

Notable Quotables

February 27, 2006 (Vol. Nineteen; No. 5)

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



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

Revenge of the Crybabies

"Americans learned the Vice President had shot a man only when a newspaper in Corpus Christi, Texas, posted a story on its Web site 18 hours later. The White House Press Secretary, Scott McClellan, faced tough questions today about why the White House did not inform the public."

— Co-anchor Elizabeth Vargas on ABC's *World News Tonight*, February 13.

"What took so long? Tonight, the White House under fire over the Vice President's hunting accident...What happened and why didn't the public learn about the accident sooner?...Tonight, the questions mostly have to do with why it took so long for word to get out that a man had been wounded by a shot fired by the Vice President."

— Brian Williams starting the Feb. 13 *NBC Nightly News*.

Co-host Charles Gibson: "Next to the growing political fallout from all this: Why didn't the White House tell everyone when this accident happened? Why did they wait so long, and did that make a bad situation even worse?..."

Reporter Jessica Yellin: "It took the Vice President's office nearly 24 hours to go public with news of the shooting. That delay has prompted some speculation online and on talk radio that perhaps Mr. Cheney was hoping to cover up the incident."

— ABC's *Good Morning America*, February 13.

"A source that I can characterize as close to this administration says the people inside the White House are, quote, 'livid' about this. This source also tells us that, quote, 'it's no longer about indulging Dick Cheney's views of press management.' Instead, he says, 'it's now about Iraq and Katrina and a range of other issues that play into the public's views of this administration's arrogance.'"

— Reporter Gloria Borger, *CBS Evening News*, Feb. 14.

Co-host Matt Lauer: "The White House, already criticized for waiting a day to announce the actual accident occurred, now we've got Scott McClellan standing in front of the press corps yesterday already knowing that Mr. Whittington has, has a minor heart attack and doesn't say a word about it. Doesn't that seem to add insult to injury?"

NBC Washington Bureau Chief Tim Russert: "Yes, and it reinforces this storyline of an administration that seems to relish or enjoy secrecy or an administration that, in the eyes of the national press corps, is suspect in terms of credibility because of issues like Iraq, like Katrina."

— Exchange on NBC's *Today*, February 15.

Welcome to the Parallel Universe

"I don't know if you were shocked like I was, this was bottom of the fold in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* yesterday. I've talked to experts, they can't believe that the papers treated this [Vice President Cheney's hunting accident] as such a light issue. It only moved up to the top of the fold front page today in both of those journals. I find that interesting, I want to talk to you when we come back. Has the press been playing this down?"

— MSNBC's Chris Matthews previewing an upcoming segment with former Clinton aides David Gergen and Dee Dee Myers on *Hardball*, February 14.

We're Not Biased, Fox News Is

"CBS News has learned that it was President Bush's political enforcer, Karl Rove, who finally got the Vice President to speak publicly about his hunting accident...The Vice President chose to make his first public comments on Fox News Channel's *Special Report*, a broadcast Mr. Cheney sees as friendly and has turned to before."

— White House reporter Jim Axelrod on the *CBS Evening News*, February 15.

"It didn't exactly represent a profile in courage for the Vice President to wander over there to the F-word network for a sit-down with Brit Hume. I mean, that's a little like Bonnie interviewing Clyde, ain't it?...I mean, running over there to the Fox network to, I mean, that's — talk about seeking a safe haven. He's not going to get any high hard ones from anybody at the F-word network. I think we know that."

— CNN's Jack Cafferty on *The Situation Room*, Feb. 15.

"The Vice President of the United States has accepted responsibility for the accidental shooting of a Texas attorney ...just 95 hours and 10 minutes after it happened. Not in a news conference, nor in a written statement, nor to a panel of interviewers from a variety of news organizations, but rather before the more malleable cameras of Fox News."

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann on *Countdown*, Feb. 15.

Liberal Sense of Humor

"These things fairly or unfairly tend to become a metaphor for a Presidency, and don't be surprised if you see lots of jokes about, you know, the Vice President was, you know he's trigger happy or, you know, he might have had better aim if he'd served in Vietnam. You'll see jokes like that."

— *Time's* Matthew Cooper discussing the Cheney shooting accident on CBS's *The Early Show*, February 13.

“A Blessing” for Cheney Bashers

“The shooting could hardly be a better metaphor for Cheney. It neatly packages his faulty judgment, insularity and arrogance in a story that is not cataclysmic on its own terms but will prove hard to forget. That’s too bad for Cheney, and certainly for Harry Whittington. But it is a blessing for anyone hoping to restore some accountability to a government that increasingly believes it is a law unto itself.”

— *Newsweek* Senior Editor Jonathan Alter in a column published in the February 27 issue.

Will Cheney End Up in Slammer?

“Yesterday, Mr. Whittington appeared to have minor injuries, moved out of the I.C.U, this was all ruled an accident. Now he’s had this heart attack. They think he’ll recover. Of course, everybody hopes he will. But do the changes in his health alter how the event is viewed legally and, under the worst case scenario, could negligent homicide actually come into play?”

— *MSNBC’s* Keith Olbermann to Paul Burka, Executive Editor of *Texas Monthly*, on *Countdown*, February 14.

ABC’s White House Secrets Expert

Co-host Bill Weir: “Before I let you go, I want to get your comment on the big story of the week, the Dick Cheney hunting accident. Your wife came out and said it was another example of this administration’s cloud of secrecy. Your friends Paul Begala and James Carville want more investigation. Do you agree?”

Former President Bill Clinton: “...I think the White House should have said something sooner, but I think it’s gotten a little more life than it would have because the administration has an enormous penchant for secrecy — for not telling anybody anything about anything.”

— *ABC’s Good Morning America*, February 19.

Will the Conspiracies Never End?

MSNBC’s Chris Matthews: “They dressed up Mr. Whittington rather well, with a lot of make-up, he looked great, I’m glad he’s back, but he walked right back into the hospital again. What was that?”

Bloomberg news columnist Margaret Carlson: “I think he had his PJs on underneath.”

Matthews: “It reminded me of [ailing Soviet party boss] Chernenko voting a couple years ago in Russia, when the guy goes into a room next door, they made it look like a voting station, and the guy goes right back to bed.”

— Exchange on *MSNBC’s Hardball*, February 17, hours after Harry Whittington left a Corpus Christi hospital.

Stunned by Support for War

“I was astonished: Almost all of them support the war, despite the fact that it’s taken such a toll on them. We asked them flat out: Should we be there? And the ones that are the most severely hit believe yes, we should have been there. They are not angry at the President, they’re not angry at the establishment. I promise you, you’ll be astonished if you’re up that late on Sunday night.”

— *CBS’s* Mike Wallace on *MSNBC’s Imus in the Morning* February 10, where he was promoting his *60 Minutes* story on four severely wounded veterans of the Iraq war.

America’s Osama bin Laden

“Cheney is a terrorist. He terrorizes our enemies abroad and innocent citizens here at home indiscriminately. Who ever thought Harry Whittington would be the answer to America’s prayers. Finally, someone who might get that lying, thieving Cheney into a courtroom to answer some direct questions.”

— Actor/left-wing activist Alec Baldwin in a February 17 blog entry posted at HuffingtonPost.com.

It’s Time to Impeach the Dictator

“There are causes worth fighting for, even if you know that you will lose. Unless you are willing to accept torture as part of a normal American political lexicon, unless you are willing to accept that leaving the Geneva Convention is fine and dandy, if you accept the expression [expansion?] of wiretapping as business as usual, the only way to express this now is to embrace the difficult and perhaps embarrassing process of impeachment.”

— Actor Richard Dreyfuss in a February 16 speech at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., and quoted in an article posted by CNSNews.com the next morning.

Olympics Too White for Bryant

“Finally tonight, the Winter Games. Count me among those who don’t like ‘em and won’t watch ‘em. In fact, I figure when Thomas Paine said, ‘These are the times that try men’s souls,’ he must have been talking about the start of another Winter Olympics. Because they’re so trying, maybe over the next three weeks we should all try, too. Like, try not to be incredulous when someone attempts to link these games to those of the ancient Greeks who never heard of skating or skiing. So try not to laugh when someone says these are the world’s greatest athletes, despite a paucity of blacks that makes the Winter Games look like a GOP convention.”

— Former CBS and NBC morning host Bryant Gumbel on his HBO program *Real Sports*, February 7.

Notable Quotables

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