mortality, continue to be substandard. And because we have that system of checks and balances, in which movement usually happens slowly and sporadically, a great need for sweeping reform may be met with a jury-rigged bill neither sufficiently deep nor broad, which perhaps someday will give way to a better one, and then eventually a truly good one.”

— Anna Quindlen in *Newsweek*’s November 2 cover story, “Hope Springs Eternal: Assessing a Young Presidency.”



Chris Froths Over Conservative Award for Cheney

“Do you think Dick Cheney is weirdly helping Barack Obama, perhaps against his will? He comes back with a black tie on, a tuxedo, he and Scooter Libby both celebrating their latest trophies they got from one of these right-wing front groups.... What goddamn award — I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said it. What award are they giving these guys?... I’m sorry for using that term. It just seems so outrageous — you give a guy an award for taking us into a war that he claimed victory in before we even got started, and cost thousands of lives, and he was dead wrong on every front.”

— MSNBC’s Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, October 23.

Dick Cheney Is Criticizing Obama, So He Must Be Crazy

Co-anchor David Shuster: “Last night in a speech to a conservative group called Keeping the Flame [sic], Cheney said President Obama is putting American troops and the country in danger.... Maybe there’s something medically wrong with the Vice President or his emotional state?... What do you think he is after here, assuming that he is of some sort of rational, healthy mind?...”

Co-anchor Tamron Hall: “As a woman, of course, I read in all kinds of machismo with this language — ‘You are afraid to come out with a decision’ — almost taunting there.”

— Talking about former Vice President Cheney on *MSNBC Live*, October 22.



Touting Kid's Plea to Obama: "They're Supposed to Love You"

Anchor Charles Gibson: "President Obama went to New Orleans today, where he tried to reassure residents that the government is committed to helping them rebuild the city....After he spoke in New Orleans, he took questions, and got an interesting one from a fourth grader."

Tyren Scott, fourth grader: "Why people hate you, and why — they're supposed to love you, and God is love."

President Barack Obama: "That's what I'm talking about!"

—ABC's *World News*, October 15.



Rush Limbaugh = "Phone Sex for the Traveling Salesman"

"You say Rush Limbaugh, I say phone sex for the traveling salesman. Think about it."

—MSNBC's Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, October 13.

Laying the Groundwork for Taxpayer Support for Media

"American society must now take some collective responsibility for supporting news reporting — as society has, at much greater expense, for public education, health care, scientific advancement and cultural preservation, through varying combinations of philanthropy, subsidy and government policy....We suggest a number of public sources of support for this news reporting....A national Fund for Local News should be created with fees the Federal Communications Commission collects from or could impose on telecom users, broadcast licensees or Internet service providers."

—Former *Washington Post* Executive Editor Leonard Downie, Jr. and Columbia journalism professor Michael Schudson in an October 19 *Washington Post* op-ed.



Veteran Reporter Confirms: "The Press Is Liberal"

"The mainstream press is liberal....Since the civil rights and women's movements, the culture wars and Watergate, the press corps at such institutions as the *Washington Post*, ABC-NBC-CBS News, the *NYT*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, etc. is composed in large part of 'new' or 'creative' class members of the liberal elite — well-educated men and women who tend to favor abortion rights, women's rights, civil rights, and gay rights. In the main, they find such figures as Bill O'Reilly, Glenn Beck, Sean Hannity, Pat Robertson, or Jerry Falwell beneath contempt....If reporters were the only ones allowed to vote, Walter Mondale, Michael Dukakis, Al Gore, and John Kerry would have won the White House by landslide margins."

—Longtime *Washington Post* political reporter Thomas Edsall, now the political editor of the Huffington Post Web site, in an October 8 essay for the *Columbia Journalism Review*, "Journalism Should Own Its Liberalism."

All Liberal Women Anchors Look the Same to Us

Anchor Contessa Brewer: "Joining me now to talk about this and the nation's real problem of joblessness, the Reverend Al Sharpton. What's your reaction to hearing someone say, you know, when it comes to income inequality, all's well, the rising tide floats all boats?"

Reverend Jesse Jackson: "I'm Reverend Jesse Jackson."

Brewer: "Right, I don't — you know, I'm so sorry, the — the script in front of me said, 'Reverend Al Sharpton.' I'm looking at your face, I know who you are, Reverend Jackson, we all do. I'm sorry."

—During the 2pm ET hour of *MSNBC Live*, October 21.



Notable Quotables

PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell III

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

NEWS ANALYSTS: Geoff Dickens, Brad Wilmoth, Scott Whitlock, Matthew Balan, and Kyle Drennen

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: Michelle Humphrey

INTERN: Mike Sargent

MEDIA CONTACT: Colleen O'Boyle (703) 683-5004

November 2, 2009 (Volume 22; No. 23)

Published bi-weekly by the
Media Research Center
325 South Patrick Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Telephone: (800) 672-1423

For daily bias updates and the latest from the MRC,
visit our Web site: <http://www.MRC.org>

