

Notable Quotables

October 25, 2004 (Vol. Seventeen; No. 22)

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



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

Bush, Another Herbert Hoover

"The Labor Department reported today that the unemployment rate remained at 5.4 percent in September. What's troubling is the number of jobs the economy did and did not create....It's the first net job loss on a President's watch since Herbert Hoover during the Great Depression of the 1930s."

— Dan Rather on the October 8 *CBS Evening News*.

"It's official. President Bush will be the first President since Herbert Hoover to face re-election with fewer people working than when he started."

— *New York Times* reporter Edmund L. Andrews in an October 9 article.

Appalled by Anti-Tax Pledge

MSNBC's Chris Matthews: "Do you expect that the pledge that John Kerry was forced to make tonight on television before maybe 50 million people that he wouldn't raise taxes in the course of a one- or two-term presidency on people who make less than \$200,000 a year, will he get an unfortunate headline out of that?"

Tim Russert: "I never thought I'd see another 'Read my lips, no new taxes,' Chris. Never in my lifetime."

Tom Brokaw: "Especially with the deficits with the size that they are today....What, what may have been playing in his mind was the tape of George Bush the 41st saying that and then remembering he also won after he said that. He paid the penalty later."

— Exchange during MSNBC's live coverage following the October 8 presidential debate.

Ugh, Please Don't Call Him Liberal

"I think the 'liberal, liberal, liberal, liberal,' seems a little tiny these days. I think it's a more serious time. I think people understand that. I think Bush, if he simply throws red meat out, that's trouble."

— *Newsweek* Managing Editor Jon Meacham on MSNBC about an hour before the October 13 presidential debate.

"[President Bush] came off very much as the compassionate conservative that he was in 2000. He also opened up a new front against Kerry. For a long time, they've ridden that tired horse of calling Kerry a liberal from Massachusetts and out of the mainstream, which doesn't, I don't think, play that well to swing voters."

— *Boston Globe* reporter Nina Easton on CNN's *News-Night* following the October 13 presidential debate.

Ted Doubts Vets, Trusts Viet Cong

"John O'Neill, the officer who took over command of John Kerry's Swift boat after Kerry left Vietnam, raised some specific questions about the incident for which Kerry received his most significant award, the Silver Star....That's what this program is about tonight....There were a number of witnesses to the incident who have never been heard from before, who have no particular ax to grind for or against Kerry. Only one of them, in fact, even knew who Kerry was. These witnesses are all Vietnamese still living in the same village where the fight took place more than 35 years ago....Our interviews don't prove that John Kerry deserved his Silver Star, but they are consistent with the after-action report and his citation for bravery."

— ABC's Ted Koppel introducing and concluding an October 14 *Nightline* devoted to interviews with Vietnamese villagers, including ex-Viet Cong guerrilla fighters.

We Should Be Tougher on Bush...

"*The New York Times* (Nagourney/Stevenson) and Howard Fineman on the Web both make the same point today: the current Bush attacks on Kerry involve distortions and taking things out of context in a way that goes beyond what Kerry has done. Kerry distorts, takes out of context, and mistakes all the time, but these are not central to his efforts to win....We have a responsibility to hold both sides accountable to the public interest, but that doesn't mean we reflexively and artificially hold both sides 'equally' accountable when the facts don't warrant that...."

"It's up to Kerry to defend himself, of course. But as one of the few news organizations with the skill and strength to help voters evaluate what the candidates are saying to serve the public interest. Now is the time for all of us to step up and do that right."

— October 8 memo from ABC News Political Director Mark Halperin and published a few hours later on the Drudge Report Web site.

...and Kerry Should Be, Too

"When President Bush said that a lot of the tax benefits from his tax cuts have gone to middle-class Americans, I think Senator Kerry had a pretty good debating point to make, to say a lot of the tax cut, the absolute dollar figures, have gone to wealthier Americans. That's been one of the Democrats' main talking points. I don't think he hit that particularly hard."

— ABC's Mark Halperin during live coverage of the final presidential debate on October 13.

Bob's Liberal Debate Agenda

"The gap between rich and poor is growing wider. More people are dropping into poverty. Yet the minimum wage has been stuck at, what, \$5.15 an hour now for about seven years. Is it time to raise it?"

— Question from CBS's Bob Schieffer to John Kerry at the third presidential debate, October 13.

"You said that if Congress would vote to extend the ban on assault weapons, that you'd sign the legislation. But you did nothing to encourage the Congress to extend it. Why not?"

— Schieffer to President Bush a few minutes later.

Pressing Kerry from the Left

"You've said, 'wrong war, wrong place, wrong time.' That being said, could you paint any scenario if you're elected that you would just pull out [of Iraq]?"

"Yet it's such a quagmire there. You've talked about initial pullout of some troops, perhaps six months in."

"There are a lot of African-Americans frankly who saw this — and many Americans — as a vendetta, that George Bush walked into the White House looking for a way to get, to get into Iraq. Do you buy that?"

— Some of the questions posed to John Kerry by former NBC reporter Ed Gordon during an interview shown on Black Entertainment Television (BET), October 7.

Everything Else Is Fluff

"As an African-American voter, I was pleased that we finally, after four debates, albeit in the last 15 minutes of the debate, finally got to issues that matter to people of color....You go back to the vice presidential debate, Mr. Kerry — Mr. Edwards rather — and Vice President Cheney asked by Gwen Ifill, a question about AIDS and people of color, both of them were clueless. Tonight at least, I finally got some conversation about things that matter to me as a voter of color."

— NPR and PBS host Tavis Smiley during ABC's live debate coverage, October 13, referring to Bob Schieffer's question about affirmative action.

Bush Presidency "Slipping Away"

Rene Syler: "Let's start [with] this CBS poll of uncommitted voters. Thirty-nine percent said they thought Kerry won the debate, 25 percent said they thought the President won and 36 percent thought it was a dead heat...."

CBS political analyst Craig Crawford: "Rene, even before these polls came out, you could feel the presidency slipping away from George Bush."

— Exchange on the October 14 *Early Show*.

The Post's All Wrong Headline

"U.S. 'Almost All Wrong' on Weapons; Report on Iraq Contradicts Bush Administration Claims."

— Front-page headline over an October 7 *Washington Post* story about a newly-released CIA report on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

"An October 7 article and the lead Page One headline in-correctly attributed a quotation to Charles A. Duelfer, the chief U.S. weapons inspector in Iraq. The statement, 'We were almost all wrong,' was made by Duelfer's predecessor, David Kay, at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing January 28."

— Correction in the October 8 *Post*.

Media Pushing Votes Kerry's Way

The Washington Post's Howard Kurtz: "You've said on the program *Inside Washington* that because of the portrayal of Kerry and Edwards as 'young and dynamic and optimistic,' that that's worth maybe 15 points."

Newsweek's Evan Thomas: "Stupid thing to say. It was completely wrong. But I do think that, I do think that the mainstream press, I'm not talking about the blogs and Rush and all that, but the mainstream press favors Kerry. I don't think it's worth 15 points. That was just a stupid thing to say."

Kurtz: "Is it worth five points?"

Thomas: "Maybe, maybe."

— Exchange on CNN's *Reliable Sources*, October 17.

Moore's Marxist Manifesto

"I've always been amazed that the very people forced to live in the worst parts of town, go to the worst schools, and who have it the hardest, are always the first to step up....They serve so that we don't have to. They offer to give up their lives so that we can be free. It is remarkable, their gift to us. And all they ask for in return is that we never send them into harm's way unless it's absolutely necessary. Will they ever trust us again?..."

"The war is not meant to be won, it is meant to be continuous. A hierarchical society is only possible on the basis of poverty and ignorance. This new version is the past, and no different past can ever have existed. In principle, the war effort is always planned to keep society on the brink of starvation. The war is waged by the ruling group against its own subjects. And its object is not a victory over either Eurasia or East Asia, but to keep the very structure of society intact."

— Michael Moore's voiceover at the conclusion of his movie, *Fahrenheit 9/11*, released October 5 on DVD.

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