

Notable Quotables

October 14, 2002 (Vol. Fifteen; No. 21)

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



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

They Report, We Deride...

"President Bush's speech last night on Iraq laid out a very extensive argument for going to war. In making the case, he relied on some information that's been around for a number of years. But he also presented some new evidence, much of it hard to verify. We have tried. With a 'Reality Check,' here's ABC's Martha Raddatz."

— ABC's Charles Gibson on *World News Tonight*, Oct. 8. As for Bush's "extensive argument," ABC aired none of the Oct. 7 speech as it happened, and Raddatz only showed two brief soundbites of the portions she sought to debunk.

...While They Distort Own Report

"A new CBS News/*New York Times* poll out tonight finds that Americans still have plenty of questions about going after Saddam, most notably, why are the President and Congress spending so much time on it? Seventy percent of people say they want to hear more about the economy than war."

— John Roberts on the October 7 *CBS Evening News*.

"A majority of Americans say that the nation's economy is in its worst shape in nearly a decade and that President Bush and congressional leaders are spending too much time talking about Iraq while neglecting problems at home, according to the latest *New York Times*/CBS News poll."

— Lead paragraph of October 7 *New York Times* story by Adam Nagourney and Janet Elder.

Reality Check:

"The poll shows no such thing. It does show that people, by a 56 to 43 percent margin, think the economy is bad, and it does show that 70 percent of those asked would like to hear political 'candidates' talk more about the economy. But the poll never asks whether 'the President' is talking too much about Iraq....A majority, 52 percent, think the President is spending his time, quote, 'about right,' with only 41 percent saying he's too focused on foreign policy. Those numbers, by the way, are not reported in *The New York Times*."

— FNC's Brit Hume on the October 7 *Special Report with Brit Hume*. When asked "which should be a higher priority," 50 percent in the same survey selected "terrorism and national security," compared to 35 percent who picked "the economy and jobs."

U.S. Plan: Kill Iraqis for Democracy

"You people are acting like this is a conversion to democracy by the sword. How can you — I mean, are you going to kill all these people, to get democracy [in Iraq]?"

— Hearst columnist Helen Thomas to Press Secretary Ari Fleischer at the October 2 White House briefing.

Saddam Saving GOP From Failure

"When it comes to the economy, there is not much for voters to feel good about this election season. By almost any of the usual yardsticks, Americans are worse off than they were during the last election. At a cabinet meeting in the White House today, the President tried to put an optimistic spin on the economy....But since he took office in January 2001, the numbers tell a different story: The Dow Jones Industrial average has fallen 27 percent; the nation's 85 million stockholders have lost \$5 trillion in wealth; the unemployment rate has risen from 4.2 percent to 5.7 percent; and a \$281 billion surplus in the federal budget has given way to a \$157 billion deficit. Add to that a siege of corporate scandals and a serious drought afflicting nearly half the country, and it would seem like enough pocketbook issues to catapult Democrats to sure victory — until talk of toppling Saddam became an all-consuming front-page issue."

— ABC's Betsy Stark on *World News Tonight*, Sept. 23.

"During Bill Clinton's eight years as President, the median income rose almost 15 percent, to just over \$43,000. But in Bush's first year, the median income fell by more than two percent, to just over \$42,000. Likewise, during Clinton's tenure, the number of Americans living in poverty fell by almost 7.7 million, the best performance under any President since the 1960s. But in Bush's first year, the number of Americans in poverty jumped by 1.3 million, with the increase concentrated among whites and in the South."

— *Los Angeles Times* Washington reporter Ron Brownstein on CNN's *Inside Politics*, September 24.

"Bad, Bad" Exxon Owns Bush

Rolling Stone's Will Dana: "Some people on the Left have said that the war on terrorism is actually about making sure the Middle East keeps pumping oil on our terms. In your book, you refer to 'Mr. Bush and his oil-industry paymasters.' What do you mean?"

New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman: "I think these guys are bought and paid by Big Oil in America, and they are going to do nothing that will in any way go against the demands and interests of the big oil companies. I mean, let's face it. ExxonMobil — I think this is a real group of bad guys, considering that they have funded all the anti-global-warming propaganda out there in the world. And Bush is just not going to go against guys like that. They are bad, bad guys — because of what they are doing in fighting the science of global warming."

— Interview published in the October 17 *Rolling Stone*.

New Victims: Citizens Not Told About Government Giveaway

"Annie Murphy is a single parent working hard to improve her job skills. Last year, she made only \$16,000. She was stunned to learn that under a new law passed by Congress last year, she is entitled to a tax refund....According to a Treasury Department investigation, more than half a million low-income families were entitled to \$200 million in refunds last year, but they never knew it. The IRS said it was just too complicated and too expensive to notify them."

— ABC's Linda Douglass on *World News Tonight*, October 3. ABC did not explain that, for most low-income people, the "tax credit" exceeds their normal income tax withholding and is therefore hardly a "refund."

AI Is Brian's Commander-in-Chief

"There is also this tonight from the man who got the most popular votes, who had hoped to be occupying the Oval Office right now. Former Vice President Al Gore spoke out today against rushing in to war with Iraq. Gore says the Bush administration's war plans have cost the nation much of the international goodwill that it received immediately after 9/11 and could set a dangerous precedent for the future."

— Brian Williams on CNBC's *The News with Brian Williams*, September 23.

Concocted Credential to Criticize

"In 1991, Gore was one of the few Senate Democrats to vote for the Gulf War. In fact, he noted proudly yesterday that he cast the deciding vote, and it's that fact, he says, that now gives him the credibility to criticize Bush on a number of fronts."

— ABC's Claire Shipman on the Sept. 24 *Good Morning America*. The *Washington Post* reported on Jan. 13, 1991 that Gore was the "last" of 10 Senate Democrats to announce his support for the use of force resolution, which passed by a five-vote margin (52-47).

Too Good to Be True?

"It's two weeks after the World Trade Center massacre, and we're visiting our favorite pita place in the former shadows of the WTC. Maybe we're gullible enough to think that we're showing support for a local Arab-American. We ask if he's had any kind of harassment. 'There was this one woman,' he explained, 'who came in from *The New York Times*. She kept telling me that she understood if I hated America. I finally told her not to come back until she wanted to write about my business.'"

— From the *New York Press*'s "Manhattan Living" column, under the entry of "Best Harassment of an Arab in the Wake of 9/11," September 25.

A Liberal Definition of Progress

"Arbitrary Victims, Identical Fate; County's Growing Diversity Reflected in Those Gunned Down."

— October 4 front-page headline in the *Washington Post* about the sniper shooting murders of five random individuals in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Make Air Force Beg for Bombs

Charles Gibson: "My wife has a sign on her office wall and it says, 'Won't it be a great day when the Air Force has to hold bake sales to get a new bomber and the schools have all the money they need?'"

Diane Sawyer: "I love your wife! I love her for many reasons. Love that sign."

— Exchange on the October 2 *Good Morning America*. Gibson's wife, Arlene, runs a private all-girls school in New York City.

Sounds About Right

"Now with Bill Moyers: Corporate greed; fraud; capitalism."

— Complete summary from the TV grid in *USA Today* on September 27, describing that evening's edition of the weekly PBS newsmagazine.

Bush "Desecrating America"

"I feel that George Bush's actions are desecrating the America that I grew up in and believed in. He is making us an imperialist government. He is choosing to replace heads of state and governments he doesn't like."

— Actor Ed Asner during a September 26 appearance on FNC's *The O'Reilly Factor* as part of a publicity tour for a DVD set of the first season of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, on which he co-starred.

"Embarrassing to Be American"

"I despise him [President George W. Bush]. I despise his administration and everything they stand for....To my mind the election was stolen by George Bush and we have been suffering ever since under this man's leadership....And I think this latest thing with Iraq is absolute madness and I'm stunned that there is not opposition on a much more global scale to what he's talking about....There has to be a movement now to really oppose what he is proposing because it's unconstitutional, it's immoral and basically illegal....It is an embarrassing time to be an American. It really is. It's humiliating."

— Actress Jessica Lange at a September 25 press conference at an international film festival in San Sebastian, Spain where she was given a lifetime achievement award. Her remarks were shown in the U.S. on the syndicated show *Inside Edition* on October 4.

Notable Quotables

PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell III

EDITORS: Brent H. Baker, Rich Noyes

NEWS ANALYSTS: Geoffrey Dickens, Jessica Anderson

Brian Boyd, Brad Wilmoth, Ken Shepherd, Patrick Gregory

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: Kristina Sewell

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: Liz Swasey

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Donna Gould

October 14, 2002 (Volume 15; No. 21)

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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