

Notable Quotables

August 19, 2002 (Vol. Fifteen; No. 17)

A bi-weekly compilation of the latest outrageous, sometimes humorous, quotes in the liberal media.



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

Time's Hype About Clinton Plan...

"Winter proposals became a victim of the transition process, turf wars and time spent on the pet policies of new top officials....Could al-Qaeda's plot have been foiled if the U.S. had taken the fight to the terrorists in January 2001? Perhaps not....[but] perhaps some of those who had to approve the operation might have been killed, or the money trail to Florida disrupted. We will never know, because we never tried. This is the secret history of that failure."

— *Time's* Michael Elliot, in the magazine's August 12 Special Report, "Could 9/11 Have Been Prevented?," which alleged that Bush officials failed to use a Clinton administration "plan" to roll back al-Qaeda.

...Promoted As Real News

"There is a new published report tonight that the outgoing Clinton administration gave the Bush White House a ready-made plan for attacking al-Qaeda that was ignored. Not true, says the Bush camp."

— NBC's Stone Phillips on the August 5 *Nightly News*.

Dan Rather: "[President Bush] is heading for a vacation in Texas. As he does so, controversy is swirling over what did or did not happen concerning terrorism in the early months of his presidency...."

Bill Plante: "At issue, a *Time* magazine report that Richard Clarke, head of counter-terrorism in the Clinton White House, had a plan for military action against al-Qaeda, which the new Bush administration did not treat as a top priority, but instead buried in the bureaucracy for eight months. The Bush White House says there was no plan, just a series of ideas which had not been implemented by the Clinton administration."

— *CBS Evening News*, August 5.

Impeachment Just a Footnote

Charlie Rose: "What will be the judgment of history about him [former President Bill Clinton]?"

New York Times Executive Editor Howell Raines: "Huge political talent. Huge political vision and I suspect — none of us, I can't predict who's going to win the next election, much less what history is going to say about anyone. But I think President Clinton's role in modernizing the Democratic Party around a set of economic ideas and also holding onto the principles of social justice, and presiding over the greatest prosperity in human history. Those would seem to me to have to be central to his legacy."

— Exchange on PBS's *Charlie Rose*, August 6.

Senate Inaction Could Kill Seniors

"Prescription drugs: The Senate kills a plan to help senior citizens afford them. Americans are putting their lives at risk to save money on medicine."

— ABC substitute anchor Elizabeth Vargas, promoting an upcoming story on the July 31 *World News Tonight*.

"No deal on drugs: The last hope for a Medicare prescription benefit goes down to defeat in the Senate....Older Americans counting on Congress to finally pass a prescription drug benefit for Medicare recipients are disappointed again. Senate Democrats could not muster enough votes for a compromise plan. The issue is now dead for this year."

— NBC's Tom Brokaw's top of the newscast tease and introduction to *Nightly News* "In Depth" report, July 31.

Shameful Thwarting of Big Gov't

Anchor Daryn Kagan: "You know what, Kate? Shame on all of them. They're sitting there playing politics in Washington. I know we have a lot of viewers at home, a lot of older people who their simple, simple request is just to be able to afford the drugs that they need."

Reporter Kate Snow: "Yeah, they will say it's a lot more complicated than that. And, you know, that there, again, there are policy differences and it's hard to get agreement when you don't agree on how to do it. That's what they'll say to that, but I think you're right, that I think a lot of seniors are going to be disappointed."

Kagan: "Tell that to our grandmothers and grandfathers and uncles and aunts who are just trying to kind of put together the bottom line."

— Exchange August 1 during CNN's "Breaking News" coverage of the end to Senate efforts to create a new prescription drug entitlement for senior citizens.

President George W. Hoover?

"I'm going to put two quotes on the screen and ask you if this was an honest mistake on the part of the White House, or if the speechwriters had no sense of history. The first quote is, 'The economy is fundamentally sound.' Herbert Hoover, 1929, a quote that just meant we're heading for hell. And here is George W. Bush today, 'The fundamentals of our economy are sound.' Is this an honest mistake by White House speechwriters, who must know the difference or similarities in this case?"

— Brian Williams to historian Robert Dallek on CNBC's *The News with Brian Williams*, July 30. All recent Presidents used similar phrasing to describe the economy.

Pushing Bogus Cheney Charges

"The Vice President sold, as you know, nearly \$40 million worth of stock in Halliburton two years ago when it was about \$50 a share. As you know, now it's about \$13 a share. Did the Vice President do what we're hearing so many CEOs have been doing recently?"

— **CBS's Jane Clayson questioning Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill on the August 1 *Early Show*.**

"Cheney seems to share one defining characteristic of ex-CEOs whose actions are now under intense scrutiny: He became a millionaire many times over by cashing in his stock options before problems came to light and ordinary shareholders began losing their shirts."

— **Los Angeles Times staff writer Warren Vieth in a July 29 front-page news story.**

Reality Check:

"Cheney did not sell his stock because he had inside knowledge that the stock market — and his company's shares — were headed south. He was forced to sell his stock when he was chosen by George Bush to be his running mate. He wasn't dumping. He didn't want to sell. In fact, the big brouhaha at the time was Cheney's wanting to retain some stock options. He sold purely to avoid conflicts of interest."

— **Conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer in the August 9 *Washington Post*.**

Continuing Anti-Tax Cut Crusade

"We currently have a deficit of \$165 billion. Senator Fritz Hollings, the Democrat from South Carolina, said that if you take away the Social Security surplus that's being used, the real deficit's over \$400 billion. With that in mind, and the costs that you laid out, can we afford an invasion of Iraq and also maintain the Bush tax cut?"

— **Tim Russert's question to Democratic Senator Joe Biden, who voted against the Bush tax cut last year, on the August 4 edition of NBC's *Meet the Press*.**

More Laws, Good; Tax Cut, Bad

"Congress gets an A for the sheer number of bills that were passed. In terms of the impact on the economy, where they get a D is that awful tax bill they passed last year where the Congress was complicit with the White House in pumping up budget surpluses to provide cover for a tax cut that we can't afford and that we're going to be digging out from under for the next ten years."

— **Newsweek's Eleanor Clift giving her report card on the 107th Congress on the August 3 *McLaughlin Group*.**

Drunk on Liberal Pomposity

"What these kids need is a safe haven, not a tax haven. In fact, you have to wonder what would happen if the powers that be were as determined to make the system work for America's poorest as they are for America's richest. But recently, the House of Representatives decided against an extra billion dollars for abused and neglected children, then turned around and voted for more than \$7 billion in tax cuts to 16 large corporations....The most generous tax haven of all turns out to be right there in the nation's capital."

— **Bill Moyers on his PBS newsmagazine *Now*, July 26.**

"Warmongering" Tops the Charts

"When country musician Toby Keith's new album *Unleashed* debuted at No. 1 on the pop and country charts last week, he had the hit 9/11 tribute song 'Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue (The Angry American)' to thank. But its warmongering lyrics — like 'We'll put a boot in your ass / It's the American way' — may have gotten Keith, 41, axed from ABC's Fourth of July special. The network says it was 'logistics,' but the singer says Peter Jennings disapproved." "Critics say you're advocating terror in response to terror." "Do you worry that 'Angry American' may push people toward intolerance?"

— **Introduction and first two questions to Keith from U.S. News & World Report's Justin Ewers, August 12.**

Liberal Bias Denied...

"I don't think it's a liberal agenda. It happens that journalism will always be spending more time on issues that seem to be liberal to some people: the problem of the downtrodden, the problem of civil rights and human rights, the problem of those people who don't have a place at the table with the powerful."

— **NBC's Tom Brokaw on MSNBC's *Donahue*, July 25.**

...And Admitted

"I think he [Clinton Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin] should be called to testify, and he should be taken to task by some people for his role, to the extent he has one, or that his company has one, Citigroup, with Enron and other loans....It is remarkable, I think, the near deification of Rubin by a lot of elements of the press."

— **Fortune Washington Bureau Chief Jeffrey Birnbaum on FNC's *Special Report with Brit Hume*, July 29.**

"I'll give you that a lot of the media is liberal. In fact, I think that's probably a gimme."

— **CNBC *Power Lunch* co-anchor Michelle Caruso-Cabrera interviewing *Slander* author Ann Coulter, July 23.**

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August 19, 2002 (Volume 15; No. 17)

Published bi-weekly by the

Media Research Center

325 South Patrick Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Subscriptions: \$29 annually. Call (800) 672-1423

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