

Notable Quotables



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

August 28, 2006 (Vol. Nineteen; No. 18)

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

Finally, "Lying" Bush Exposed

"There are laws on the books against what the administration is doing, and it's about time somebody said it out loud. This federal district judge ruled today President Bush is breaking the law by spying on people in this country without a warrant....It means President Bush violated his oath of office, among other things, when he swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States. It means he's been lying to us about the program since it started, when he's been telling us there's nothing illegal about what he's doing. A court has ruled it is illegal....I hope it means the arrogant inner circle at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue may finally have to start answering to the people who own that address — that would be us — about how they conduct our country's affairs."

— CNN's Jack Cafferty on the August 17 *Situation Room*, after a judge appointed by President Carter ruled that surveillance of suspected terrorists was unconstitutional.

Government Spying on "Our" Calls

"Unconstitutional: A federal judge in Detroit orders Bush administration eavesdropping on our calls and e-mails halted immediately....From the moment in December when the *New York Times* first revealed the existence of the government's secret warrantless surveillance program, nearly anybody who had actually read the Constitution at some point believed that it would be only a matter of time until a court of law ruled such spying to be patently illegal....The matter of time took just 35 weeks. The Bush administration's first attempt to politicize today's judicial smackdown taking mere minutes."

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann on *Countdown*, August 17.

...And Need for Secrets a "Ruse"

"Domestic spying by the Bush administration has many fangs. Is this specific to the wiretapping of the international calls and emails? Or is it broader than that?"

"The administration tried forever to get this suit dismissed on the ruse of state secrets, but, Jonathan, do we really think the country would dissolve into a bowl of Jell-O if the courts threw out the administration's national security rationale for wiretapping? Have we ever noticed this in the past when previous administrations have cited national security of the most urgent import? Do you recall the country ever going out of business, or the safety of the citizens ever just vanishing?"

— Olbermann's questions to anti-Bush law professor Jonathan Turley later in the same program.

America's Own Terrorist Team?

Hardball host Chris Matthews: "Here we have maybe 25, 24 people who've lived in London and England and the free world for all these years that become citizens, subjects of the Crown, and yet, after having gotten to know us, they want to kill themselves to hurt us. Isn't that an even deeper conundrum here than the chemicals being used in these attacks?"

NBC's Brian Williams: "And that, Chris, that last aspect, the willingness to take one's own life — I always tell people, you know, there are guys on our team like that, too. They're called Army Rangers and Navy Seals and the Special Forces folks and the first responders on 9/11 who went into those buildings knowing, by the way, they weren't going to come out. So we have players like that on our team."

— Exchange on MSNBC's *Hardball*, August 10, after word of the foiled terrorist plot to bomb American passenger jets over the Atlantic Ocean.

vs.

"Comments I made during a live interview with Chris Matthews last night have been aggressively misunderstood in the hours since....I was criticizing the view, expressed by some, that as long as we are fighting the 'suicide bomber mentality' we can never get the upper hand, because, as this belief goes, 'we aren't willing to give our lives the way they are.' Of course we are. The difference is: the folks willing to die for OUR country do so in the act of protecting and defending it — NOT killing civilians by detonating an explosive and killing innocent people. I hope that clears it up."

— Williams in a posting to NBC's *Daily Nightly* blog the next morning, August 11.

More of Keith's Paranoia

"His press secretary said Mr. Bush knew of the British investigation as early as Sunday. Did his vice president know? His party national committee chair? Does that explain the unbridled rhetoric about the Democrats in the Connecticut Senate primary vote?...Could it just be coincidence that the President finds out about this plot, then his vice president and the Republican chairman start slamming Democrats for being soft on terror, then the public is informed about the plot? Could it really be just coincidence?"

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann reacting to news of the foiled terrorist attacks, *Countdown*, August 10.

Anchors Push for Joe to Go

“The fact of the matter is, there are a lot of Democrats who think now, going forward, you’re putting your own personal ambitions above the good of the party....Is there any phone call you could receive, is there anyone in the Democratic Party who could call you today and ask you to drop out, that you would listen to?”

— **NBC’s Matt Lauer to Connecticut Senator Joe Lieberman, running for re-election as an independent after his primary defeat, on the August 9 *Today* show.**

“Senator, I heard you say ‘I’m a Democrat.’ But you’re talking about running as an independent and there are members of the party who’ve already said, commentators, that this is a selfish decision. How can you run against the party?...You’re going to be all alone out there.”

— **ABC’s Diane Sawyer to Lieberman on *Good Morning America*, August 9.**

“You will run as an independent at risk of losing the seat to the Republicans? You understand that risk? By splitting the Democratic vote.”

— ***The Early Show*’s Harry Smith to Lieberman, August 9.**

Dan’s Epiphany: Bush No Sun God

“You’d think the lessons out of the Watergate, Vietnam period, one of them would be the dangers of assuming the President needs to be so strong he can break into people’s houses, which is one of the things that happened with Watergate, do all these things. Now, I’m not equating George Bush with Richard Nixon, but it surprises me that this president and those around him haven’t learned what I would consider, personally, the real lessons out of Watergate, Vietnam era....In our system, in the United States of America, a president is not a descendant of a sun god where people are supposed to bow down and he’s supposed to throw these lightning bolts down.”

— **Dan Rather on *The Chris Matthews Show*, August 6.**

“Kennedy Milk” to Bush’s Bombs

“If you talk to people my age — I’m in my mid-40s — and who grew up in poor countries like Morocco, you know, they will tell you that when they went to school in the mornings, they used to get milk, and they called it Kennedy milk because it was the Americans that sent them milk. And in 40 years, we have gone from Kennedy milk to the Bush administration rushing bombs to this part of the world. And it just erodes and erodes and erodes America’s reputation.”

— ***New York Times* Middle East reporter Neil MacFarquhar on the July 31 edition of PBS’s *Charlie Rose*.**

Lame Joke = “Sinister” Slur

Anchor Bill Weir: “Damage control is under way this morning on the part of a U.S. senator who was caught on tape making what some are calling a racial slur. The senator has apologized. But is this just an innocent case of foot-in-mouth disease, or something more sinister? Our Jessica Yellin in Washington has details....”

Reporter Jessica Yellin: “[Senator George] Allen is under the microscope for a racially insensitive comment he made. And it was all caught on tape....The Senator used a little-known racial slur, ‘macaca,’ to apparently mock a man of Indian descent...a volunteer for his opponent’s campaign.... It’s not the first time Senator Allen has been accused of racial insensitivity. As Governor, he issued a proclamation praising the Confederacy without mentioning slavery.”

— **ABC’s *Good Morning America*, August 16. Allen said he was trying to make a joke about the man’s haircut.**

War on Terror a Big Failure

“What today’s plot reminds us is that five years after 9/11, the United States has not eliminated al-Qaeda. We eliminated Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan in under four years, but five years into this war against al-Qaeda, they’re out there still plotting major attacks against the United States.”

— **ABC News consultant Richard Clarke, a former Clinton administration counter-terrorism official, discussing the foiled airline bomb plot on the August 10 *World News*.**

Bush, the Manchurian Candidate

“That his movie [*World Trade Center*] does not criticize the actions or policies of President Bush should not be read as an endorsement. [Director Oliver] Stone is not a fan. ‘Bush makes Nixon look like St. Augustine,’ he says of the saint known for his zeal in confessing wrongs. ‘At least Nixon had some intelligence and a conscience....[ellipses in original] Bush is *The Manchurian Candidate*,’ a reference to the 1962 movie about a presidential contender manipulated by immoral handlers.”

— **Excerpt from reporter Anthony Breznican’s profile of Oliver Stone in the August 6 *USA Today*.**

He Must Have a Really Huge Tank

“The pumps were quickly shut down amid fears that oil company profits might plummet. But for one brief, shining moment, we the consumers won. It was like the old days, before you needed to refinance your home to refill your tank.”

— **NBC’s Brian Williams, who makes an estimated \$4 million a year, concluding an August 22 *Nightly News* story about an Illinois gas station whose computers accidentally set gas prices at 30 cents per gallon instead of \$3.09.**

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August 28, 2006 (Volume 19; No. 18)

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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