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TPMDC

From Dollars To Death Panels: How Republicans Distorted Debates On Capitol Hill

Brian Beutler | November 27, 2009, 8:42AM

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With Thanksgiving recess now upon us, it seems an appropriate time to revisit the hysterical Republican whoppers and talking points about the Democratic party agenda that have dominated this Congress. Herewith a top-five list:

Number Five: Paul Ryan Draws Line On Graph



Back in the Spring, when Democrats were putting together the federal budget, House Budget Committee ranking member Paul Ryan (R-WI) released a much-mocked

Republican alternative, which would have basically canceled the stimulus and instituted a spending freeze of sorts. The ideas in the Republican alternative budget were roundly rebuked by experts, but Ryan wasn't deterred. Instead of accepting defeat, he unveiled some graphs suggesting that, under Republican budgets, spending would be restrained, while under Democratic budgets, it would blow through the roof.

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Obama	Approve 49%, Disapprove 42% Nov 28 Gallup
WI-GOV	Barrett (D) 41%, Neumann (R) 39% Nov 27 PPP (D)
WI-GOV	Barrett (D) 46%, Thompson (R) 41% Nov 27 PPP (D)
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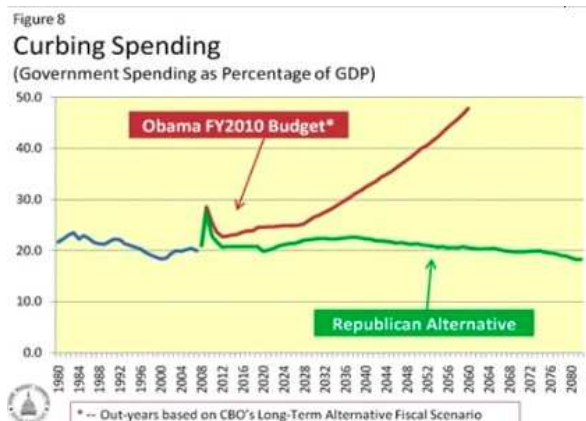
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8. Obama Issues New Orders On Afghanistan
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TPM Top News



Obama Issues Orders For More U.S. Troops In Afghanistan



Except his numbers weren't based on any analysis at all. Instead, Ryan used CBO numbers through 2018 and then drew an upward-sloping line on the graph completely at random. It didn't take long for Republicans to catch on and begin claiming that Democratic policies would make government spending half of GDP before the end of the century.

Number Four: Senate Health Care Bill Will Cost \$2.5 Trillion

This one's **only now catching on**, and it's a doozy. Hours after the CBO released an analysis of Senate health care legislation last week, Senate Budget Committee ranking member Judd Gregg (R-NH) released a statement: "American taxpayers are about to see an unprecedented expansion of the federal government that will cost a staggering \$2.5 trillion when fully implemented." From there, it **went viral**. The



provenance of this number is unclear. It could have come from Michael Cannon of the CATO institute, who'd been **bandying it about for a little while**. Democrats do, in fact, hide some of the cost of implementing the legislation in the CBO's 10 year window. But not \$1.7 trillion (or two times the bill's CBO cost) worth. Now it's on the lips of every Republican in the Senate. (Relatedly, Republicans in the House claimed that an early version of House health care legislation would cost \$1.6 trillion. That wasn't true either.)



Bill Press: Beck Is A 'Ticking Time Bomb' Who Will 'Explode In The Face Of Roger Ailes'



Ensign: Candidates *Want Me To Campaign* For Them



Family Guy Mocks Chris Matthews' Inflated Ego

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Number Three: Republicans Try Math



It seems like so long ago that the House passed far-reaching cap and trade legislation. Before they did, though, the GOP did its best to raise the specter of another energy crisis, thanks to a new, and tyrannical "light switch tax." To underscore their point, they claimed that, based on an MIT study, cap and trade legislation could cost the average household \$3,128 a year. Too bad the author of that study claimed it was **all hogwash**. That didn't deter leading Republicans, **including House Minority Leader John Boehner**, from repeating the number over and over again until the day the American Clean Energy and Security Act **passed on the House floor**.

Number Two: Inhofe Says Obama 'Gutting Our Military'

This one needs little introduction:



Washington: Local Mom Makes \$77/hr Online!
Unemployed Mom Makes \$6,397/Month Working Online!
Read How She Did It.

Acai Berry Scam EXPOSED!

Washington Warning! Read this before you buy any Acai berry Product



His claim was based on a meme, which made the rounds in early April, that the White House's call for a modest increase in defense spending amounted to a "defense spending cut." Inhofe took it to a whole new level. And to add insult to injury, **he was in Afghanistan at the time**.

Number One: Death Panels



It's possible that if TPM's Eric Kleefeld hadn't **pored over every word in this rambling Facebook post** by Sarah Palin, somebody else would have stumbled across it. But it's also possible that it would have gone unnoticed, and we would have had a *very* different political summer. "The America I know and love is not one in which my parents or my baby with Down Syndrome will have to stand in front of Obama's "death panel" so his bureaucrats can decide, based on a subjective judgment of their "level of productivity in society," whether they are worthy of health care." Her rendering, 'death panel', gave voice to some fringe conservatives who had been chattering about how the confluence of rationing and end-of-life counseling would lead to euthanasia. They were wrong, of course, but their wrongness was confined to the fever swamps until, with Palin's help, it became the talk of the August town halls. In a way, when more mainstream Republicans **began echoing the term**, it marked the end of bipartisanship in health care reform. The uncontested winner.

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realist NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:00 AM



Another distortion, particularly by Southern and Sunbelt conservatives, is decrying pork spending and earmarks yet greedily accepting defense industries and military bases in their districts.

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Acewrap NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:31 AM in reply to realist



That's not distortion, just hypocrisy.

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theWalrus NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:15 AM



One of my favorites is Rep. Steve King (R-IA) saying, on video - while reading from the bill - that it says in the bill "encourage the promotion of suicide or assisted suicide.." [It does!] He does that by completely ignoring the wording on the previous pages that specifically states "NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL--".

That's a doozy!

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JEP07 NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:08 AM in reply to theWalrus



Where's Bachman(R-MN)? Or Jenkins(R-KS)?

Steve King isn't on this list, probably because of the sheer triviality of each of his "episodes" but I do believe if you add them all together, they constitute an imminently qualified distorter of the first magnitude.

I hereby tender my official complaint that Rep. King(R-IA) is not on this list, maybe the TPM crew should have worked a bit harder and offered a 10 name list.

There are certainly more than that many available! I just offered three more imminently qualified distorters, two more should be easy enough to find to round out the top ten.

Not that I disagree with the people already offered, or their position on this list, but c'mon, guys, there's an iceberg under that tip! And I think you missed the most egregious, yet least wordy distortion of them all..

"YOU LIE!!!"

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JEP07 NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:11 AM in reply to JEP07



"slit our wrists" Bachman and "great white hope" Jenkins...

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sbv NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:18 AM



as i watched a neighbor hang their american flag upside down, i was reminded of the aldous huxley quote, "Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored," along with "don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up," or those who are non-democrats, will believe anything but the truth.

the good ol' gop learned quite well, after successfully lying this country and the world into an unnecessary and unpaid for war, they could lie about anything; in fact the bigger the lie, the more people will believe it.

has there ever been a president, elected by an overwhelming majority of americans, who has been so criticized so soon on everything? of course, though, credit must be given where credit is due and that is clearly at the feet of the msm and their enabling and validating these lies.

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Lalo35adr NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:31 AM



Seems like Paul Ryan borrowed "the trick" from the global warming scientists, I mean activists, on temperature data to create the same hockey stick effect.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

Clavis NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:29 AM in reply to Lalo35adm



OMG! It's a conspiracy!!! Where's your tinfoil hat to protect you from the global warming mind-control satellites!!!!?

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

ericf NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:51 AM in reply to Lalo35adm



Wow, scientists debating science and showing proper disrespect to deniers. What more proof does anyone need global warming is made up?*

*Please ignore all climate changes occurring.

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The Reluctant Conspiracy Theorist

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 2:07 PM in reply to ericf



I won't deny climate changes on earth. I deny it is man-made. Can you explain what is causing global warming on Mars? I don't think we have inhabited that planet and are wreaking our usual havoc on it.

The only science practiced by scientists that promote the man-kind caused global warming agenda is political science.

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mass_mu

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 2:27 PM in reply to The Reluctant Conspiracy Theorist



Yes! And the earth changed for billions of years before there were people! That pretty much debunks the whole global warming myth. If there were no people, how did it the climate change before! And on Mars, there are no people and it is changing every day! I am surprised that the logic of this has not dawned on the tree hugging pot smokers that hate democracy.

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slb

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 4:37 PM in reply to The Reluctant Conspiracy Theorist



Nobody disputes that natural factors can cause average global temperatures to fluctuate, nor that such things may occur in long cycles. But just because nature itself can be an additional factor does not mean that human activity can be ignored, nor does it mean that human activity cannot have an effect that dwarfs the natural factors.

The best scientific evidence suggests that human activity is having a significant influence on average global temperatures. To ignore that because it is inconvenient is the utmost folly.

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Dr Lemming

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 12:00 PM in reply to Lalo35adm



Lalo is just painted a, "Look, I'm a troll!" sign on himself. However, his posting is valuable in illustrating a Republican distortion that could have significant long-range impacts. Republican denialist tactics regarding global warming have been all too effective at reducing public understanding of this issue.

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The Reluctant Conspiracy Theorist

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 3:25 PM in reply to Dr Lemming



And Dr. Lemming's sign says he's a man-made global warming kool-aid drinker who is unable or unwilling to separate climate science from political science. Again, I ask...what is responsible for the global warming on Mars?

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calgarr

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 5:55 PM in reply to The Reluctant Conspiracy Theorist



Well, since you asked...the respected scientific journal Science printed a short article in 2001 regarding the general climate conditions, and this topic was elaborated on during a press release in 2005 held by the Mars General Circulation Model (GCM) team at NASA. Their conclusion is that the climate change currently being seen at the southern pole is regional, not global, and is the result of the unusual topography of the area (which is typically subject to massive dust storms which have far-reaching effects on the climate).

In closing, "Thus inferring global warming from a 3 Martian year regional trend is unwarranted. The observed regional changes in south polar ice cover are almost certainly due to a regional climate transition, not a global phenomenon, and are demonstrably unrelated to external forcing. There is a slight irony in people rushing to claim that the glacier changes on Mars are a sure sign of global warming, while not being swayed by the much more persuasive analogous phenomena here on Earth..."

Satisfied?

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h1yaaagu

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 6:05 PM in reply to calgarr



Thank you Calgarr for posting that response. I love the way that the troll is gone not that you've presented an actual answer to her question. She will now leave this forum in order to find another where she can spew lies and propaganda.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

calgarr

NOVEMBER 27, 2009 7:57 PM in reply to h1yaaagu



I guess that's the litmus test of honest debate, right? If you can raise a



counter-point with well reasoned logic and verifiable sources, but they neither change their mind nor reply in kind, they are not being honest with regards to their position. People like that deserve no respect and certainly no attention should be paid to their arguments. And there's something to be said for determining who is worth arguing with.

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kenner NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:13 PM in reply to [The Reluctant Conspiracy Theorist](#)



We don't live on Mars, do you? Are you a scientist? You are aware that they are different planets, right? Are the rainforests on Mars shrinking because people want cheap wood? Who is pumping millions of tons into the Martian atmosphere? The system is being changed here on Earth, to ignore it is folly.

"unable or unwilling to separate climate science from political science" This describes you, not the good doctor. The science is there. You can ignore it, but we choose not to.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

kenner NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:16 PM in reply to [kenner](#)



that should read 'millions of tons of carbon dioxide and pollutants'

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

CityGuy NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:32 AM



Lies and the lying liars that tell them. Hammer it home to the GOP in 2010!

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

FebM NOVEMBER 27, 2009 9:49 AM



Another TMP obsession with their covergirl Palin.....

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JEP07 NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:18 AM



You've got a good start on a great thread here, Brian.

Maybe this could be extrapolated out to "Distortions, Equivocations and Deceptions" it would probably be a great little book (maybe not so little) by the time you were done with each category.

These all used to be done with such subtle subterfuge, but since the election, there is no subtlety left in them, they are so desperate they have become transparent.

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bondwool NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:38 AM



The GOP is in such tatters that lies are all they have left. It's too bad, because two-party systems don't work that well without two parties.

Here's what they could do to re-brand:

Take That, GOP!

(satire)

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ilovebaco NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:44 AM



Sarah SquareGlasses has aged 12 years in the past 12 months. Tabloids should have fun kicking her around for another couple years.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

hquain NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:46 AM



Isn't there a cautionary tale, of the "sleeping dogs" variety, shouting to be heard here? If TPM's Eric Kleefeld is responsible for publicizing the "death panels" meme, as claimed, and if that did as much as anything to stall HCR, then shouldn't TPM be worrying about its role, instead of (as is usual in the sort-of-left-ish sort-of-web-ish media world these days) obsessing about the bad guys?

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wyt NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:36 AM in reply to [hquain](#)



I read it that way at first too. But, in taking an obvious lie and seeing who would subscribe to it, hasn't the entire Republican leadership been irrevocably tarnished in the eyes of those millions of Americans who care about honest truth? That's undoubtedly a minority of us. Still, it takes us out of contention - at most the Republicans can hope the Democrats will similarly tarnish themselves with lies so we don't vote. Because we will never vote for a Republican again.

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Reefdanc NOVEMBER 27, 2009 10:50 AM



One lesson to be learned from this: Ignore Palin's FB page and maybe she'll sink back into her hole.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

Odel Roo NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:17 AM in reply to Reefdancer



No she won't TPM will always have stories on her. There is that ole "love hate thing" going on.

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ilovebaco NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:07 AM



Now TPM is helping to make the "biggest Democratic political scandal you've never heard of" big news. Huh?

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

Lok52 NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:22 AM in reply to ilovebacon



I believe that is called "reporting the news." It is a rare beast in the wild, most "news reporters" now being domesticated and taught to heel. But every once in a while, it does appear, seemingly from nowhere.

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bogglesth NOVEMBER 27, 2009 12:02 PM in reply to ilovebacon



Corruption is corruption.

No one gets a free pass.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

warbaby NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:26 AM



The Big Lie is so effective because once you've conned them, the dupes will walk through fire rather than walk it back.

It's called cognitive dissonance. Between that and homophobia, the Republicans don't have any issues left.

It's just embarrassing when the opposition party has no responsible adults left to front for them.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

Icon NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:28 AM



"Party of No" is so last summer. They should now be called "Party of Lie".

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

ilovebaco NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:34 AM



I'm all for reporting news. But this "big scandal" just pales in comparison to Abramoff, et al.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

imagiste NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:44 AM



Lying, factmaking, fearmongering gives the GOP and its downwind relations a larger political playbook.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

Odel Roo NOVEMBER 27, 2009 11:52 AM in reply to imagiste



Lying, factmaking, fearmongering gives the Democrats and its downwind relations a larger political playbook.

They both play the same games. A slightly different playbook, but the game is the same.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

MyMy NOVEMBER 27, 2009 1:14 PM



Just saw on Huff Post that back in September Obama kicked all industry lobbyists off federal advisory boards.

While the entire press, blogs included, chased the ugliness of right wing tea partiers, and lying Republican congressmen, this happened. And NO ONE NOTICED.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

Johnbo NOVEMBER 28, 2009 6:42 AM



One of my favorite Re THUG LIE CON distortions is that the health care bill will take away your gun. Ok, in their defense, maybe they meant it would make your penis shrivel.

[REPLY](#) | [FLAG ABUSE](#)

akw



NOVEMBER 28, 2009 7:39 PM

ObamaCare's Cost Could Top \$6 Trillion

November 27, 2009

by Michael F. Cannon

Congressional Democrats are using several budget gimmicks to disguise the cost of their health care overhaul, claiming the House and Senate bills would cost only (!) about \$1 trillion over 10 years. Now that critics have begun to correct for those budget gimmicks, supporters of ObamaCare are firing back.

One gimmick makes the new entitlement spending appear smaller by not opening the spigot until late in the official 10-year budget window (2010–2019). Correcting for that gimmick in the Senate version, Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH) estimates, “When all this new spending occurs” — i.e., from 2014 through 2023 — “this bill will cost \$2.5 trillion over that ten-year period.”

Another gimmick pushes much of the legislation’s costs off the federal budget and onto the private sector by requiring individuals and employers to purchase health insurance. When the bills force somebody to pay \$10,000 to the government, the Congressional Budget Office treats that as a tax. When the government then hands that \$10,000 to private insurers, the CBO counts that as government spending. But when the bills achieve the exact same outcome by forcing somebody to pay \$10,000 directly to a private insurance company, it appears nowhere in the official CBO cost estimates — neither as federal revenues nor federal spending. That’s a sharp departure from how the CBO treated similar mandates in the Clinton health plan. And it hides maybe 60 percent of the legislation’s total costs. When I correct for that gimmick, it brings total costs to roughly \$2.5 trillion (i.e., \$1 trillion/0.4).

Here’s where things get really ugly. TPMDC’s Brian Beutler calls “the” \$2.5-trillion cost estimate a “doozy” of a “hysterical Republican whopper.” Not only is he incorrect, he doesn’t seem to realize that Gregg and I are correcting for different budget gimmicks; it’s just a coincidence that we happened to reach the same number.

When we correct for both gimmicks, counting both on- and off-budget costs over the first 10 years of implementation, the total cost of ObamaCare reaches — I’m so sorry about this — \$6.25 trillion. That’s not a precise estimate. It’s just far closer to the truth than President Obama and congressional Democrats want the debate to be.

Beutler and other supporters of ObamaCare can react to this news in two ways. They can continue to deny the enormous cost of the legislation they support. Or they can question how President Obama’s health plan came to be so blessedly expensive, and how (and by whom) they were duped into thinking it wasn’t.

<http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/2009/11/27/obamacares-cost-could-top-6-trillion/>

REPLY | FLAG ABUSE

inokeah

NOVEMBER 28, 2009 11:14 PM



Thank you TPM for another Gov. Sarah Palin story. I hope you never stop the free publicity. I know you dont have a clue why she is so popular. So keep up the good work.

At least you are not covering the refunding of ACORN by the Act'g Ass. AG David Barron action by order of AG Eric Holder by order of President Stupidly.
Children being imported for use in whore house in poor neighborhoods
This is Social Justice Obama style

REPLY | FLAG ABUSE

shooter24

NOVEMBER 29, 2009 2:00 PM



* re: the graph. The bump from 20% of GDP to nearly 30% is done. Only the foolish should believe it's ever going to go lower.

* Yes Healthcare will cost almost triple the projections. The projections are based on unrealistic assumptions.

* Yes, there are death panels.

* Cap and Tax is mortally wounded and dying a slow but certain death.

Keep up the good work.

REPLY | FLAG ABUSE

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