

# Notable Quotables

July 18, 2005 (Vol. Eighteen; No. 15)

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



Bringing Political  
Balance to the Media

## Like Adams, Jefferson or Madison

**Andrea Mitchell:** "It is an iconic picture: American hostages, hands bound and blindfolded, being paraded outside the U.S. Embassy in Tehran by their captors. But has one of those student radicals now become Iran's newly elected President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad?... Tonight, U.S. intelligence officials say that they will continue to study this, but may never have definitive proof of what the role was of Iran's new president, Brian."

**Brian Williams:** "Andrea, what would it all matter if proven true? Someone brought up today the first several U.S. presidents were certainly revolutionaries and might have been called terrorists at the time by the British Crown after all."

**Mitchell:** "Indeed, Brian."

— *NBC Nightly News*, June 30.

## Now Upset by "Clintonian Defense"

**Charles Gibson:** "It's been revealed that Karl Rove did leak to the media that the wife of an administration critic, former Ambassador Joseph Wilson, worked for the CIA, part of an apparent effort to discredit his claims.... Joe, if this had happened in the Clinton administration, the Republicans would be going nuts."

**Republican political analyst Joe Watkins:** "First of all, Karl Rove is not necessarily the target of this investigation. We don't know that he is and certainly he hasn't done anything wrong. He's done nothing illegal, and we know that from his lawyer, as well as from what he said."

**Gibson:** "Is that not a Clintonian defense? Yes, Karl Rove didn't specifically name this person. He just talked about Wilson's wife and he didn't actually say she was undercover, and so therefore he didn't technically break the law."

— *ABC's Good Morning America*, July 12.

## Reporters in Full Scold Mode

**NBC's David Gregory:** "Scott, I mean, just — I mean, this is ridiculous. The notion that you're going to stand before us after having commented with that level of detail and tell people watching this that somehow you decided not to talk. You've got a public record out there. Do you stand by your remarks from that podium, or not?... Why are you choosing when it's appropriate and when it's inappropriate [to comment on the leak investigation]?"

**Press Secretary Scott McClellan:** "If you'll let me finish—"

**Gregory:** "No, you're not finishing — you're not saying anything!"

— Exchange at a July 11 White House news briefing.

## Rushing to Pronounce Rove Guilty

"Now that Rove has essentially been caught red-handed peddling this information, all of a sudden you have respect for the sanctity of the criminal investigation?"

— **ABC's Terry Moran to Press Secretary Scott McClellan at a July 11 White House briefing later shown on C-SPAN.**

"Karl Rove is a liability in the war on terror.... In his 'story guidance' to Matthew Cooper of *Time*, Rove did more damage to your safety than the most thumb-sucking liberal or guard at Abu Ghraib. He destroyed an intelligence asset like Valerie Plame merely to deflect criticism of a politician. We have all the damned politicians, of every stripe, that we need. The best of them isn't worth half a Valerie Plame."

— **Countdown host Keith Olbermann in a July 11 posting to his "Bloggerman" page on MSNBC's Web site.**

## So Says CBS's #1 Rug Beater

"Bob, the White House has got to come up with something other to say on this, politically at least, other than just 'We're not going to talk about an investigation,' because for the last two days the press secretary has just been hung up on a clothesline and beaten like a dusty rug."

— **CBS White House reporter John Roberts, who joined in the persistent questioning of Scott McClellan, on the July 12 *Evening News*.**

## Fearing a Turn to the Right

"Before today's announcement we were anticipating the retirement of Chief Justice Rehnquist. He, of course, an ardent conservative and were he to leave, we would presume that the President would appoint another strong conservative, ardent conservative.... [But Justice O'Connor] is a moderate, she is a pragmatic centrist in her judicial philosophy. And there's no question, I think, that President Bush will work very hard to replace her with more of an ardent conservative, and as a result you may have a change in the legal complexion in the areas of affirmative action, abortion, civil rights, and criminal law."

— **ABC reporter Manuel Medrano during live coverage of Justice O'Connor's retirement announcement on July 1.**

"There will be a huge battle now because O'Connor is the critical vote. Only the retirement of Justice John Paul Stevens and a replacement with a conservative justice would push the court further to the right."

— **NBC reporter Pete Williams during live coverage of O'Connor's retirement, July 1.**

## Lack of Real Liberals on Court

"In now standard red vs. blue political shorthand, the court lacks a deep-blue liberal in the mold of, say, Thurgood Marshall or even Harry Blackmun. It lost another gradation last week: Sandra Day O'Connor's neutral (or flickering) gray. The forecast is for more red, but nobody knows how deep."

— **Caption accompanying a *Time* graphic of the Supreme Court in which the magazine labeled Justices Rehnquist, Scalia and Thomas as "staunch conservatives" but designated no Justices as "staunch liberals."**

## Appalled by Mockery of Liberals

**Newsweek's Washington Bureau Chief Dan Klaidman:**

"What Karl Rove is trying to do is create the sort of Republican fantasy of a liberal, a kind of a stereotype liberal who they can, you know, launch a political war against. And they need an enemy, someone that they can demonize as they go forward...."

**Substitute host David Gregory:** "Is there a danger, John, in trivializing, for instance, Guantanamo Bay, the treatment of detainees? When you send Dick Cheney out, the Vice President, to say 'let's remember they're all bad people,' and when you send such a lightning rod like Karl Rove out to say that the Left wanted to subject the 9/11 terrorists to therapy, doesn't that sort of caricature what are important debates in the country?"

**Slate's John Dickerson:** "Well, sure."

— **Exchange on MSNBC's *Hardball*, June 23.**

## Chris Worries Dean Has Gone Soft

"What's changed with you, Governor, about the war? I think you inspired a lot of young people when you were campaigning for the nomination for President of the Democratic Party, because you were a clear voice of saying — and in the wilderness, I must say — that the war was wrong. It was bad policy. It wasn't based upon the facts. In fact, we were getting wrong facts. And now, as party chairman, you seem to be in that muddy middle right now, with Hillary and Bill and John Kerry and the rest of them."

— **MSNBC's Chris Matthews to DNC Chairman Howard Dean in an interview on the June 29 *Hardball*.**

## Mutual Admiration Society

**PBS's Bill Moyers:** "I think this (*NewsNight*) is the most serious and informative program in primetime, and if that's flattery, then so be it."

**CNN's Aaron Brown:** "It is. I am deeply appreciative of that. Thank you."

— **Exchange on CNN's *NewsNight*, June 24.**

## Let's Hope Journalists Listen

**Captain Christopher Vick, 18th Airborne Corps in Iraq:** "I think it's hard for Americans to get up every day and turn on the news and see the horrible things that are going on here, because there's no focus on the good things that go on. What they see is another car bomb went off."

**Reporter Kimberly Dozier:** "Do you think that's exactly what the militants are trying to do?"

**Vick:** "Sure. You've got to win the information war. I mean, it's, if they can turn public perception away from the good that is happening in this country, then they will eventually win the battle."

— **CBS Evening News, June 29.**

## Editor: I Want to Burn the Flag

"If the U.S. Senate follows its silly siblings in the House of Representatives and votes for a ban on burning the American flag, I'm going to burn one. It never occurred to me to burn a flag — except in some flag-retiring ceremony — but just the idea that Congress has nothing better to do than spend time on this nutty issue makes me want to burn one."

— **Linda Grist Cunningham, Executive Editor of the *Rockford Register Star* in Illinois, in a June 26 column.**

## Yearns for a Cronkite to End War

"President Bush went on the air this week to pretend again that things are OK in Iraq. Shades of President Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam....Walter Cronkite, CBS-TV news anchor known as 'the most trusted man in America,' after a combat tour of Vietnam in 1968 declared, 'There is no way this war can be justified any longer.' Johnson lamented to aides, 'If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost middle America.'... The crucial difference between Vietnam and Iraq is that there is no Cronkite to call Bush's bluff."

— **USA Today founder Al Neuharth in a July 1 column.**

## Happy Birthday America: You Suck

"We know what July 4th is. What about July 5th? After the fireworks, the music, the rhetoric of freedom — what then?...What kind of nation does our flag fly over now? Not a less innocent one, because American innocence was never the truth. Not one less reluctant to go to war without a good reason, because we have foolishly credited bad reasons in the past. But now the nation lacks even that. As our President demonstrated last week, we have become a people who wage unending war — killing and maiming our young ones and theirs — without being remotely able to say why."

— **Columnist James Carroll in the July 5 *Boston Globe*.**

## Notable Quotables

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