How ABC, CBS, and NBC Are Deliberately Smearing the Tea Party Movement

The liberal media despise the Tea Party movement that has swept the nation because it’s effective and fundamentally upholds our conservative principles. It is regular people challenging their political leaders to obey the Constitution. It is millions upon millions of people who want lower taxes, smaller government, rule of law, and an end to the economically destructive welfare state.

In short, the Tea Party — Taxed Enough Already — represents everything the liberal media oppose. It threatens their big government agenda. This is why the liberals continually little and smear the movement, and the leftist press is trying desperately to destroy it.

In our new MRC Special Report, TV’s Tea Party Travesty: How ABC, CBS, and NBC Have Dismissed and Disparaged the Tea Party Movement, we document how the three networks have slanted their coverage of this grassroots movement in different ways, constantly inferring that the Tea Party is extreme, racist and dangerous.

In the report, by MRC Research Director Rich Noyes, we looked at all the morning and evening news shows on ABC, CBS, and NBC, as well as their Sunday talk shows and ABC’s Nightline from February 2009 through March 2010. These news shows reach a combined audience of 47 million Americans — 35 million every day during the week and then another 12 million on Sundays.

That’s huge, considering that the biggest show on cable, Fox’s The O’Reilly Factor, has an audience of 3 million a day.

Our new report shows that when the Tea Party was launched in the spring of 2009, with activists criticizing the $700 billion financial bailout, followed by the $787 billion so-called “economic stimulus,” the networks tried to ignore those voices. A typical example was NBC’s Chuck Todd, who reported on Apr. 15 that the Tea Party “idea hasn’t really caught on.”

Democratic operative Paul Begala went around tarring the activists as “just a bunch of wimpy, whiny weasels who don’t love their country.”

On July 4, 2009, the Tea Party held rallies nationwide, which the networks largely ignored. Only the CBS Evening News ran one short segment.

But as September’s off-year elections approached, and the battle over socialized medicine intensified, the networks realized that the Tea Party was having a huge impact on the public.
con-versation. So, they changed direction. Now they are smearing the movement as dangerous and racist.

On CBS's *Face the Nation* that month, Bob Schieffer prattled about “an angry nation, a nasty debate,” conservatives “protesting what they call socialism in the president’s health care plan.”

ABC’s Dan Harris labeled conservatives racists, lecturing that the movement was all about some Americans’ “refusal to accept a black president.” NBC’s Brian Williams fretted about protests speckled with “racial and other violent themes,” and ABC’s Terry Moran channeled Jimmy Carter that “it was all being fueled by racism.”

The networks’ attacks really heated up after the January 2010 election of Scott Brown, who won the Senate seat formerly held by Ted Kennedy in the People’s Republic of Massachusetts, with a lot of help from Tea Party supporters who wanted to stop ObamaCare. Brown’s shocking win was a blistering wake-up call to the liberal media.

As a result, the networks intensified their trashing of the Tea Party. They also tried to panic the GOP, fretfully reporting that the activists were also going after moderate Republicans.

CBS’s Chip Reid warned on Feb. 18, “Republican incumbents have a big problem of their own this year. Across the country, Tea Party activists are challenging sitting Republicans, claiming they’re not conservative enough.” Reid’s CBS colleague Harry Smith wondered, “Can the Republican Party exist without moderates?” (Moderate is media code for liberal.)

When Tea Party activists held a convention in Nashville in February, the networks gave it 36 mentions, much of it negative. ABC’s *World News*, for example, noted “a tone of anger and confrontation” and questioned whether the people there would ever get beyond “the fringe.”

In fact, as our report documents, 44 percent of the complete news stories (27 out of 61) broadcast by ABC, CBS, and NBC on the Tea Party — not counting the briefs and mentions — implied or stated that the movement was fringe or extremist.

That tack continued through March, particularly around the ObamaCare vote. As tens of thousands of Tea Party activists from across the country rallied in Washington, D.C., the *CBS Evening News* described it thus, “it got ugly.”

Then, with no evidence whatsoever — despite hundreds of witnesses, video cams and cell phone cams at a Capitol Hill rally — the networks breathlessly reported that Tea Party protesters had called a black congressman the N-word and spat on another lawmaker.

No evidence has surfaced to prove that either of those incidents ever happened. But the liberal networks reported them anyway to smear the Tea Party.

That’s what the liberal media do. I will continually say this: They can’t win in the battle of ideas — their ideas are intellectually and morally bankrupt. So, the networks distort the facts and trash conservatives to keep liberalism’s charade going as long as they can. It’s all they have.

And that’s why we, despite the near 50-million audience of ABC, CBS, and NBC, are documenting and exposing their deceptions every day.

Our message about liberal media bias reaches tens of millions of Americans every week through our Web sites, blog, publications, and on talk radio, cable TV, in the newspapers and across the Internet.

It is still a liberal media world, but we are devastating in our impact, as the media hits on page 7 of this newsletter document. We shall fight on, thanks to your support — and like those anti-tax protestors at Boston Harbor some 237 years ago, we will prevail.

Sincerely,

L. Brent Bozell III
Founder and President

“Hey!” To read the MRC Special Report, *TV’s Tea Party Travesty: How ABC, CBS, and NBC Have Dismissed and Disparaged the Tea Party Movement*, go to www.mrc.org and click on “Special Reports.”
The liberal media have pushed the party line on man-made global warming for the last 20 years. Even the ClimateGate scandal of November 2009 — thousands of leaked e-mails showing that some of the top warming scientists twisted and suppressed data to fit their theories — did not slow down the media’s lock-step coverage to advance the man-made global warming mantra.

A new Special Report by the Media Research Center’s Business & Media Institute documents how the liberal media have continued to promote the global warming hysteria despite ClimateGate. Furthermore, a Media Reality Check from the MRC’s News Analysis Division, 20 Years of Advocacy, Not Journalism, on Global Warming, provides examples of the media spin on this issue from the 1980s to the present.

The BMI study, Networks Hide the Decline in Credibility of Climate Change Science, shows how ABC, CBS, and NBC have been as strident in their advocacy in the months since ClimateGate as they were in the 20 years that preceded the scandal.

The study documents, for example, that it took ABC, CBS, and NBC 14 days to even mention the ClimateGate e-mail scandal, even though it involved the top scientists on the issue at the University of East Anglia’s Climatic Research Unit. Just one of the thousands of leaked e-mails read: “We can’t account for the lack of warming at the moment.”

While the alternative media on the Internet, cable news, and talk radio led the reporting on the scandal, the networks eventually aired some stories but downplayed the gravity of ClimateGate. CBS’s Wyatt Andrews, for example, belittled the e-mail evidence of deception, claiming, “if that’s true, it’s a fraud adopted by most of the world’s leading scientists.”

ABC’s Clayton Sandell largely dismissed the scandal and reported, “the science is solid.” NBC’s Anne Thompson said, “Does this controversy change the science?” and then referenced unnamed researchers who “say it doesn’t matter what’s in those e-mails — the Earth is changing.”

In the end, as BMI’s study documents, the networks aired more than six times as many global warming alarmism reports than they did stories mentioning any of the problems with the warming research (86 to 13). Furthermore, at the November 2009 Copenhagen climate conference, 75 percent of the stories broadcast by NBC (42 out of 56), for example, promoted the alarmists’ talking points.

MORE ONLINE

“As the science editor at Time, I would freely admit that on this issue we have crossed the boundary from news reporting to advocacy.” — Time’s Charles Alexander at a Sept. 16, 1989 global warming conference at the Smithsonian Institute, quoted in the Oct. 5 Wall Street Journal.

“Could global warming one day force us into space to live?” — ABC’s Sam Champion, Good Morning America, Feb. 8, 2008.

“Not doing it [fighting global warming] will be catastrophic. We’ll be eight degrees hotter in 10, not 10 but in 30 or 40 years, and basically none of the crops will grow. Most of the people will have died and the rest of us will be cannibals. Civilization will have broken down.” — CNN founder Ted Turner on PBS’s Charlie Rose, Apr. 1, 2008.

To read the BMI study and the Media Reality Check visit www.mrc.org.
Police State?

Apparently unaware that it’s a crime to enter the U.S. illegally, NYTimes.com columnist Linda Greenhouse, who was the former Supreme Court reporter for the NYT print version, wrote on Apr. 26 that Arizona’s law against illegal immigration makes it “a police state.” While Arizona’s law mirrors existing federal law, Greenhouse lectured on that it sort of creates a “system of internal passports” like they had in the Soviet Union and “apartheid-era South Africa.”

Driving home her delusional point, Greenhouse opined, “So what to do in the meantime? Here’s a modest proposal. Everyone remembers the wartime Danish king who drove through Copenhagen wearing a Star of David in support of his Jewish subjects. It’s an apocryphal story, actually, but an inspiring one. Let the good people of Arizona — and anyone passing through — walk the streets of Tucson and Phoenix wearing buttons that say: I Could Be Illegal.”

Trashing Conservatives

MSNBC’s left-wing Rachel Maddow turned to liberal historian Sam Tanenhaus, author of The Death of Conservatism, on Apr. 26 to supposedly explain why Tea Party activists aren’t ostracized by the conservative movement. Tanenhaus, who also edits the NYT’s Book Review section, predictably claimed that tea partiers are like the John Birch “foot soldiers” who backed Barry Goldwater and “the right is always nervous about evicting people like that,” who he also labeled “extremists.”

Tanenhaus went on to slam today’s prominent conservative leaders, sneering that “there are no serious ideas left on the right” and “we see who the great idea people are, the ones who pretend to be — Glenn Beck and Rush Limbaugh and all the rest. This is about as good as it’s getting now, so they don’t have a Buckley or an Irving Kristol or someone like that to call them out.”

Shoddy CNN

CNN revealed how shoddy and liberal its reporting can really be on Apr. 27 when anchor Rick Sanchez essentially read from a press release put out by the radical, pro-Islamist Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) concerning a Virginia pickup truck and its supposedly mysterious license plate. A sticker on the truck’s tailgate read, “Everything I ever needed to know about Islam I learned on 9/11.” CNN’s Sanchez, without even contacting the driver, then reported CAIR’s talking points, stating that the license plate “reads ‘14CV88.’ CAIR says that is a coded hate message.”

A coded message? Read on. “We’re told the number eight is for the eighth letter in the alphabet, ‘H,’” Sanchez continued. “Two eights equals ‘H.H.’ for ‘Heil Hitler.’ Fourteen represents imprisoned white supremacist David Lane’s motto about securing the future for white children.” The Washington Post also ran with the CAIR-concocted lunacy but later spoke with the truck’s owner. He non-cryptically pointed out that the numbers refer to . . . his two favorite NASCAR drivers: Tony Stewart, who drives car No. 14, and Dale Earnhardt Jr., who drives No. 88.

Green ‘Travesty’?

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman went ballistic on CBS’s Face the Nation on Apr. 25, railing that Congress, and particularly the GOP, is not going to pass major global warming legislation this year. In response to host Bob Schieffer, Friedman despaired, “This is a disaster. . . . This is a travesty. . . . It was all set up for Monday. We had Lindsey Graham, [John] Kerry, [Joe] Lieberman. Industry was coming down.”

But then the White House decided to place immigration ahead of Mother Earth, fretted Friedman, to try to help get Harry Reid and Barbara Boxer re-elected. It’s all about “raw politics,” he whined. “On both sides, okay? Lindsey Graham — shame on the Republican Party. There’s one Republican for advancing green energy in this country? One Republican senator dare step out? So he’s completely isolated and the Democrats are worried about Harry Reid. Have a nice day.”
NBC Pro-Crist

NBC Today’s Meredith Vieira pushed the liberal line on Apr. 30 asking Florida’s liberal Republican Charlie Crist — who switched to Independent because of a U.S. Senate primary challenge from conservative Marco Rubio — whether he deserted the GOP “or is this a case where the party has become so intolerant it no longer has room for a moderate voice?” Vieira asked Rubio the same question and then tried to undercut his strong support among Floridians by asking, “Do you feel you’re being manipulated at all by the Tea Party? Because they’re the ones that have sort of helped boost your numbers. You’ve become their darling.”

Vieira pushed the liberal line again with Rubio, questioning his criticism of Crist’s support of President Obama’s economic stimulus deal and asking, “What would you have done if you were governor? Would you not accept the money? Your state is in big trouble.” Rubio then schooled Vieira in free market economics, pointing out that deficit spending is self-defeating and that tax cuts stimulate growth and create jobs.

NBC Aid$ Left

Comedian and liberal activist Chevy Chase let slip on the Apr. 22 Today show that as part of a charity Earth Day auction to raise money for leftist environmental groups, NBC’s Matt Lauer was offering his own donation: a guided tour of the Today studio. Chase explained that he was emcee-ing the Christie’s auction, “a green auction, it’s to save the Earth,” and added that the money raised would go to groups like the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a hard left environmental organization.

Among the items being auctioned, said Chase, included “golf with President Clinton” and “a tour of the Today show with Matt Lauer.” Lauer’s NBC colleague Al Roker noted that “all the profits go to those organizations,” such as the NRDC. Chase then joked that, after the auction, “I always celebrate Earth Day quietly at home with a bonfire and some liquor.”
Arizona’s 21-Bottle Salute

Arizona officially joined the South in April. In other words, it became for our Northeastern media elitists a state dominated by backward, slack-jawed racists. The Associated Press marked the passage of a tough new anti-immigration law with the leftist version of a Welcome Wagon: “The furor over Arizona’s new law cracking down on illegal immigrants grew Monday as opponents used refried beans to smear swastikas on the state Capitol.”

Disagreeing with the left — and more importantly, handing them a political defeat — brings a lot of ugliness these days from the forces of “tolerance.” Character assassination is required. A citizen of Arizona cannot be concerned about higher rates of crime and strained government budgets without being Mexican-food-smearied as an adorer of Adolf Hitler.

But what’s truly outrageous if not surprising is that the same media that visibly quivered with anger that anyone would draw a Hitler moustache on their hero Barack Obama now present these Nazi smears as not an embarrassment to the left, but as a way of augmenting the left. The “furor was growing” over the tough new law, they dutifully report.

On the CBS Evening News, Katie Couric calmly forwarded as credible the Nazi charge against those who support enforcing federal immigration laws. On April 23, CBS reporter Bill Whitaker suddenly liked the Catholics: “In Los Angeles, Cardinal Roger Mahony, head of the country’s largest Catholic archdiocese, called the law mean-spirited and compared it to Nazi oppression.”

On April 26, CBS spotlighted a swastika sign with the words “Achtung! Papers Please,” and Couric relayed the AP line that “some of those opponents vandalized the state capital building, smearing refried beans in the shape of swastikas on the windows.” Ho hum.

Don’t these “journalists” see the contradiction? Are they really that blind, or that dumb?

A month ago, when the Tea Party movement brought their ardor to Capitol Hill against a government takeover of the health industry, “ugly” was the defining word.

Here’s David Muir on ABC’s March 20 World News: “Protesters against the plan gathered on the streets of the Capitol, where late today we learned words shouted turned very ugly — reports of racial and homophobic slurs, one protester actually spitting on a Congressman.” There were no arrests, and no actual proof of the “slurs” alleged. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver backed off the claim he was spit on. The N-word was never used, as so dishonestly claimed.

And still, the Tea Party is “very ugly.”

When protesters are left-wing, how it changes. Look at the Arizona coverage. On the same network on April 24, ABC reporter Mike von Fremd was spinning wildly: “Riot police were called in to try and control demonstrators protesting outside the capital. Most were peaceful. A handful threw bottles at police and were arrested.”

This spin line — that rioting protesters were “mostly peaceful” — was repeated by the New York Times, and by CNN (who called them “largely peaceful”). The Times made sure its photo choices radiated sympathy for the protesters. On Saturday, they stood enveloped in a huge American flag. On Sunday, they were holding a sober candlelight vigil. There were no photos of a cop getting hit in the head with a bottle. ABC and NBC noted the protests, and mentioned neither the violence, nor the “mostly peaceful” spin.

A leftist protester of the World Bank was also arrested in Washington on April 24 for felony assault on a policeman, one of eight arrests. No one heard about that violence. Media liberals may dismiss the notion of violence by insisting that policemen haven’t been hospitalized.

But leftist protests, in the architecture of their organizing principles, rely on making days miserable for police, forcing arrests for disturbing the peace, on forcibly blocking traffic and then going limp and forcing officers carry them to jail. In the interest of drawing media attention, they often plan on violence against policemen and property. They must sneer at conservative protests as placid garden parties by comparison.

And the tea party protesters are the “ugly,” “violent” ones.

A Washington Post article glorifying this last weekend’s leftist jog in our nation’s capital as a “run on the bank” to “destroy capitalism” offered a telling line. One protester described the expected behavior for their “convergence space” before protest activities, warning “Don’t be a jackass in the neighborhood. Save that for downtown.”

The sick joke in that line is that protesters can be as aggressive and offensive anywhere they want, and they can count on their media sympathizers to romanticize their struggle against whatever power structure that has failed to bow to their utopian wishes.
The experts at the Media Research Center are interviewed almost every day on stories of national importance, often reaching millions of Americans daily. They provide analysis and commentary on radio, TV, the Internet, in magazines, books and in newspapers, always striving to help restore political balance to the major media. Some of the MRC’s latest media appearances include the following:

**Television**

**CBN:** NewsWatch, Apr. 14, 15

**CNN:** Rick Sanchez, Apr. 19

**FNC:** America’s Newsroom, May 7

Fox & Friends, Apr. 13, 22

Hannity, Apr. 22, 29, May 6

Special Report with Brett Baier, Apr. 20, May 4

**MSNBC:** Countdown, Apr. 9

**Radio**

Mark Levin Show, Apr. 15, 29

Rush Limbaugh Show, Apr. 28

Lars Larson Show, Apr. 13, 15, 22

American Family Radio, Apr. 20

Thom Hartmann Show, Apr. 13, 20

Frank Beckmann Show, Apr. 19

Steve Malzberg Show, Apr. 9

True News Radio, Apr. 19

National Public Radio, Apr. 16

USA Radio Network, Apr. 21

WIBC, Indianapolis, IN, Apr. 9, 15, 22

WIBA, Madison, WI, Apr. 9, 13, 16, 19, 23

NRA News, Apr. 8, 15, 22

KFMB, San Diego, CA, Apr. 21

KKTX, Corpus Christi, TX, Apr. 12, 19, 21

WAFG, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Apr. 26

WTKF, Greenville, NC, Apr. 9, 16, 23

WMUZ, Detroit, MI, Apr. 22

WENY, Corning, NY, Apr. 1, 14, 21

KBAR, Burley, ID, Apr. 6, 15, 22

KRLG, Clearwater, FL, Apr. 5, 19

KSLR, San Antonio, TX, Apr. 15, 19

WAMT, Orlando, FL, Apr. 15

KPAM, Portland, OR, Apr. 13

WTAN, Tampa Bay, FL, Apr. 16

WIZC, Lacrosse, WI, Apr. 16, 19

KSCJ, Sioux City, IA, Apr. 20

WCHE, Westchester, PA, Apr. 16

- PARTIAL LISTING

**Internet**

Drudge Report, Apr. 18, 26, 27, 28

Fox Nation, Apr. 29

WSJ.com, Apr. 19

Spero News, Apr. 16

LifeNews.com, Apr. 22

FoxNews.com, Apr. 22

Pajamas Media, Apr. 7

Big Hollywood, Apr. 29

LifeSite.com, Apr. 7

BigJournalism, Apr. 13

Human Events blog, Apr. 21

Breitbart.com, Apr. 15

CBN.com, Apr. 13

WashPost blog, Apr. 13

NewsMax, Apr. 14

HotAir.com, A0

Townhall.com, Apr. 20, 30

RightSideNews, Apr. 28

Examiner.com, Apr. 23

- PARTIAL LISTING

**Print**

Washington Times, Apr. 7, 9, 14, 16

The Tennessean, Apr. 4

Chattanooga Times-Free Press, Apr. 7

New York Times, Apr. 15

U.S. News & World Report, Apr. 13

Washington Post, Apr. 13

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, Apr. 12

Columbus Ledger-Enquirer, Apr. 14

Catholic News Agency, Apr. 18

Wall Street Journal, Apr. 23

Washington Business Journal, Apr. 20

Politico, Apr. 6

The Atlantic, Apr. 29

Investor’s Business Daily, Apr. 15

TIME magazine, Apr. 29

- PARTIAL LISTING

National Journal Hotline, Apr. 7

National Review Online, Apr. 8

History News Network, Apr. 15

RushLimbaugh.com, Apr. 29

Fox’s Special Report with Brett Baier illustrated a NewsBusters story on May 4 about how MSNBC’s Contess Brewer was “frustrated” that the Times Square bomber was a Muslim.

On Fox’s Hannity, host Sean Hannity cited MRC research about liberal media bias against the Tea Party movement and interviewed MRC President Brent Bozell about the topic on May 7.

Dan Gainor, Vice President of Business and Culture at the MRC, appeared on the May 7 broadcast of Fox News’ America Live to discuss the double standard at Comedy Central when it comes to mocking religious figures.

MRC President Brent Bozell analyzed the liberal media’s biased coverage of the Times Square Islamist bomber on the May 7 Fox & Friends.
ABC’s Sam Donaldson seriously proposes Al Gore for the Supreme Court, “I think he’s confirmable” and “I think he might make a very good justice.” ■ Washington Post columnist Anne Applebaum, quoting a British friend, opines that the Iceland volcano is “judgment for the bad things we have done to the Earth.” ■ MSNBC’s Chris Matthews warns, “Coming up, what happens to Republicans who don’t march to the right-wing tune? Well, they’re getting purged. This is Stalinesque, this stuff.” ■ Bloomberg Editor Al Hunt tut-tuts the tea party, “They love Glenn Beck and they’re skeptical of John McCain. That’s not America.” ■ Washington Post columnist Kathleen Parker frets on CBS that with conservative opinion on the Internet, “people who are not well-grounded and who may have these more violent tendencies suddenly find a place where they can convene and find validation and even find company … it’s kind of scary.” ■ MSNBC contributor slams John McCain and the Arizona primary: “The ultimate sadness is that, here, in the 21st century, running for re-election, he shows more fear of J.D. Hayworth than he showed toward his captors in North Vietnam.” ■ Concerning the legal challenges to the health care law, ABC’s Cokie Roberts warns, “I was just with my grandkids at Fort Sumter, and the notion of nullification made me extremely nervous because it was, of course, the first step toward the Civil War. But that is going to be a huge question before the Court this fall.” ■ CNN’s Joy Behar slams Arizona’s illegal immigration law as “immoral and it reeks of fascism.” ■ Also, NYT’s Tim Egan rants that Arizona’s “crackpot laws owe their genesis to the crackpots who dominate Republican politics, who in turn cannot get elected without the backing of crackpot media.” ■ HBO’s Bill Maher goes crude, again, against Sarah Palin and Michelle Bachmann, and labels them “MILFs — they’re Morons I’d Like to Forget.”