

Notable Quotables

May 26, 2003 (Vol. Sixteen; No. 11)

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



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

NY Times Editor Failed Own Test

"If you have to choose between a worthy but erring colleague and the newspaper itself, you choose for the paper. After all, all the members of this profession know the rules when we sign up. They are rules based on a tradition of trust that cannot be ignored without stirring anxiety in the newsroom and suspicion among the readers."

— *New York Times* Executive Editor Howell Raines in an "Editorial Observer" column in the August 13, 1998 *New York Times* criticizing the *Boston Globe* for not firing columnist Mike Barnicle after he was found to have extensively quoted from a book of George Carlin's comedic observations without attribution.

vs.

"Our paper has a commitment to diversity and by all accounts he appeared to be a promising young minority reporter. I believe in aggressively providing hiring and career opportunities for minorities....Does that mean I personally favored Jayson? Not consciously. But you have a right to ask if I, as a white man from Alabama, with those convictions, gave him one chance too many by not stopping his appointment to the sniper team [in October 2002]. When I look into my heart for the truth of that, the answer is yes."

— Raines after a meeting with staffers about the fraud perpetrated by ex-reporter Jayson Blair, as quoted by *Times* media writer Jacques Steinberg in a May 15 story. In April 2002, a *Metro* editor had warned Blair should no longer write for the *Times*, a year before the newspaper acknowledged Blair's news stories were a mix of factual reporting, plagiarized material and fabrications.

U.S. Special Forces: Hospital Wreckers, Not Heroic Rescuers

Peter Jennings: "When U.S. commandos stormed an Iraqi hospital to get Private Jessica Lynch last month it was described, you'll recall, in very dramatic fashion — U.S. commandos rushing an enemy compound to save a comrade in the dead of night. Now we hear that it may have been less dangerous and maybe even less challenging than Central Command first told us."

David Wright: "The hospital staff says there were no Iraqi troops or officials on the premises when the Americans rushed in. They had all left at 10am the morning before the rescue. The soldiers broke down doors in the intensive care unit when they could have just asked where she was....[Over pictures of punched out doorknobs] The hospital still bears the scars of that midnight raid. The administrators had to sell precious drugs to pay for the damage."

— *ABC World News Tonight*, May 7.

Conservatives Invent Terms...

"The term 'partial-birth abortion' was invented by the anti-abortion community to describe a procedure in which a fetus is partially delivered outside the womb. Doctors don't even use the term."

— *PBS's Brenda Breslauer* in a report filed for *Now with Bill Moyers*, May 16.

...But Liberal Rhetoric Is Simply Common Knowledge

"He [President Bush] reinstated a policy often called the 'global gag rule,' first announced during the Reagan administration in Mexico City in 1984. The rule prohibits taxpayers' funds from going to any organization overseas that has anything to do with abortion."

— *Breslauer* in the same report a few minutes later.

"Forced" to Raise Taxes

"When we come back this evening, the states: forced to raise taxes as the federal government cuts taxes."

— *ABC's Peter Jennings* previewing an upcoming item on the May 12 *World News Tonight*.

"Mayor Bloomberg, you're being forced to raise taxes now. What kind of help are you looking for from the federal government if any?"

— *ABC's George Stephanopoulos* to New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg on *This Week*, May 11.

No Arms or Legs for Poor People

Bob Schieffer: "I was just in California where they're telling me that not only are they facing these huge deficits, but for every five jobs that are lost in America, one of those jobs is in California. The governor out there — his approval rating is down to 20 percent. We're seeing other governors with these low approval ratings. Is that because the states are just so starved for money?"

Time's Karen Tumulty: "That's right. And while these arguments we're having here in Washington over tax cuts may look sort of abstract to most people in America, it is not abstract when your kid's teacher gets laid off.... Libraries are closing, teachers are getting laid off. Gray Davis is in the position of having to decide whether he should deny prosthetic limbs to poor people."

— *Exchange on CBS's Face the Nation*, May 11. According to the *Cato Institute*, California's state spending grew from 39.5 billion in fiscal year 1994 to 78.1 billion in fiscal year 2001, an increase of 98 percent.

Bush's Spin Buried Liberal Truth

"Their argument — which Democrats call the 'fairness question' and the White House calls 'class warfare' — is seen by many as the sharpest and best weapon they have against Bush's drive to cut taxes by at least \$550 billion over 10 years. But even many Democrats agree that it may amount to little more than a sideshow in the Senate showdown. That is a remarkable testament to the administration's long-running efforts to neutralize a Democratic political staple: couching Bush's tax cuts as sops to the rich at the expense of the poor....Polls suggest it has worked.... Last week, a *USA Today*/CNN/Gallup poll found that 52 percent of Americans now think the tax cuts are 'a good idea,' an increase of 10 percentage points in two weeks. That gain is all the more remarkable because the President's original \$726 billion tax cut plan — and the smaller versions that passed the House and are under consideration in the Senate — clearly do favor the affluent."

— *Washington Post* reporter Jonathan Weisman in a May 13 news analysis.

Dan's Distorted Poll Reporting

"The President calls the tax cut necessary. Democrats call it a campaign for the wealthy. So far, it's a problematic sell for the President. In a CBS News/*New York Times* poll out tonight, less than half the respondents thought the Bush tax cut would actually help the economy."

— Dan Rather on the May 13 *CBS Evening News*. Rather failed to report that the poll he cited showed twice as many said tax cuts would help the economy (41 percent) than said new tax cuts would hurt (19 percent).

Worried About a Military Coup?

"The President arrived on deck in a very dramatic, spectacular fashion on board a military aircraft wearing a full flight suit. And there are some people who are concerned that that might have dissolved or weakened the distinction between civilian control of the military and adopt — this civilian President adopting military regalia at the end of a war. Is the President concerned at all about that?"

— ABC's Terry Moran question to Ari Fleischer at the White House briefing on May 7 about the President's trip to the *USS Abraham Lincoln* the previous week.

As Costly As a Clinton Hair Cut

"Democrats claim the event [Bush's visit to the aircraft carrier] must have cost up to one million dollars in taxpayer funds, including an estimate that \$200 was spent to outfit the President in a custom-fitted flight suit."

— NBC's Norah O'Donnell on CNBC's *The News with Brian Williams*, May 7.

Mondale, Dukakis Not Liberal?

"Ever since the George McGovern disaster of 1972, the party has routinely chosen technocratic moderates for standard-bearers."

— *Time's* Joe Klein in the magazine's May 19 cover story, "Why They Don't Make Democrats Like They Used To (And How to Fix It)."

Heroic Renegades vs. Tom DeLay

CNN political analyst Bill Schneider: "Since when do you get the play of the week for walking off the job? Since Texas Democrats did just that this week. Walking off the job can get you called some rude names in Texas....But somehow the renegade representatives ended up looking like heroes....How did they make the walkout work? By choosing a terrific target."

Jim Dunnam, Texas Democratic Caucus: "We have a message for Tom DeLay: Don't mess with Texas."

— Schneider on CNN's *Inside Politics*, May 16, assigning his "Political Play of the Week" to Texas Democrats who blocked a legislative vote on a congressional redistricting plan by fleeing to Oklahoma.

His Dental Fillings Told Him So

Left-wing filmmaker Michael Moore: "What happened to the search for Osama bin Laden?...You don't think they [the U.S. government] know where he is?"

Bob Costas (astonished): "You think they know where Osama bin Laden is and it's hands off?"

Moore: "Absolutely, absolutely."

Costas: "Why?"

Moore: "Because he's funded by their friends in Saudi Arabia! He's back living with his sponsors, his benefactors. Do you think that Osama bin Laden planned 9-11 from a cave in Afghanistan? I can't get a cell signal from here to Queens! I mean, come on, let's get real about this. The guy has been on dialysis for two years. He's got failing kidneys....I think the United States, I think our government knows where he is and I don't think we're going to be capturing him or killing him any time soon."

— Exchange on HBO's *On the Record with Bob Costas*, May 9.

Haven't They Suffered Enough?

"I'm making a conscious decision to take this whole Judaism thing seriously. I think the Jews need me right now."

— FNC's Geraldo Rivera, explaining why his fifth wedding will be his first in a synagogue, "as opposed to some hippie thing in a backyard," as quoted by the May 15 "The Reliable Source" column in the *Washington Post* by Lloyd Grove and Anne Schroeder.

Notable Quotables

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