

Notable Quotables

March 1, 2004 (Vol. Seventeen; No. 5)

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



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

As We've Been Saying...

"Like every other institution, the Washington and political press corps operate with a good number of biases and predilections. They include, but are not limited to, a near-universal shared sense that liberal political positions on social issues like gun control, homosexuality, abortion, and religion are the default, while more conservative positions are 'conservative positions.'..."

"The press, by and large, does not accept President Bush's justifications for the Iraq war....It does not accept the proposition that the Bush tax cuts helped the economy....It remains fixated on the unemployment rate...."

"The worldview of the dominant media can be seen in every frame of video and every print word choice that is currently being produced about the presidential race....On the strength of all the negative coverage of the President and all his own positive coverage, Senator Kerry heads into today's twin primaries on a roll."

— From the February 10 edition of ABCNews.com's "The Note," a daily political memo assembled by ABC News political director Mark Halperin and his staff.

Justifying a Bogus Smear

"Gutter politics goes both ways. And I think that in this case, what we're talking about is a legitimate issue of character which is peripheral to the campaign, not nearly as important as issues of war and solvency, but it's an issue....It's kind of fun to watch Republicans respond to the kind of politics that they've been practicing for the last 20 years, especially the Bush family in 1988 and in 2000."

— Time's Joe Klein on CNN's Paula Zahn Now on February 11 discussing DNC chief Terry McAuliffe's claim that Bush was "AWOL" from the National Guard in the 1970s.

Dying for Bush's "Lies"

"We've had Presidents who have lied to the American people. Our last President lied on a number of occasions to the American people, but nobody died when Bill Clinton lied. If, as these polls reflect, a majority of the American people think the President either lied or exaggerated about the weapons of mass destruction and sent young men and women off to war to fight and to die based on those lies and exaggerations, they're likely to be a little unforgiving, I think, in November."

— U.S. News & World Report's Roger Simon on NBC's Meet the Press, February 15. The poll Simon referenced found 68 percent of the public concluded Bush "honestly believed" Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, with just 27 percent saying Bush had not been honest.

As if ABC Had No Part In It

"We're going to start now with President Bush's military record. It's a subject that seems to be consuming Washington these days. The questions about the President's National Guard service just won't stop."

— ABC's Charles Gibson on Good Morning America, February 11.

Hell No, They Won't Let Go

Dan Rather: "The White House did release some of what it called newly-discovered documents today. But as CBS's John Roberts reports, it did not put the issue to rest."

John Roberts: "White House officials....still cannot produce one person who remembers serving in the Guard during that time with the future President."

— CBS Evening News, February 10.

"The new records show that he earned money and points for his service, but in a hot political season, the questions just won't stop. Did he miss some of his duty? Did he get any special treatment?"

— ABC's Claire Shipman on Good Morning America, February 11.

"The problem for the White House is that these documents don't actually prove Mr. Bush showed up on the dates for which he was paid. And so far no one has come forward to say that they served with him, leaving the President on the defensive."

— CBS's Bill Plante on The Early Show, February 11.

"Officials hoped the release of Mr. Bush's dental records would end the matter, but the dentist who treated him has no specific recollection of seeing the future President."

— John Roberts on the February 12 CBS Evening News.

"Even with these new records, which describe Mr. Bush as an exceptionally fine young pilot and officer, there are still some gaps the White House has yet to fill in."

— Roberts on the February 13 CBS Evening News.

"The two-inch thick stack of documents includes everything from the President's Yale transcript — though his grades are redacted — to personal medical records. However, it does not answer the fundamental question that has been dogging Mr. Bush: Did he report for duty in the Alabama National Guard between May and October 1972?"

— ABC's Geoff Morrell on World News Tonight/Saturday, February 14.

CNN Impressed by Phony Charges

"With Bill Clinton in the White House, Democrats were reluctant to make a big deal out of Bush's military service. Now, John Kerry is the party's prospective nominee. That changes everything....The Democrats now have standing to play the military card and make it the "Political Play of the Week." John Kerry was on both sides of the issue that split the Vietnam generation. He was a war hero and an anti-war hero. In this campaign, for once, it's not the Democrats who have to feel defensive about the Sixties."

— CNN's Bill Schneider awarding his "Political Play of the Week" to Democratic claims that Bush was AWOL, on the February 13 *Inside Politics*.

Jane "Willie Horton" Fonda

Byron Pitts: "Kerry the Vietnam war hero? The GOP is developing their own spin. This picture of John Kerry war protester, sitting near controversial anti-war activist Jane Fonda, now appears on a number of Web sites."

Donna Brazile, Democratic strategist: "Remember Willie Horton? Well, Willie Horton has been retired. Jane is taking his place. And they're going to use that to undermine his credibility."

Pitts: "Donna Brazile was Al Gore's campaign manager in 2000. She says Republicans will try to paint a different picture of John Kerry."

Brazile: "In fact, Teresa Heinz will not know John Kerry the moment the Republicans start going after him."

— *CBS Evening News*, February 11.

Don't Ruin Chance to Beat Bush

"Ralph Nader, we all watched you yesterday and it comes down to this: Realistically, you don't have a chance of winning and, realistically, you can keep the Democratic candidate from winning. Is that okay with you?"

"Well, I heard you just a moment ago make the case that you wouldn't cost John Kerry the presidency, but the simple fact is four years ago you did cost Al Gore the presidency, didn't you?"

"If on November 1st the polls said Bush 49, Kerry 48, Nader 3, would you drop out?"

— ABC's Charles Gibson on independent candidate Ralph Nader on *Good Morning America*, February 23.

Missing Communism's Comforts

"Russia's rush to capitalism left the vast majority scrambling to survive. For many, life is worse than it was in Soviet times."

— NBC's Matt Lauer in Moscow on the February 12 *Today*.

Rude Rooney's Mean-Spirited Rant

"I heard from God just the other night. God always seems to call at night. 'Andrew,' God said to me. He always calls me 'Andrew.' I like that. 'Andrew, you have the eyes and ears of a lot of people. I wish you'd tell your viewers that both Pat Robertson and Mel Gibson strike me as wackos. I believe that's one of your current words. They're crazy as bedbugs....Mel is a real nut case. What in the world was I thinking when I created him?'"

— Commentator Andy Rooney on the February 22 edition of CBS's *60 Minutes*.

Tim Still Tooting His Tax Trumpet

"If they don't pass, those [budget and bond] propositions, will you have to raise taxes?"

"You mention the car tax. Each Californian getting about a \$135 refund....Wouldn't it be better to maintain programs for the poor and for the disabled, and for the blind, and for students, than refund \$135 to Californians?"

"Pete Wilson, Republican, Ronald Reagan, Republican, when it came down to the crunch, raised taxes, fees, in order to make sure they balanced the budget. You would do that if necessary?"

— Some of Tim Russert's questions to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on the February 22 *Meet the Press*.

Make Welfare, Not Warfare

"You do have a premise that evil is viewed differently by conservatives than it is by liberals, specifically as it pertains to the war on terrorism....But you could also argue that Democrats do see evil, that they see evils such as the evils of poverty and that it's a matter of priorities in this country."

— CBS's Hannah Storm questioning FNC host Sean Hannity on *The Early Show*, February 18, where Hannity was promoting his new book, *Deliver Us from Evil: Defeating Terrorism, Despotism, and Liberalism*.

She Still Likes that Tax Hike

"[The first] President Bush did the right thing [in 1990 when he agreed to raise taxes], and then he apologized for it under — in the heat of battle. And so then he was in a no-man's land, but boy, he did the right thing. And that President Bush, I think, did have more courage than any of you gave him credit for, for doing that then. Tax cutters, however, are an unforgiving lot."

— *Time's* Margaret Carlson on CNN's *Capital Gang* on February 14, recalling how then-President George H. W. Bush admitted during the 1992 campaign it had been a mistake to agree to Democratic calls for a tax increase.

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PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell III

EDITORS: Brent H. Baker, Rich Noyes, Tim Graham

NEWS ANALYSTS: Geoff Dickens, Jessica Anderson, Brian Boyd, Brad Wilmoth, Ken Shepherd, and Amanda Monson

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: Kristina Sewell

DIRECTOR OF EDITORIAL SERVICES: Tim Jones

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