

# Notable Quotables

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



America's  
Media Watchdog

## NBC's Declaration of War

"For months now, the White House has rejected claims that the situation in Iraq has deteriorated into civil war, and for the most part news organizations like NBC have hesitated to characterize it as such. But after careful consideration, NBC News has decided a change in terminology is warranted, that the situation in Iraq with armed militarized factions fighting for their own political agendas can now be characterized as civil war."

— Co-host Matt Lauer leading off NBC's *Today*, Nov. 27.

"The President has a crucial meeting on Wednesday in Jordan with the Prime Minister of Iraq. They will discuss what NBC News has decided to now call a civil war in Iraq."

— NBC's Ann Curry during the 8am news update on *Today*, November 27.

"While Washington looks for answers, the violence in Iraq is spiraling out of control. Today NBC News joined other major news organizations in calling it a civil war....Many experts say that the White House has a huge incentive to avoid that term because it could further erode public support for keeping U.S. troops in Iraq."

— Andrea Mitchell on NBC *Nightly News*, November 27.

## Yearning for a "Cronkite Moment"

"It is civil war in Iraq. Not says the State Department. Not says the Iraqi government. But after long and painful consideration, it meets the technical standards for civil war, and we must call it that, says NBC News. Is this the 'Walter Cronkite moment' of the Iraq War?"

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann opening his *Countdown* program, November 27.

### Flashbacks:

"[Left-wing activist Cindy Sheehan] may be evolving as an icon in the war's turning point....Making it safe, her supporters say, to voice doubts about the war, just as Walter Cronkite did on the *Evening News* in 1968."

— NBC's Carl Quintanilla, August 25, 2005 *Nightly News*.

"In 1968, Walter Cronkite returned from Vietnam and told Americans that, in his opinion, the Vietnam War had become a stalemate. That was a turning point. Now, it's too early to tell whether what happened this week [John Murtha calling for a troop pullout] was a turning point in Iraq, but it certainly was the political 'Play of the Week.'"

— Bill Schneider on CNN's *Situation Room*, Nov. 18, 2005.

## Bush Dodged First Vietnam War, Now "Creating Another One"

"Mr. Bush's trip here was bound to fuel his critics who've never bought his explanation about how he managed to avoid military service in Vietnam. But Iraq raises the stakes and changes the focus from what he did during the Vietnam War to whether he's creating another one....Right now, U.S. troops are bogged down, domestic opposition is growing, a presidency is under fire — a description that fits Iraq and loudly resonates here as well."

— White House correspondent Jim Axelrod reporting from Vietnam on the November 17 *CBS Evening News*.

"In Vietnam, we learned the lesson. We stopped endlessly squandering lives and treasure and the focus of a nation on an impossible and an irrelevant dream, but you are still doing exactly that, tonight, in Iraq. And these lessons from Vietnam, Mr. Bush, these priceless, transparent lessons, written large as if across the very sky, are still a mystery to you. 'We'll succeed unless we quit.' No, sir. We will succeed against terrorism, for our country's needs, towards binding up the nation's wounds when you quit, quit the monumental lie that is our presence in Iraq."

— MSNBC *Countdown* host Keith Olbermann in a "Special Comment," November 20.

## CBS: Let's Talk About U.S. Defeat

CBS's Lara Logan: "We hear very little about victory in Iraq these days. We hear a lot about how to manage the defeat. And a lot of Americans—"

General John Abizaid: "What defeat?"

Logan: "How we minimize the defeat."

General Abizaid: "That's your word. Defeat is your word, not my word."

— CBS's *60 Minutes*, November 26.

## Matthews Anxious to Surrender

"[Iraq is] a lot like Vietnam was when we had the Tet Offensive in 1968 and the American people saw that we couldn't get victory out of that country. The word 'victory' is still used by the President. Most Americans, I think, know we can't win over there. We can't create a stable, democratic government....How many more casualties will we take in what looks to be a losing war? It's just like Vietnam. We could have cut the same deal in '68 that we cut eventually in '73. I think the American people are gonna see that."

— MSNBC's Chris Matthews on NBC's *Today*, Nov. 14.

## Appalled by Stall on Withdrawal

**Anchor Katie Couric:** "Senator, were you as frustrated with General Abizaid's position today as John McCain and Hillary Clinton?"

**Senator Carl Levin (D-MI):** "I was somewhat frustrated, because I thought basically he was saying that we should stay the course, which is, I think, clearly a position that's been rejected by the American people...."

**Couric:** "So, as the future Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, where does that leave you, Senator Levin? I mean, what are your options? You have long advocated a phased withdrawal, but how are you going to make that happen? It seems almost impossible right now."  
— *CBS Evening News*, November 15.

## Terrorists Need Their Privacy

"As proof that his arrogance was not lost in the election, he [President Bush] wants Congress to pass legislation legalizing the NSA spy program, the one that's already been ruled illegal by a federal judge....Great idea, right? You do something illegal, you just get your toadies in Congress to pass a law saying it's legal. Same thing they did with the violations of the Geneva Conventions."

— CNN's Jack Cafferty on *The Situation Room*, Nov. 17.

## America: Land of Bigots

"We have seen new polls this morning about you and Senator Hillary Clinton. Here's my question: Do you think that residual resistance is greater for race or for gender? Is the nation secretly, I guess, more racist or more sexist?"

— ABC's Diane Sawyer to Democratic Senator Barack Obama on *Good Morning America*, November 13.

"Ninety percent of Americans say race and gender make absolutely no difference in their vote in the polls. I asked Senator Obama yesterday if he believes it, and he thinks it's case by case. Let me ask you, do you think that there is secret sexism, secret, secret genderism in this country?"

— Sawyer to *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd on *Good Morning America* the next day.

## Media Not Biased, Viewers Are

"I do not have a liberal bias....I don't have a conservative bias, either. I don't have any bias. I am bias-free....Bias is what people who hear or read the news bring to the story, not what the journalist brings to the reporting....[My news-cast] is a flavor of neutrality."

— PBS *NewsHour* anchor Jim Lehrer appearing on Comedy Central's *The Colbert Report*, November 27.

## Dan Finally Detects Media Bias

"I think it's fair to say, Bill, in fact I know it is, that Fox News operates in at least a somewhat different way than every other news organization that I know. They have their talking points....We know that they get talking points from the White House....I think it's pretty clear that they had wished the election had gone another way....That's not a crime, it's not an indictable offense. This is America, they can do what they want to do, but I think that's the perspective through which one should view it."

— Ex-CBS anchor Dan Rather discussing the Fox News Channel, HBO's *Real Time with Bill Maher*, November 17.

## Touting NBC's Smarts

"I see us as still offering this reasoned, serious half hour every night. The more people shout on cable, the more I actually welcome that....Give us this half hour of peace and tranquility and let me hear what David Gregory says it was like in the front row of the briefing that day. Let me hear Andrea Mitchell describe Condi Rice on this trip to Jakarta. I want to know about that. I want to know it from smart people who do this for a living."

— NBC *Nightly News* anchor Brian Williams in an interview on PBS's *Charlie Rose*, November 20.

## Putting Bleak Spin on Good News

**Anchor Katie Couric:** "The government today put out the final report on unemployment before the election. It shows the jobless rate fell in October to the lowest level in five years, 4.4 percent. And the economy created about 92,000 jobs. But do the jobs out there pay enough? A big issue in the battle for Congress this year is how much the lowest-paid workers make..."

**Reporter Lee Cowan:** "Congress hasn't raised [the minimum wage] above \$5.15 an hour since 1997. Since then, 23 states have raised it on their own, and next Tuesday minimum wage will be voted on in a half dozen more states, including Ohio, which wants to raise it to \$6.85....Seventy percent of Ohio voters say they are in favor of the increase just to get the wages out of the gutter."  
— *CBS Evening News*, November 3.

## Koppel Cackles Over Bush Trip

"It's a sign of the times: Thirty-five years ago, he [George W. Bush] joined the Texas Air National Guard to stay out of Vietnam. And now, he's going to Vietnam to stay out of Washington."

— Ted Koppel joking about the President's trip to an economic summit in Vietnam, on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*, November 15.

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**PUBLISHER:** L. Brent Bozell III

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

**NEWS ANALYSTS:** Geoff Dickens, Brad Wilmouth, Megan McCormack, Mike Rule, Scott Whitlock and Justin McCarthy

**RESEARCH ASSOCIATE:** Michelle Humphrey

**CIRCULATION MANAGER:** Holly Schnitzler

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