

Notable Quotables

August 13, 2007 (Vol. Twenty; No. 17)

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



America's
Media Watchdog

Media's Bridge to Higher Taxes

"Experts have been warning for years that this country's infrastructure is crumbling. But are taxpayers ready to spend the billions, maybe trillions, it would take to fix all the pipelines, tunnels and bridges?"

— CBS's Katie Couric reporting from the collapsed I-35W bridge in Minneapolis on the August 2 *Evening News*.

Anchor Katie Couric: "The House approved an emergency bill authorizing \$250 million to rebuild the 35W bridge....It's really just a drop in a very huge bucket when it comes to fixing all of America's bridges and highways...."

Reporter Sharyl Attkisson: "Congress only funds about 25 percent of the nation's infrastructure. States and local governments pick up the rest of the tab, and they're cash-starved too....[Congressman Jim Oberstar] is Congress's leading authority on infrastructure....He says both Congress and the White House have traditionally had trouble making the tough decision to collect and spend more tax dollars on infrastructure."

— CBS *Evening News*, August 3.

"Nearly 70 percent of people polled would pay more in taxes to actually know that they could cross the 14th Street bridge safely. But, you know, you can't get the will to do it....As time goes on, the [infrastructure] problem gets worse. And we're coming up against it at the time when we're spending, what, \$4,000 a minute on the Iraq war."

— Bloomberg News columnist and former *Time* reporter Margaret Carlson on *Inside Washington*, August 3.

"Each and every candidate [in] each and every campaign is forced to respond to this litmus test of 'No New Taxes.' How are we gonna get taxes passed when you can't get anything done in the Congress?...Government's gotta get bigger to help governors in various states."

— Fill-in host Mike Barnicle leading a panel discussion on MSNBC's *Hardball*, August 2.

Des Moines Register columnist David Yepsen: "Is this Republican dogma against taxes now precluding the ability of you and your party to come up with the revenues that the country needs to fix its bridges?"

Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani: "David, there's an assumption in your question that is not necessarily correct, sort of the Democratic liberal assumption: 'I need money, I raise taxes.'"

— Exchange at Republican candidates debate on ABC's *This Week*, August 5.

Blame Bush for Bridge Deaths

"The total outlay for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, so far, over \$600 billion. Think for a minute about what we could do with that money here at home, not only to improve our own infrastructure, but for other domestic needs that go wanting. Here's the question: In light of the Minnesota bridge collapse, how could the U.S. better spend the \$2 billion a week that we're pouring into Iraq?"

— CNN's Jack Cafferty on *The Situation Room*, August 2.

"The bridges of every county: How the endless war and endless spending crippled our ability to repair or just check our infrastructure....By some estimates, bringing all of America's bridges up to satisfactory condition would take nearly \$190 billion. The Iraq war now estimated at costing about half a trillion...."

"Republicans, including [Minnesota] Governor Pawlenty, President Bush, have demonized taxes, demonized any Democrat who ever said tax hike could improve our lives, save our lives at home. Does the governor's reversal [on a possible hike in gasoline taxes] tonight suggest maybe somebody is going to start having sane, reasoned discussions about taxes and when they're needed?"

— Keith Olbermann's introduction and question for liberal Air America radio host Rachel Maddow on MSNBC's *Countdown*, August 3.

Touting "Very Centrist" Obama

"He's basically a centrist politician. He's annoyed the teachers union. He went to Detroit and annoyed the car industry. But the war gives him a lot of cover to take very centrist positions."

— *Newsweek's* Richard Wolffe describing Illinois Senator Barack Obama on MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, July 31. The liberal Americans for Democratic Action gives Obama a 100% approval rating, while the American Conservative Union agrees with just 8% of Obama's Senate votes.

Paid for by Edwards 2008?

"With a train whistle in the background and the sweet smell of freshly cut grass in the air, John Edwards campaigned this month next to a cornfield and a big sign proclaiming: 'This is John Edwards Country.' Surrounding him were about 100 voters, all seated on outdoor chairs provided by the local Congregational church, in a scene that could not have been more picturesquely American — democracy in action at its most intimate level."

— Beginning of *New York Times* reporter Leslie Wayne's July 22 profile of Edwards.

Who, Us Biased?

"I know there are some people who actually believe that the [New York] Times has a partisan or ideological 'agenda' There are even a few people who think the news coverage and editorial page operate in lockstep as part of a liberal cabal. The Vice President is much too experienced and sophisticated, I suspect, to really believe that. I won't pretend that reporters' stories are never shaped by liberal bias (more accurately liberal assumptions about the world) but I think those instances are relatively rare, and I fight to filter them out and deplore them when they get into the paper. But that's not an 'agenda.'"

— Excerpt from a 2004 e-mail from *New York Times* Executive Editor Bill Keller to Vice President Dick Cheney's spokesman Kevin Kellems, as reprinted in Stephen Hayes' new biography, *Cheney*.

Paper Hurt by Conservative Views

"[In the 1990s] the [Wall Street] Journal's editorial page increasingly did its own reporting, with equal portions of journalistic hustle and ideological spin, and it often overshadowed the news side. I suspect that helped undermine the franchise. Advertisers, in the end, perhaps weren't enthralled with a newspaper distinguished by vitriolic right-wing attack editorials.... The sad part of this story is that 'the empire,' as we reporters once liked to call it, was already dying — and that so many of its wounds were self-inflicted."

— *Washington Post* columnist and former *Wall Street Journal* reporter David Ignatius, August 2.

Proud of His Slanted Approach

"The journalist's job is not to achieve some mythical state of equilibrium between two opposing opinions.... The journalist's job is to seek out and offer the public the best thinking on an issue, event, or story. That's what I did regarding the argument for impeachment.... There's a movement for impeachment, not one against impeachment, and to fail to explore the arguments driving that movement would be as foolish as when Washington journalists in the months before the invasion of Iraq dared not talk about 'occupation' because official sources only wanted to talk about 'liberation.' ... I could have aired a Beltway-like 'debate' between a Democrat and a Republican, or a conservative and a liberal, but that's usually conventional wisdom and standard practice, and public broadcasting was meant to be an alternative, not an echo."

— PBS's Bill Moyers in a letter to PBS ombudsman Michael Getler, who had criticized the July 13 edition of *Bill Moyers Journal* for featuring only guests who favor Bush and Cheney's impeachment.

Bush Against Healthy Kids?

Moderator Gwen Ifill: "The disagreement is over the federally funded State Children's Health Insurance Program. Congress would like to double the number of children covered. The administration says that would simply cost too much. So is this all going to come to a head in a presidential veto, David?"

Washington Post's David Broder: "Well, the President has threatened the veto, and everybody I've talked to in the administration this past week says take that threat seriously. He's on possibly the worst possible domestic issue to which to threaten the veto. I mean, who can be against providing health insurance for kids?"

— PBS's *Washington Week*, July 27.

Poverty: Blame Callous Americans

"There is something tragic about Edwards' failure to break through. Today, 37 million Americans live below the poverty line, 12 million more than at the time of [Sen. Robert F.] Kennedy's death. And yet Edwards's call of conscience has not resonated. By all rights, Edwards, the son of a mill-worker, should have an easier time talking about poverty than did Kennedy, the son of a millionaire. His difficulty speaks to the candidate's inability to connect. It also speaks to the nation's inability to be moved."

— *Newsweek's* Jonathan Darman reporting on Democratic candidate John Edwards' anti-poverty push, July 30 issue.

Puppet President Will Have to Pull His Own Strings

"Tomorrow morning Vice President Cheney will undergo surgery to have the battery replaced on his heart defibrillator.... For a few hours, at least, George W. Bush will actually get to be President."

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann opening *Countdown*, July 27.

Lusting for JFK

"Longtime White House correspondent Helen Thomas is miffed at Garry Trudeau.... [In a *Dooniesbury* strip, fictional TV correspondent Roland Hedley tells] visitors the 'legendary UPI reporter [has] been here since the Truman administration! Some say she was Truman's lover.'

"Truman's lover? Puh-lease. Thomas likes to think she could do better than that. 'I wish he'd said I was Jack Kennedy's lover,' said Thomas, who began covering the White House when President Kennedy took office in January, 1961."

— "Under the Dome" columnist Daphne Retter in the Capitol Hill newspaper *The Hill*, July 31.

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