

Notable Quotables

January 30, 2006 (Vol. Nineteen; No. 3)

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



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

Obviously Karl Rove's Handiwork

"The last time we got a tape from Osama bin Laden was right before the 2004 presidential election. Now here we are, four days away from hearings starting in Washington into the wiretapping of America's telephones without bothering to get a court order or a warrant, and up pops another tape from Osama bin Laden. Coincidence? Who knows."

— CNN's Jack Cafferty, *The Situation Room*, January 19.

"Late in the same week that an NSA whistleblower suggests the illicit tapping of American phones is thousands of times larger and thousands of times less focused than the President claims, suddenly we have FBI sources linking stories about Middle Easterners trying to buy vast quantities of untraceable, disposable American cell phones from K-Marts and Target stores. Which, if true, makes the wiretapping look like a good idea and its leakers look like they've already helped terrorists outsmart the eavesdropping. Boy, you can't buy timing like that. I mean it. I'm asking seriously, you can't buy timing like that, right?...We'll never know for sure if that is or is not just an amazing coincidence that it falls right after the whole NSA whistleblower issue comes up, but, as we had pointed out here before, the administration sure gets a lot of these breaks."

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann to *Time* reporter Mike Allen on the January 13 *Countdown*.

Don't Doubt Bush's Criminality

"The administration seems to be, as you well know, Dan, pulling out all the stops to justify this eavesdropping program, but that doesn't change the fact that many people believe that the President broke the law. For example, law professor Jonathan Turley of GW told lawmakers on Capitol Hill on Friday, quote, 'What the President ordered in this case was a crime.' What's your reaction?...Last week a legal analysis by the non-partisan Congressional Research Service concluded that the administration's limited briefings for Congress were, quote, 'inconsistent with the law.'"

— NBC's Katie Couric to White House counselor Dan Bartlett on *Today*, January 23.

"Computers and cell phones have changed all our lives, and a lot of those changes have been good. But technology can also have a downside, including the erosion of privacy. You can now go online and buy other people's phone records....Maybe the government doesn't need to do this illegal eavesdropping, they could just buy it."

— CBS's Bob Schieffer on the January 12 *Evening News*.

Smearing Conservatives as Bigots

"[A] visibly frustrated Democrat Edward Kennedy grilled Samuel Alito on his membership in a conservative Princeton Alumni organization, one opposed to admission of women and minorities."

— Thalia Assuras on CBS's *Early Show*, January 12.

"The topic: Alito's one-time membership in an ultra-conservative group called Concerned Alumni of Princeton, known for opposing the admission of more women and minorities to the school."

— CNN's Joe Johns on *Anderson Cooper 360*, January 11.

Reality Check:

Host John Gibson: "Was it [Concerned Alumni of Princeton] an anti-integrationist, anti-feminist group?"

FNC's Andrew Napolitano, a former CAP member: "Absolutely not. It was a traditional, conservative mainstream organization, the purpose of which was to give alumni at Princeton a voice in a very, very liberal university administration....To say it was against women belies the fact that the editor of the publication was Laura Ingraham... [and] after Laura Ingraham, the editor was Dinesh D'Souza, a scholar at the Hoover Institution and a man of color."

— FNC's *Big Story with John Gibson*, January 11.

EEK! The Court Is Moving Right

Bob Schieffer: "Jan, it appears that Judge Alito is going to be confirmed....How is he going to make the Court different than Sandra Day O'Connor, who he is going to replace?"

Chicago Tribune's Jan Crawford Greenburg: "There's little question, Bob, that he would move this court to the right."

— CBS *Evening News*, January 12.

Bob Schieffer: "This [abortion ruling] was probably Sandra Day O'Connor's last case. The new Chief Justice is now settled in. This court is moving to the right, isn't it?"

Jan Crawford Greenburg: "That's right."

— Exchange on the January 18 *CBS Evening News*.

Bob Schieffer: "The President promised during the election to move this court to the right. And from what we heard in these [Alito] hearings, what we've already seen with Judge Roberts on the bench, it is moving to the right, isn't it?"

Jan Crawford Greenburg: "Well, that's right....This court is poised for an historic shift to right...."

— CBS *Evening News*, January 24.

On Torture, Bush = Saddam Lite

"Highlighting Saddam's brutality nearly two years after his regime was toppled is the latest Bush effort to justify the Iraq war. But the event came on the same day the group Human Rights Watch released an annual report saying Mr. Bush may be no Saddam, but no saint either, concluding that in 2005, 'the abuse of detainees had become a deliberate, central part of the Bush administration's strategy of interrogating terrorist suspects.'"

— CNN's Dana Bash on *The Situation Room*, January 18.

Walter Waves White Flag, Again

"We should get out now....We had an opportunity to say to the world and Iraqis after the hurricane disaster that Mother Nature has not treated us well and we find ourselves missing the amount of money it takes to help these poor people out of their homeless situation and rebuild some of our most important cities in the United States. Therefore, we are going to have to bring our troops home...I think we could have been able to retire with honor. In fact, I think we can retire with honor, anyway."

— Former *CBS Evening News* anchor Walter Cronkite, who in 1968 editorialized in favor of withdrawing from Vietnam, in a January 15 meeting with reporters later quoted by Associated Press reporter David Bauder.

Won't Support "Imperialist Tools"

"I don't support our troops....When you volunteer for the U.S. military, you pretty much know you're not going to be fending off invasions from Mexico and Canada. So you're willingly signing up to be a fighting tool of American imperialism, for better or worse....I'm not advocating that we spit on returning veterans like they did after the Vietnam War, but we shouldn't be celebrating people for doing something we don't think was a good idea."

— *Los Angeles Times* columnist and former *Time* staff writer Joel Stein in a January 24 column.

Touting "Health Wonders" of Mao

"Until the beginning of the reform period in the early 1980s, China's socialized medical system, with 'barefoot doctors' at its core, worked public health wonders....Since then, in one of the great policy reversals of modern times, China has dissolved its rural communes, privatized vast swaths of the economy and shifted public health resources away from rural areas and toward the cities."

— *New York Times* reporter Howard French, January 14. According to a new biography of Mao, the communist dictator who ruled China from 1949 to 1976 "was responsible for well over 70 million deaths in peacetime, more than any other twentieth-century leader."

Conservative Cowards Skip Iraq

ABC's Terry Moran: "Now, Wayne Newton may not be to everyone's taste...and maybe a lot of the young soldiers he performs for are, well, unfamiliar with his body of work. But at least he goes to see them and perform for them."

Which is more than you can say for a lot of Hollywood stars today. While the USO has been able to attract some big names for tours in recent years — Jessica Simpson, Robin Williams, the rapper 50 Cent — some of the top stars are AWOL. Like, say—

Comedian Kathy Griffin: "Mel Gibson, big conservative. Go on over, Mel, anytime. They'd be glad to see you. They all love *Braveheart*."

Moran: "Comedian Kathy Griffin has done one USO tour to Kuwait and Afghanistan and signed up for another soon to the Middle East. A self-described D-list celebrity and opponent of the war, she, too, loves performing for the troops and she wonders why some vocal war supporters have stayed home."

Griffin: "I think Rush Limbaugh should, you know, pop a few of those Oxycontin that he probably still has laying around and go over....You know, put your money where your mouth is, O'Reilly, go do a book tour or something over there."

— ABC's *Nightline*, January 20. In February 2005, Limbaugh spent several days with U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

Belafonte Goes Bananas

"We've come to this dark time in which the new Gestapo of Homeland Security lurks here, where citizens are having their rights suspended....You can be arrested and not charged. You can be arrested and have no right to counsel."

— Singer/left-wing activist Harry Belafonte, in a January 21 speech to the Arts Presenters Members Conference in New York City, comments reported later that day by Verena Dobnik in an AP dispatch.

"I stand by my remarks....We've taken citizens from this country without the right to be charged, without being told what they're taken for, we've spirited them out of this country, taken them to far away places, and reports come back with some consistency that they're being tortured.... My phones are tapped. OK? My mail can be opened. They don't even need a court warrant to come and do that as we once were required to do....I think President George W. Bush, I think Cheney, I think Rumsfeld, I think all of these people have lost any moral integrity. I find what we are doing is hugely immoral....Al Qaeda tortures. We torture. Al Qaeda's killed innocent people. We kill innocent people....We have no business doing what we do."

— Belafonte on CNN's *The Situation Room*, January 23.

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