

# MEDIA FAIRNESS CAUCUS

## *A Look at Media Bias*

Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), Chairman

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## Networks Spell Scandal Without the 'D'

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During the week after South Carolina's Republican Governor admitted to having extramarital affair, the three broadcast networks ran a combined 49 stories on the affair and immediately identified the Governor as a Republican, according to the Media Research Center. The huge amount of coverage came even in the midst of several major stories such as the continuing repression in Iran and Michael Jackson's death.

**In contrast, the networks and other members of the national media have largely ignored the scandals plaguing a number of Democrat elected officials and failed to mention their party affiliation.**

For example, the day after the Governor of Illinois was removed from office last year, not one network news report mentioned that he is a Democrat. CNN ignored the party affiliation of the Democratic Mayor of Baltimore as news broke that she had been indicted. The AP did the same while covering the indictment of the former Democratic Mayor of Detroit. And in the aftermath of his sex scandal, network newscasts apparently forgot that the former Governor of New York is a Democrat.

## CBS Ignores Obama, Stimulus as Unemployment Soars

The unemployment rate jumped to 9.5 percent last month, the highest in 26 years.

**However, the day after the announcement CBS Evening News aired a story that did not mention President Obama or his "stimulus" bill even once.** The same day, NBC only showed a brief clip of the President defending his economic policies.

In contrast, during ABC World News anchor Charlie Gibson said: "Tonight, job jolt. Unemployment reaches a 26-year high. Where are all those jobs the economic stimulus was supposed to produce?" Gibson later said: "The rising unemployment raises questions about the economic stimulus, which was supposed to create jobs."

## White House Press Corps Criticize Administration

In a rare example of the media holding the Obama Administration accountable, **members of the White House Press Corps last week strongly criticized White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs for the Administration's use of handpicked audiences and prepackaged questions during President Obama's Town Hall speeches.**

Chip Reid of ABC news referred to the Town Hall questions and audiences as "tightly controlled" by the Obama Administration. Another press corps member asked where the "dissenting views" were in the Town Hall questions being asked of the President. Gibbs laughed off the questions and tried to postpone the discussion to a later date.

Helen Thomas of the Hearst Corporation responded to Gibbs by saying, "No, no, no. We're having [the discussion] now." She then called the Administration's media control "shocking."

