

Notable Quotables

March 14, 2005 (Vol. Eighteen; No. 6)

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



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

No Bias, No Forgeries, No Lies

"A panel was appointed by CBS News to look into this [National Guard story]....They concluded that whatever happened, whatever you thought about it, it was not motivated by political bias, and they said that, although they had four months and millions of dollars, they could not demonstrate that the documents were not authentic, that they were forgeries. They said they couldn't make that conclusion....Whatever one thinks of what we did or didn't do with the story in question here, nobody broke the law, nobody lied. Depending on your point of view, it was a mistake, and who hasn't made a mistake somewhere along the line?"

— **Outgoing CBS Evening News anchor Dan Rather discussing the investigation into his forged memo story, on *The Late Show with David Letterman*, March 3.**

Great Career, "One Flawed Story"

"He [Dan Rather] should be remembered as the complete reporter, a person who should be remembered for the hundreds and thousands of broadcasts he did....If we wish to be fair-minded rather than mean-spirited, we should not be fixated on the one story that went bad."

— **Former CBS News reporter Marvin Kalb, now at Harvard's Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, as quoted in the March 8 *Boston Globe*.**

Columnist Mark Shields: "Al, the lynch mob won. Wednesday will be Dan Rather's last night anchoring the *CBS Evening News*, but Rather's career is about much more than one flawed story about George W. Bush's military service. Dan Rather for more than 40 years has been one terrific reporter through the JFK assassination, Vietnam, Watergate and around the globe....Thanks, Dan, for a job well done."

Moderator Al Hunt: "Mark, I couldn't agree more."

— **Shields announcing his "Outrage of the Week" on CNN's *Capital Gang*, March 5.**

"Sad" Conservatives Were Right

"The major flaw of the original story was that documents used to support its allegations were not thoroughly verified. Rather likes to think of himself as a 'reporter-anchor,' but he hardly has the time to go rummaging through files and halls of records to check on the authenticity of documents that are decades old....One of the sad things about it is that it gave the right wing, which has had its sights on Rather for years now, something to cheer and dance in the streets about."

— **Washington Post TV critic Tom Shales, March 9.**

America Now a Tad Less Barbaric

"We begin at the Supreme Court tonight. The Court has ruled today that executing people who were under 18 when they committed their crime is unconstitutional....This brings the U.S. into line with much of the world."

— **Peter Jennings on ABC's *World News Tonight*, March 1.**

"Today's decision ends a practice that drew ridicule for years from some of America's closest friends around the world."

— **Brian Williams on the March 1 *NBC Nightly News*.**

Blame Bush for Korean Nukes?

"When the Koreans said today they had nuclear weapons to defend themselves against the Bush administration, the analysts in Washington and many other countries, scratched their heads and said, 'What do the North Koreans want now?' And what has the Bush administration done, if anything, to incite this kind of talk?"

— **Peter Jennings on *World News Tonight*, February 10.**

Channeling European Rebukers

"Mr. Bush insists he wants a diplomatic solution [to the Iran nuclear weapons impasse], but just the mention of the war option was enough to throw a chill on this last night of the Brussels summit. The President says he came here to listen, but many Europeans were left to wonder just how much he heard."

— **John Roberts concluding a report on President Bush's trip to Europe, *CBS Evening News*, February 22.**

"President Bush still has image problems here. Many people mistrust his policies and think rather than embracing Europe's way of thinking, he wants Europe to embrace his."

— **Roberts on the February 23 *CBS Evening News*.**

Reviving "Death Squad" Smear

Reporter Bruce Morton: "The Reagan administration used Honduras as a base to help the right-wing Contras fight the left-wing Sandinista government in nearby Nicaragua. Critics say [John] Negroponte turned a blind eye to human rights abuses by Honduran death squads. One critic spoke up during the hearing on Negroponte's appointment to be ambassador to Iraq."

Man yelling in hearing room: "Senators, please ask the ambassador about Battalion 3-16. Ask him about his involvement in a death squad in Honduras that he supported."

— **CNN's *Inside Politics*, February 17.**

CBS Touts Liberal's "Experience"

"If you judge a man's experience by the pictures on his study wall, well, Robert Ball sure got a lot of experience.... He spent most of his adult life immersed in the Social Security system, starting just four years after FDR signed the idea into law....Robert Ball may well know more about Social Security than anyone alive....A liberal, Ball is no fan of private investment accounts because they don't address this deficit....Robert Ball disagrees with the President's view of the future. And while the wall in his study speaks from the past, it's also the voice of experience."

— Jim Axelrod on the February 14 *CBS Evening News*.

Government Needs More Money

Hannah Storm: "I want to ask you about the deficit because the President has pledged to cut the deficit in half by the time he leaves office in 2009. Is he going to be able to realistically achieve that goal without raising taxes?"

Incoming CBS anchor Bob Schieffer: "I frankly don't think so. I think in the end this President will raise taxes before his term is out, just like Ronald Reagan raised taxes after he enacted those enormous tax cuts at the beginning of his program. The government has just got to find some money to finance these programs."

— Exchange on CBS's *Early Show*, February 8.

What? Liberal Reporters?!

Chris Matthews: "What do you think of this guy [ex-Talon News reporter Jeff Gannon/James Guckert]? You're a real reporter. What do you think of this guy who says he's a, he operates under a different name. He's a blogger, I guess...."

Weekly Standard's Stephen Hayes: "Look, at the end of the day, if we're worried about too many conservatives in the White House press briefing room, this is a discussion that's not, that's not gonna resonate with the American public."

Matthews: "You think it's mostly packed with liberals? Are you saying most of those people who are paid to be journalists in that room are lib-labs, they're liberals?"

Hayes: "Yes, of course....I don't think there's any — is there a debate about that?"

Matthews: "Well, there's Helen Thomas, who I would call liberal. But who else is in there? Seriously. There are a lot of straight reporters in that room."

Time's Margaret Carlson: "I think they're mostly straight reporters. And I don't think you can keep your job otherwise....Elisabeth Bumiller reports for the *New York Times*, which has a liberal editorial page, but she plays it straight down the middle."

— Exchange on MSNBC's *Hardball*, February 25.

Consistently Conservative Hillary

Host Anderson Cooper: "No one reads tea leaves better than political commentator and former presidential adviser David Gergen. He joins us tonight. David, good to see you. You know, there is so much talk about Hillary Clinton repositioning herself....Do you see a makeover going on?"

U.S. News & World Report Editor at Large David Gergen: "I see her in — she's very consistent what she's always believed. She's very consistent what she's always believed. She's always had strong religious faith. She's been a strong Methodist. She does have conservative social values on many issues."

— Exchange on CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360*, February 9.

More Phony Terror Threats

Host Don Imus: "Well, we've just been informed now by Porter Goss and, I guess, the Secretary of Defense that al-Qaeda is still a big threat."

Boston Globe columnist Tom Oliphant: "And the head of the FBI, too....The only thing that makes sense to me is this is mid-February, it's budget cycle, and al-Qaeda has replaced the Soviet Union as the great boogeyman, and you need to say it five or six or seven times to make sure your budget is as big as possible, and all these budgets are exploding....Every one of these guys — [Secretary of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld, [CIA Director] Porter Goss, [FBI Director Robert] Mueller — all of them have big, huge budgets pending in Congress, and so it's time to get scared."

— Exchange on MSNBC's *Imus in the Morning*, February 17.

MSNBC's Gift to Al Sharpton

Chris Matthews: "We're talking about the President's plan, which is, on top of the half-trillion dollars in deficit we have each year now in the federal government, adding more and more debt, more and more money we owe the Chinese and Japanese investors....Why don't they just start paying people in their Social Security checks with yen, because we're getting money from them to pay the older folks their regular check?"

Former Democratic presidential candidate Al Sharpton: "Well, that was a great soundbite, Chris. I might use it."

— Exchange on MSNBC's *Hardball*, March 1.

Peter's Flying Saucer Exposé

"I believe there are unidentified flying objects. I'm just not sure who's driving."

— ABC anchor Peter Jennings on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* on February 23, promoting his two-hour prime time special, *Peter Jennings Reporting: UFOs — Seeing is Believing*, which aired the following night.

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