



Written by [Ralph R. Reiland](#) on September 21, 2009

## Burying the News About the Tea Party March on D.C.

On the morning after the huge 9/12 tea party march on Washington, there wasn't much surprise in the lobby of our D.C. hotel about the coverage in the New York Times about the previous day's event, a massive rally that Rep. Mike Pence of Indiana, the third-ranking Republican leader in the House of Representatives, described as "the largest gathering of conservatives in American history."

One could add that it was the largest march in favor of capitalism in U.S. history. Who'd ever think that we'd need such a thing?



The *Times* ran a photo of the march on page 1, below the fold, but no article. Readers were instructed to go to page 37 for the coverage.

Two other stories were deemed more important for the *Times'* front page. One, "Awakening Brooklyn for Ramadan, with a Big Drum, at 4 A.M.," was about a Pakistani immigrant, Mohammad Boota, who beats his drum in the middle of the night on the sidewalks, a tradition that's designed to rouse sleepers, explains the *Times*, "so they can eat a meal before the day's fasting begins."

It seems not to have occurred to Boota that alarm clocks would do the trick, ringing all across Brooklyn on the night stands of his fellow worshippers. With just the adoption of that small bit of Western technology, the late-night bar crowd, with heads already banging, could avoid being jolted out of bed by an added dose of banging from the street the minute their heads hit the pillow.

"Everywhere they complain," Boota is quoted as saying. "People go, 'What the h\*\*\*? What you doing, man?' They never know it's Ramadan."

A photo of Boota making his pre-dawn racket on the sidewalk is about twice as large as the *Times'* photo of the protest rally.

The other front-page story that beat out coverage of the march, "In Wisconsin, Hopeful Signs For Factories," reports that a Rockwell factory in Mequon "reinstated a shift, hiring a dozen workers." A sign, I suppose, that Obamanomics is working its magic.

I went to page 37 to read the *Times'* coverage of the rally and nothing was there except a story about a New York politician looking for illegals on a duck farm and an article about how an uninsured woman got an E-coli infection from a hamburger and now owes \$400 a month in medical bills, "Without Health Care, and Just a Hamburger From Financial Ruin."

I eventually found the *Times'* article on the protest on page 33, directly facing an article on page 32 about President's Obama's brief stop at the Target Center in Minneapolis on the same day. The headlines described events of rough equivalency.

The headline about Obama's speech at the partly-empty Target facility: "Thousands Rally in Minnesota Behind Obama's Call for Health Care Overall."



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The *Times*' headline about the Washington rally's overflowing crowd (estimated at "as many as one million people" by London's *Daily Mail*): "Thousands Attend Broad Protest of Government."

At least one major news outlet noted the discrepancy. Reporting that Obama was "addressing a crowd numbering only a fraction of the total that turned out on the streets of Washington — 15,000 health reform supporters at the Target Center in Minneapolis, a venue that can hold over 25,000," *Investor's Business Daily* asked this question: "When Americans have to turn to the foreign press for truthful reports of the size of popular protests in Washington, it's time to wonder: Are we dominated by 'state-run media'?"

There wasn't much wondering among the marchers about the mainstream media's bias. Raising reasonable issues all summer at tea parties and town halls, they'd been either ignored or labeled as "Nazis," "unAmerican," "Brown Shirts," "an angry mob," "evil-mongers" — or as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi put it, "astroturfers."

This time around, in vast and growing numbers, they carried homemade placards with slogans like "Can You Hear Us Now?," "Hey Nancy, Ever See Astroturf Grow This Fast?," "Axis of Evil: NBC, CBS, ABC."

They weren't alone. A Pew Research survey, released the following day, showed that only 29 percent of Americans believe that news organizations generally get their facts right, a two-decade low.

My favorite placards: "The Primitives are Pissed!," "Where Will Canadians Go If We Socialize Health Care?," "ACORN: A Sheltered Environment for Growing Nuts," "Keep Pushing Us — See What Happens!," "Czars, NYET!," "We Came Unarmed — This Time!."

And these — all good pro-capitalist economics: "My Life's Work Is Not the Government's Slush Fund," "Atlas Has Shrugged," "Spread My Work Ethic, Not My Wealth," "John Galt Was Right."

??And the best: "Help Me Obama! They Want Me to Work and Stuff."

**Ralph R. Reiland** is an associate professor of economics at Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh.



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