

Notable Quotables

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



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

Instead, He Left Her to Drown

"If she had lived, Mary Jo Kopechne would be 62 years old. Through his tireless work as a legislator, Edward Kennedy would have brought comfort to her in her old age."

— Charles Pierce in a January 4 *Boston Globe Magazine* article, "Kennedy Unbound: After 40 years in the U.S. Senate, Edward M. Kennedy has transcended the family mythology and become his own man." Kopechne drowned while trapped in Kennedy's submerged car off Chappaquiddick Island in July 1969, an accident Kennedy did not report for several hours.

George W. Bush's America

"We are about to show you bread lines in America that you may find hard to believe. With the recession there has been a sudden leap in the number of people on emergency food assistance. The lines we found looked like they'd been taken from the pages of the Great Depression. It's not just the unemployed. We found plenty of people working full-time, but still not able to earn enough to keep hunger out of the house. If you think you have a good idea of who's hungry in America today, come join the line. You'd never guess who you'd meet there....Almost half the people fed by these lines are kids. The Agriculture Department figures one out of six children in America faces hunger; that's more than 12 million kids. Nationwide, children have the highest poverty rate. Preschoolers come here with their parents and play in boxes as empty as the day's want ads."

— CBS's Scott Pelley's report from a food line in Marietta, Ohio, on the January 8 *60 Minutes II*.

No Nonpartisan Accountants?

Byron Pitts: "As for Mr. Bush's proposal to eliminate the dividends tax, the bigger your wallet, the bigger the benefit. Estimates are 74 percent of the tax break in 2003 will go to people making more than \$100,000 a year, and 25 percent to those making more than a million dollars."

Avery Neumark, Certified Public Accountant: "When you go to the lower brackets, there is no savings."

Pitts: "We asked accountant Avery Neumark to do the math. Under the President's overall tax plan, a person earning \$175,000 per year could save \$3,500. Someone earning \$50,000 could expect to get back an extra \$1,000. Anyone earning \$25,000 — zero."

Neumark: "If you were to summarize this tax proposal as we see it today, the winners are the wealthy."

— *CBS Evening News*, January 6. According to a search of FEC records on opensecrets.org, Neumark has given \$2,000 to the Democratic National Committee since 1996.

ABC's Around-the-Clock Bias

"Democrats are out there hammering hard on what they say is the basic inequity that cannot be disputed, based on a couple of facts of the President's tax plan. For instance, they say that somebody in this country who is making a million dollars or more is going to benefit \$29,000 from the President's tax plan, but if you're making \$30-\$40,000 a year, which the average American [makes], you're only going to get \$42, and there will not be rejoicing in America by all of these middle-class taxpayers for \$42."

— Diane Sawyer to new Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist on ABC's *Good Morning America*, January 7.

"A central element of the President's plan is abolishing the taxes that people pay on their stock dividends....How many taxpayers would benefit? We do know that 34 million tax returns claimed income from a stock dividend in 2000. Who would benefit most? Well, as five percent of the population owns most of the stocks, 65 percent of the benefits would go to five percent of the population. These people make more than \$140,000 a year. Would there be any immediate benefit for taxpayers? No. Taxpayers would not see any savings until after they file their 2003 tax returns, which would be in the spring of 2004. And how much is this going to cost the government? \$25 billion in 2003, \$280 billion over the next decade — money which could be spent in other ways."

— Peter Jennings on ABC's *World News Tonight*, January 7.

"Most of the immediate benefits would go to the richest Americans — those who now pay taxes on stock dividends — but middle-class couples with kids would also receive a tax cut, and even the jobless would get some help to look for work. The price tag is steep: just eliminating the dividend tax alone could cost the Treasury \$300 billion over the next ten years. But that's not what makes it such a tough sell. A new ABC News poll out tonight shows Americans are far more concerned about the fairness of the President's tax policies. When asked whether they benefit the wealthy or the less well-off, fully half say the wealthy."

— Chris Bury on ABC's *Nightline*, January 7.

Bush's Vision: More Pollution

"Fiscally, [Bush] is a Reagan Republican — big tax cuts tilted toward the rich — and if that means deficit spending, so what? He's pro-business, wants oil drilling in Alaska and offshore, would let coal plants pollute the air more."

— CNN's Bruce Morton on the January 1 *Inside Politics*.

Bush's Teapot Dome "Bribery"

"This is a plan heavily skewed to the rich which does nothing to stimulate the economy in the immediate short term. It's a big bribery of the right wing....This is class warfare against millions of Americans who will not get the benefit and young people who will have to pay off the tab this President is running up. The deficits are totally irresponsible."

— *Newsweek's Eleanor Clift on the McLaughlin Group*, January 11.

"It's crumbs for about 99 million, and then it's caviar for the very top....It won't create jobs, it's not going to stimulate the economy, it will exacerbate the income disparity in America....It'll be a bonanza for the rich....You've got to go back to Teapot Dome to find such a fleecing. This time it's legal. Bloomberg reported that George W. Bush himself, \$44,000 tax break here. Dick Cheney, \$327,000 tax break."

— *Wall Street Journal Executive Washington Editor Al Hunt on CNN's Capital Gang*, January 11.

Edwards: Moderate Like Hillary...

"[John] Edwards, 49, worked as a trial lawyer before entering politics, and when he moved to Washington in 1998, he left behind a very successful — and wildly lucrative — practice in his native North Carolina. He has since built a reputation for moderate political views....Much has been made of a recent political tradition: southern Democrats from conservative southern states winning election to the White House. Clinton, Carter and Johnson were part of this largely successful strategy, which seems to help deflate Republican charges of Democrats' rampant liberalism. Edwards fits neatly into this mold."

— *Time's Jessica Reaves in a January 2 article naming Edwards Time.com's "Person of the Week."* For 2001, the liberal Americans for Democratic Action assigned Edwards a 95 percent approval rating, the same as Hillary Clinton, Barbara Boxer, Chris Dodd and John Kerry.

"A moderate, Edwards also bucked his state's textile lobby and voted for permanent trade relations with China."

— *Fox News Channel reporter James Rosen on the January 2 Special Report with Brit Hume.*

And "Fiscally Disciplined" Like Bill

Andrea Mitchell: "Do you think that some deficit spending is a good idea or do you think we need to return to the fiscal discipline that Bill Clinton espoused?"

John Edwards: "I strongly believe in fiscal discipline...."

— *Exchange on CNBC's Capital Report, January 2.* Mitchell did not challenge Edwards despite the fact the National Taxpayers Union gave him an "F" grade of "Big Spender" for his 2001 votes on fiscal issues.

Why No Tax Cut for Freeloaders?

"You're doing an enormous amount for those at the upper income end of the bracket, and for people who pay payroll and Social Security taxes but no income taxes, you're doing nothing. What's the equity in a plan like that?"

— *The Washington Post's Dan Balz to Commerce Secretary Don Evans on CBS's Face the Nation*, January 12.

All Onus on Bush, Not Saddam

"Don't you have to have irrefutable evidence, what people in the country are calling a photo, a smoking gun of some kind before you can go to war against Saddam Hussein and expect international cooperation?"

— *Tom Brokaw's question to Secretary of State Colin Powell on the NBC Nightly News*, January 9.

Provoked by Bush's Rhetoric

Mark Litke: "Sketchy intelligence reports have portrayed Kim as a cruel, vain playboy....U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright became the highest-ranking U.S. official to ever spend time with Kim. She was treated to quite a show, and found Kim wasn't as odd as the world thought."

Madeleine Albright: "In having discussions with him, he is perfectly rational and he is isolated, but not uninformed."

Litke: "But Kim's apparent willingness to engage in dialogue with the outside world began to fade with the arrival of the new Bush administration and that 'axis of evil' declaration. It was then that Kim seemed to resort to the crazy, unpredictable image again to get what he and his generals wanted."

— *ABC's World News Tonight*, January 8.

Helen Parodies Herself

Helen Thomas: "Ari, you said that the President deplored the taking of innocent lives. Does that apply to all innocent lives in the world? And I have a follow-up....The follow-up is, why does he want to drop bombs on innocent Iraqis?"

Press Secretary Ari Fleischer: "...The President has made it very clear that he has no dispute with the people of Iraq. That's why the American policy remains a policy of regime change. There's no question the people of Iraq —"

Thomas: "That's a decision for them to make, isn't it? It's their country."

Fleischer: "Helen, if you think that the people of Iraq are in a position to dictate who their dictator is, I don't think that's been what history has shown."

Thomas: "I think many countries don't have, people don't have the decision — including us."

— *Exchange during a January 6 White House briefing shown on all three cable news networks.*

Notable Quotables

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