

Notable Quotables

May 23, 2005 (Vol. Eighteen; No. 11)

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



Bringing Political Balance to the Media

Conspiracy to Embarrass Media

Anchor Keith Olbermann: "Why does a book in a toilet start riots, but a war doesn't?...*Newsweek* first apologizing for the report over the weekend, and then late this afternoon, formally retracting the story....Something smells funny to me about this *Newsweek* apology, then retraction. Do you sense the same thing, and what the heck are we smelling?"

MSNBC Analyst Craig Crawford: "...This is a pattern we've seen before, Keith. We saw it in the CBS case, as bad as the supposedly fake memorandum that Dan Rather used in the *60 Minutes* report on Bush's National Guard service, as bad as that was, they did show it to the administration ahead of time. It does make you wonder if sometimes they set up the news media."

— **MSNBC's Countdown with Keith Olbermann, May 16.**

"The way Craig Crawford reconstructed it, this one went similarly to the way the Killian [*60 Minutes*] memos story evolved at the White House. The news organization turns to the administration for a denial. The administration says nothing. The news organization runs the story. The administration jumps on the necks of the news organization with both feet—or has its proxies do it for them. That's beyond shameful. It's treasonous."

— **Keith Olbermann in a posting to his MSNBC.com "Bloggerman" Web log at 9:45pm EDT May 16, about 90 minutes after his exchange with Crawford.**

Of Course, Army Is Still Guilty

"'What we know,' he [Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman] said, 'is that the *Newsweek* story about a Koran destruction is demonstrably false.' Demonstrably false? At Guantanamo Bay, almost nothing is demonstrable, especially to the Muslim world. It's a secret prison, for good reason, perhaps. But secret. What really goes on at Guantanamo Bay, no one really knows."

— **ABC reporter John Donvan on the May 16 *Nightline*.**

"Do you think the volume of the protests [from Bush administration officials] is, perhaps, a bit calculated to deflect some attention away from the policies at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo?...Given the other abuses, I guess what I'm getting at here is, does *Newsweek* deserve all the blame assuming that its story was incorrect?"

— **Anchor Chris Bury to Akbar Ahmed, Chairman of Islamic studies and professor of international relations at American University, on ABC's *Nightline*, May 16.**

Mag Caved to Bush's "Pressure"

"Under pressure from the White House, *Newsweek* today retracted a story that led to deadly rioting in Afghanistan.... Over the weekend, *Newsweek* said its source could no longer confirm the report, and the magazine's editor apologized. Then late today, under pressure from the White House, *Newsweek* retracted the entire story."

— **Bob Schieffer introducing the May 16 *CBS Evening News*.**

"Did you get pressure from the White House, Dan?"

"The administration's criticism of *Newsweek* has intensified over the last 24 hours following the so-called apology on Sunday. Do you think there is a bit of piling on here from the administration?"

— **Co-host Matt Lauer to *Newsweek* Washington bureau chief Dan Klaudman on NBC's *Today*, May 17. Klaudman denied there was any pressure exerted on *Newsweek*.**

Simply Beyond Help

ABC White House correspondent Terry Moran: "Scott, you said that the retraction by *Newsweek* magazine of its story is a good first step. What else does the President want this American magazine to do?"

Press Secretary Scott McClellan: "...We would encourage *Newsweek* to do all that they can to help repair the damage that has been done, particularly in the region. And I think *Newsweek* can do that by talking about the way they got this wrong, and pointing out what the policies and practices of the United States military are when it comes to the handling of the Holy Koran. The military put in place policies and procedures to make sure that the Koran...is handled with the utmost care and respect...."

Moran: "With respect, who made you the editor of *Newsweek*? Do you think it's appropriate for you, at that podium, speaking with the authority of the President...to tell an American magazine what they should print?"

— **Exchange at the May 17 White House news briefing.**

Anchor Bob Schieffer: "I must say I can never recall a White House telling a news organization to go report X, Y or Z. Can you ever remember anything like that?"

Reporter Wyatt Andrews: "I've thought about that, Bob. I cannot remember any circumstance like this from the White House podium, especially in this context, as if *Newsweek* is now obligated to repair the damage that America has suffered to its reputation overseas. Never seen it."

— ***CBS Evening News*, May 17.**

Twisting Ken Starr's Words

CBS's Gloria Borger: "Just who gets to sit on the Supreme Court? And should we appoint Justices who want to rule on everything from abortion to gay marriage to civil rights? That's why many conservatives consider the fight over judges their political Armageddon. But conservative icon and former federal Judge Ken Starr says it's gotten out of control."

Ken Starr, to Borger: "This is a radical, radical departure from our history and from our traditions, and it amounts to an assault on the judicial branch of government."

Borger: "Starr, who investigated the Monica Lewinsky case against President Clinton, tells CBS News that the Republican plan to end the filibuster may be unwise."

Starr: "It may prove to have the kind of long-term boomerang effect, damage on the institution of the Senate that thoughtful Senators may come to regret."

— *CBS Evening News*, May 9.

"Kenneth Starr — an appeals court judge on the D.C. circuit from 1983-1989 — came out against the Republican plan to ban judicial filibusters on Monday. He told *CBS Evening News* that it is a 'radical, radical departure from our history and our traditions, and it amounts to an assault on the judicial branch of government.'"

— **May 10 Associated Press dispatch by Jesse Holland.**

vs.

"The 'radical departure' snippet was specifically addressed — although this is not evidenced whatever from the clip — to the practice of invoking judicial philosophy as a grounds for voting against a qualified nominee of integrity and experience....Our friends are way off base in assuming that the CBS snippets, as used, represent (a) my views, or (b) what I in fact said."

— **Ken Starr in an e-mail he sent to National Review writer Ramesh Ponnuru and posted May 12 on National Review's "The Corner" Web log.**

"Very Conservative" John Warner

"It's interesting to me that the person who may actually be the deciding vote could be John Warner, the very conservative Senator from Virginia, who may — I'm saying may; there's been no public announcement — could vote with the Democrats to defeat this."

— **CBS's Bob Schieffer discussing a proposal to end the Senate Democrats' filibuster of judicial nominees, on Face the Nation, May 15.** According to the American Conservative Union's 2004 scorecard, Warner was tied with John McCain as the fifth least conservative of 51 Republican Senators, behind only Mike DeWine, Susan Collins, Olympia Snowe, and Lincoln Chafee.

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"Disgusted" If Filibuster Fails?

"If the 'nuclear option' is played out, don't you think voters are going to be disgusted with all politicians and say come on, get out of the sandbox?"

— **NBC's Katie Couric to Republican Senator Arlen Specter on the May 13 Today.**

Informed Putin vs. Ignorant Bush

Anchor Bob Schieffer: "Let me ask you this other question, though, Mike. Do you find him [Russian President Vladimir Putin] informed on what's going on in the West?"

Mike Wallace: "You know something? He's a foreign intelligence expert, that's where he came from. And unlike President Bush who, I understand, says, 'Look, I get the news, I don't read newspapers, I get the news from my aides,' he [Putin] said, 'Not me, I read newspapers all day long. I don't want to hear the biases of my aides. I don't want to hear what they believe is the news. I want to find out for myself. And that's why I read papers.'"

— **Exchange on the May 9 CBS Evening News, where Wallace was showing additional clips from his interview with Putin for 60 Minutes.**

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Mike Wallace: "Mr. Putin apparently believed that Dan's resignation as anchor of the CBS Evening News meant he had been fired from CBS."

Putin: "On our TV screens, we saw him resigning. We understood that he was forced to resign by his bosses at CBS. This is a problem of your democracy, not ours."

Wallace to Putin: "He still works for CBS News. He continues to work, as a matter of fact, on 60 Minutes."

— **CBS's 60 Minutes, May 8.**

Mean Assault on Beloved Liberal

"It's like he [President Bush] stuck a broomstick in his [FDR's] wheelchair wheels."

— **Newsweek's Jon Meacham on MSNBC's Imus in the Morning May 9, discussing Bush's criticism of Roosevelt's Yalta deal with Stalin on control of post-war Europe.**

CBS Ethics Guide, "Never Used!"

"My yard sale consisted mostly of things I found lying around the office, like a box of macaroni and cheese from the '96 Republican convention, and some boring personnel manuals. 'CBS News Standards.' This is the standards we work by. That book's never been used."

— **CBS's Steve Hartman showcasing some of the items he tried to sell while working on a story on yard sales for 60 Minutes Wednesday, April 27.** Hartman marked the spiral-bound guide, "Never used!" and priced it at 50 cents.

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