

Notable Quotables

July 17, 2006 (Vol. Nineteen; No. 15)

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



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

Keith's Dishonest Bias Denials

"Here are *Countdown's* 'Top Three Newsmakers' of this day. Number three, the rabid right-wing spin group, the Media Research Center, which studied our 'Worst Persons in the World!' segment for the last year and discovered that of approximately 600 nominees, only 174 of them were conservative. That means roughly 71 percent of the Worst are not conservative. I'd like to thank the MRC for confirming my point that the segment is apolitical."

— **MSNBC's Keith Olbermann, June 28 *Countdown*. We documented that Olbermann attacked conservatives nearly eight times more often (174 times) than liberals (23).**

"But the winner, Brent Bozell. Red Beard. Again. From the rabid-right spin machine, the Media Research Council [sic]. He has targeted this show now for his latest 'MRC Action Alert.' You know, sending us impotent e-mails that make everybody here laugh. Our inbox now has literally dozens of them demanding that we, quote, 'tell the truth about the WMD that were found in Iraq.' Okay, we'll do it again: There weren't any. Rick Santorum tried to pretend there were, and if you believed him, you may actually be a sheep. Thanks for writing! Brent Bozell of the Media Research Council [sic], today's 'Worst Person in the World!'"

— **Olbermann criticizing MRC President Brent Bozell later in the same June 28 program. U.S. forces have found 500 chemical weapon warheads in Iraq since 2003.**

Conservatives, the Next Nazis?

"[Your book] deals with psychological principles that are frightening and that may have faced other nations at other times in — Germany and Italy in the '30s coming to mind in particular. How does it apply now? And to what degree should it scare us?...This whole edifice requires an enemy — communism, al-Qaeda, Democrats, me, whoever — for the two-minute hate....Are you actually saying here they [conservative Republicans] would set up, encourage, terrorism from other countries to set them up as a bogeyman to have again that group to hate here, that group to more importantly be afraid of here?...This all seems to require not merely venality or immorality, but a kind of amorality where morals don't enter into it at all....You've been at one of the central moments of history in the 20th century. What kind of danger, are we facing a legitimate threat to the concept of democracy in this country?"

— **MSNBC's Keith Olbermann to ex-Nixon White House lawyer John Dean, who claims in a new book that modern conservatives are moving the Republican Party toward "authoritarianism," July 10 *Countdown*.**

Press Critics = Nixonian Thugs

"It's an election year. Beating up on the *New York Times* is red meat for the conservative base....I think the administration's a little embarrassed. They — this is the most secretive White House we've had since the Nixon White House, I think, by general acceptance, and I think they're a little embarrassed that they've had so much trouble holding on to their secrets. And making this kind of a clamor, I suspect, they hope will silence people who do talk to the press and maybe intimidate reporters."

— ***New York Times* Executive Editor Bill Keller on CBS's *Face the Nation*, July 2, referring to widespread criticism of his decision to publish details of a secret program to track international financing of terrorism.**

VS.

"As someone who spent most of his adult life as a journalist, much of it covering national security affairs, I find the decision of the *New York Times* and other newspapers to publish the story about the administration's money-tracing program to be really irresponsible....Running the story about the money-tracing program is a version of giving Anne Frank's address to the Nazis."

— **Longtime NBC reporter Richard Valeriani in a June 28 posting on the Huffington Post blog.**

Dana's Sleazy Slam

Substitute host Andrea Mitchell: "A story you wrote last year disclosing the secret CIA prisons won the Pulitzer Prize, but it also led to William Bennett, sitting here, saying [you]...were, 'not worthy of an award but rather worthy of jail.' Dana, how do you plead?"

***Washington Post* reporter Dana Priest:** "Well, it's not a crime to publish classified information. And this is one of the things, Mr. Bennett keeps telling people that it is....I mean, some people would like to make casino gambling a crime, but it is not a crime."

— **Exchange on NBC's *Meet the Press*, July 2. Bennett in 2003 admitted betting large sums at casinos.**

Rather Arrogant

"[I am] biased — I have a very strong bias toward independent journalism.... Some of what you describe as 'baggage' comes from people who have the following view: Their view is, 'You report the news the way I want it reported or I'm going to make you pay a price and hang a sign around your neck saying you're a bomb-toting Bolshevik.'"

— **Ex-CBS anchorman Dan Rather, as quoted by the *Washington Post's* Lisa de Moraes in a July 12 column.**

Either Liberal or “Hateful”

“The kind of hateful speech that we have seen, on the floor of the United States Congress and in a lot of the blogosphere, is what seems to dominate. And I do think it goes back, in my own experience, to 1989 when the talk radio shows went crazy about the congressional pay raise which was supported by Common Cause and some other groups in Washington who felt there needed to be a higher-paid salary....The anti-Washington, anti-bureaucrat bias that was built into that debate was then taken up by cable talk hosts as well and that became the kind of really combative conversation that displaced reasoned discussions about controversial issues.”

— NBC reporter **Andrea Mitchell** appearing on PBS’s *Washington Week*, July 7.

Media’s Iraq News: Too Rosy?

“It’s a lot worse over here [in Iraq] than is reported....Living conditions have gotten so much worse, violence is at an even higher tempo, and the country is on the verge of civil war. The administration has been successful to the extent that most Americans are not aware of just how dire it is and how little progress has been made. They keep talking about how the Iraqi army is doing much better and taking over responsibilities, but for the most part that’s not true.”

— *Newsweek* chief foreign correspondent **Rod Nordland**, in a Web interview with *Foreign Policy* posted July 5.

Bush “Scoffed” at Iraq Coalition?

“Is there a Bush Doctrine, a coherent set of guidelines, dictating this administration’s foreign policy? I mean, with Iraq, you know, international coalitions were kind of scoffed at. North Korea, they’re, they’re embraced.”

— CNN’s **Anderson Cooper** to *Washington Post* reporter **Robin Wright** on *Anderson Cooper 360*, July 6. More than 30 countries supplied troops, bases or other help to the U.S.-led coalition that toppled **Saddam Hussein** in 2003.

No Oil, No American Troops

Host Chris Matthews: “Tell us what the American people watching right now and what their government can do.... [What do] you want the government of the United States to do [to help alleviate the refugee crisis in Darfur, Sudan]?”

Actress Mia Farrow: “Well, what has to happen, and happen fast, is a U.N. peacekeeping force has to come in, a robust peacekeeping force of NATO quality. Twenty thousand strong is what Kofi Annan recommended in January, and air support as well....There is, of course, a lack of political will. There is no oil in Darfur, only human beings.”

— MSNBC’s *Hardball*, June 28.

Go See Al Gore’s Horror Flick

“Former Vice President Al Gore and his wife Tipper have been forces of nature in the fight to save the planet. And there is a wonderful movie you all have to see called *An Inconvenient Truth*. And in it, the Vice President, the former Vice President, lays out a compelling, horrifying, but ultimately hopeful case for finding a way to save an Earth that’s on the brink of disaster. And that means saving our lives and our children’s lives....We want to tell people, again, we don’t endorse a lot of things. We talk about a lot of movies, but it’s rare that we say to people: It’s very important to see this.”

— **Barbara Walters** interviewing Al and Tipper Gore on ABC’s *The View*, June 29.

Empathizing With Illegal Aliens

“Try explaining immigration reform to two toddlers living in a shotgun house, or to their parents who work 12 hours a day picking blueberries for minimum wage. Don’t worry, it’s likely you’ll never have to. And today...members of Congress didn’t try. What they were doing was, at best, political theater — a road show on both coasts.”

— Reporter **Byron Pitts** beginning a story about congressional hearings on immigration, *CBS Evening News* July 5.

Example of Liberal Compassion?

“Now that he’s [Ken Lay] died of a heart attack in the luxury of his Colorado getaway while awaiting sentencing for his crimes, none of his victims will be able to contemplate that he’s locked away in a place that makes the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel look like Hawaii; that he might be spending long nights locked in a cell with a panting tattooed monster named Sumo, a man of strange and constant demands; and long days in the prison laundry or jute mill or license plate factory, gibbering with anguish as fire-eyed psychopaths stare at him for unblinking hours while they sharpen spoons into jailhouse stilettos.”

— *Washington Post* Style section essayist **Henry Allen** in an article published July 6, the day after Lay’s death.

Fox “News,” the Low IQ Network

“Speaking of the devil, our winner Roger Ailes, the head of Fox, quote, ‘News,’ unquote. Apparently, its position as the network of choice for those aged 70 or over, or with IQs 70 or under, is insufficient. He is now threatening his own staffers through ‘Now Hiring’ ads in trade publications.... Which merely proves the theory that even in Hell, Satan will periodically demand more productivity from you. Roger Ailes, today’s ‘Worst Person in the World!’”

— MSNBC’s **Keith Olbermann** on *Countdown*, June 26.

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PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell III

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

NEWS ANALYSTS: Geoffrey Dickens, Brian Boyd, Brad Wilmoth, Megan McCormack, Mike Rule, Scott Whitlock

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: Michelle Humphrey

INTERNS: Eugene Gibilaro, Chadd Clark

July 17, 2006 (Volume 19; No. 15)

Published bi-weekly by the
Media Research Center
325 South Patrick Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Subscriptions: \$29 annually. Call (800) 672-1423

For daily bias updates and the latest from the MRC, visit our Web site: <http://www.mediaresearch.org>

