

# Notable Quotables

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



Bringing Political Balance  
to the Media

## Scary and Not Liberal Enough

"What also struck me, aside from how frightening much in this speech was, were the things that were missing. Very little with respect to minorities, the uninsured, the homeless, the elderly, Enron workers who have lost their life savings."

— *Washington Post* reporter **Ceci Connolly** during Fox's broadcast coverage of President George W. Bush's State of the Union address on January 29.

## Using Enron to Blunt Reform

**Tom Brokaw:** "Senior aide Karl Rove was forced to sell his Enron shares at a loss last year to comply with ethics regulations. Even though thousands lost their life savings in Enron stock and 401(k) accounts, this administration is pressing ahead to allow all Americans to buy stock as part of their Social Security accounts."

(**To Rove**): "So you're going to continue to pursue that?"

**Karl Rove:** "You bet, absolutely. This is a fundamental reform that is important to the country long term."

— Exchange on the NBC News prime-time special *The Bush White House: Inside the Real West Wing*, Jan. 23.

## Advocates 1st, Journalists 2nd

"In tonight's Eye on America, CBS gives you an in-depth look at the sudden revival of congressional interest in legislation that's been killed more times than Dracula: Legislation for serious campaign finance reform. In the wake of the Enron fiasco, will Congress finally put its votes where its mouth is?"

— **Dan Rather** on the January 25 *CBS Evening News*.

"What does this portend for, for campaign finance reform? Could this be the straw that breaks the camel's back that makes people say, 'Enough is enough! This has got to happen! We don't care what those folks on Capitol Hill say?'"

— **NBC's Katie Couric** to **MSNBC's Chris Matthews** on the January 25 *Today*.

## Glimpse of Liberal Paranoia

"Though no network news executive openly suggested that the Bush administration had timed the [John Walker] Lindh hearing to coincide with the start of the Enron hearings, several executives said they would not be surprised if Bush officials had planned it that way. One executive noted that information on Mr. Lindh's appearance was 'a big mystery' until yesterday morning."

— *New York Times* television reporter **Bill Carter** in a January 25 story. Lindh's court hearing had concluded before the congressional hearings on Enron began.

## Potential Anti-Lawyer "Backlash" More Frightening than Terrorism

"Are we in greater danger from the John Walker Lindhs of this world or from the backlash against them and towards those who would serve as their attorneys?"

"Is it going to be personally scary for those who represent John Walker Lindh at this point because of the potential for public vilification of them, let alone him?"

"In the '50s, we had a blacklist against many on the left politically. In the '40s, we had Americans of Japanese descent interned at race tracks in California. In the '20s, we had the Palmer Raids. You can go all the way back to the Alien and Sedition Act in 1800. Are you worried that we might be entering that kind of period of time again in the case of Walker Lindh and the case of the detainees in Guantanamo Bay, even the ones in American jails of Arab descent, at this moment?"

— **Host Keith Olbermann's** questions for a panel of defense lawyers on CNN's *The Point*, January 24.

## Ruing a "Pretty Dismal Existence"

"They went to their new home, which is this eight foot by six foot by eight foot high, well, it's a cage, they [the military] don't like to call it a cage, but it is a cage. It is a mosquito infested place at night, there is no mosquito repellent being handed out. But the place is supposed to be sprayed by [sic] mosquitoes. It is a pretty dismal existence, and nobody knows exactly how long these people will be there or what they're going to do with them."

— **CNN's Bob Franken** on the Jan. 14 *NewsNight*, reporting on the first batch of al Qaeda terrorists transferred to the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay.

"If, in fact, as you say, these prisoners are being treated humanely, that's certainly not the perception in some quarters. Is there a concern that the U.S. will somehow lose the high moral authority in this war on terrorism by the treatment of these detainees?"

— **NBC's Jim Miklaszewski** questioning Defense Secretary **Donald Rumsfeld** at a January 22 briefing shown on all three cable news outlets.

## Terrorists Need Air Conditioning

"You mentioned earlier that Cuba has a beautiful climate. But as you know, in a few months it's going to be very, very hot down there, and there is going to be more complaints about them being held in open conditions like that."

— **Thelma LeBrecht** of the AP Broadcast service, questioning Rumsfeld at the Pentagon's January 22 briefing.

## “Truth Telling” = Raising Taxes

“What about truth telling on the economy? This is one area in which people have not responded well to blunt talk about what needs to happen here, you know, sacrifice and tax increases and things of that sort.”

— ABC’s Michel Martin on PBS’s *Washington Week*, Jan. 4.

## Anti-American to Drive an SUV

“At issue tonight, with the U.S. locked in dependence on foreign oil, is it downright unpatriotic to drive an SUV? Should Americans be somehow forced to get better mileage or should the government stay out of the car business?”

— MSNBC’s Brian Williams teasing an upcoming segment on *The News with Brian Williams*, January 2.

## Equating Conservatives & Taliban

“The council will be navigating a scientific and ethical landscape significantly more complex than the one that existed ...last summer. In November, researchers announced that they had made the first human embryo clones, giving immediacy to warnings by religious conservatives and others that science is no longer serving the nation’s moral will. At the same time, the United States was fighting a war to free a faraway nation from the grip of religious conservatives who were denounced for imposing their moral code on others.”

— *Washington Post* reporter Rick Weiss in a January 17 “Federal Page” article about President Bush’s new Council on Bioethics.

## Ruining Hillary’s Magic Moment

“A supportive spouse, surprisingly accepting colleagues, and a mandate to legislate. For Sen. Clinton, life is almost perfect. If only they weren’t still out to get her.”

— Subhead of *Washington Post* reporter John Harris’s profile, “The Liberation of Hillary,” the cover story for the *Post*’s Sunday magazine, January 27. “They” referred to Clinton’s conservative critics.

## Clamoring for a Clinton Camelot

“I think another dynamic that we’re living through is that we cannot let the Clinton legacy go. We’re living vicariously through Chelsea because as a country we don’t want to let a very popular former President out of our hands, and here’s another chance with Chelsea....This is Camelot, almost. We’re trying to create another legacy here to hold on with with the Clintons, and you know, so much for Hillary for President — how about Chelsea? I mean, I’m hearing some of that, have you?”

— *E!Online* columnist Ted Casablanca to ABC’s Diane Sawyer on the January 22 *Good Morning America*, in a segment inspired by Chelsea Clinton’s new hairstyle.

## New Show, Same Liberal Gasbag

“The beauty and health of our environment matters to most of us. We know our dependence on oil, coal and gas drives global climate change. We know that moving away from fossil fuels to renewable energy would serve our needs forever. But the President’s energy plan is all about fossil fuel and the industries that helped elect him. From the beginning it’s been a happy marriage of money and politics....The fossil fuel interests spent \$55 million to help elect candidates to advance their goals and the Bush administration became practically a mirror of the energy industry. There were no strangers here.”

— PBS’s Bill Moyers on his new Friday night program, *Now with Bill Moyers*, January 18.

## Confounded by Common Sense

“Since the early 1970s, the number of state prisoners has increased 500 percent, growing each year in the 1990s even as crime fell.”

— *New York Times* reporter Fox Butterfield in a January 21 news story, “Tight Budgets Force States to Reconsider Crime and Penalties.”

## Belittling Evidence of Bias

“[Former CBS News correspondent Bernard] Goldberg has picked this moment in time to haul out the old canard about the media being ‘liberal’ and the news being slanted leftward. It’s the first refuge of a no-talent hack.”

— *Washington Post* TV critic Tom Shales in a review of Goldberg’s new book *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*, in the January 7 issue of *Electronic Media*.

“Like a stopped clock, Goldberg isn’t always wrong. He’s probably sincere. But he’s remarkably dense. And you have to wonder whether his glorifiers are just as dense, or deeply cynical, or living on a different planet. Do they really think it is devastating evidence of bias that a TV producer would decide to label a full-time ideologue such as Phyllis Schlafly as ‘conservative’ but not feel obliged to label avocational activist Rosie O’Donnell as ‘liberal’?”

— A January 11 *Washington Post* op-ed by Michael Kinsley, Editor of Microsoft’s *Slate.com*.

## Not Looking Very Hard

“I have yet to see a body of evidence that suggests the reporting that gets on the air reflects any political bias.”

— Former CBS and CNN correspondent Deborah Potter, who is currently the Executive Director of NewsLab, when asked by the *Boston Globe*’s Mark Jurkowitz for a comment on her former colleague Bernard Goldberg’s new book *Bias*. Potter had not read the book.

### Notable Quotables

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