

# Notable Quotables

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



Bringing Political Balance  
to the Media

## Lecturing the President

"So you can look me in the eye and say that you are a President committed to cleaning up the environment?"

— Question from Matt Lauer to President George W. Bush on NBC's *Today*, April 25.

## So Government Makes Energy?

"President Bush is warning of a looming energy crisis, but at the same time his budget would slash more than \$200 million from solar and other alternative energy programs. The budget would, however, spend \$150 million to develop what are called less polluting coal products."

— Dan Rather on the April 9 *CBS Evening News*.

## Hailing Hillary's Hundred Days

"Clinton was the new kid on the block while her colleagues were howling about her husband's last-minute pardons of questionable criminals. Then she learned her own brother Hugh was paid \$400,000 to win pardons for a drug dealer and a swindler....Her friends tell ABC News Mrs. Clinton was devastated, angry at Hugh, yet frustrated that she could not protect him. They say she felt cut off from her family. She is rarely seen with Mr. Clinton, though sources say he often sneaks into Washington to stay with her. Back home in New York, the tabloids have raked her over the coals. Her husband dealt with the flap over his expensive office space, now it was her turn. Her critics never give up and she never gives in...."

"All agree, Clinton has thrown herself into work, often putting in 16- to 18-hour days, immersing herself in details of legislation, almost never missing a committee hearing. She has been a sponsor on 20 pieces of legislation, twice that of other freshmen Senators — on education, job programs, consumer protection, health care and, ironically, tighter scrutiny of presidential pardons."

— ABC's Linda Douglass marking Senator Clinton's first 100 days in office, April 12 *Good Morning America*.

## Tax Cuts = Kids with Cancer

"George Bush goes to Atlanta last month and he gets teary-eyed, he cries because he's at a cancer ward with kids. And then he cuts the program. Now, I'm sorry. He did, he did. He cut it by \$55 million. At the same time, he has a budget that gives hundreds of millions of dollars of tax cuts to his cabinet."

— Al Hunt, Executive Washington Editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, on CNN's *Capital Gang*, April 14.

## Slaughterhouses Over Children

"What is it with Republicans and school lunches? In 1981 Ronald Reagan looked both callous and politically ham-handed when he tried to save a few pennies on school lunches by classifying catsup as a vegetable. Last week the Bush administration went beyond condiments, proposing to ax a Clinton administration regulation that forces the meat industry to perform salmonella tests on hamburger served in school cafeterias. Given the heightened interest in the health of cattle right now, the move wasn't exactly well timed...."

"What happened to the compassion that was supposed to go with Bush's conservatism? The campaign prepared us for some of this — candidate Bush made plain his intention to drill in the Arctic wildlife refuge, not a bad political calculus given America's preference for SUVs over caribou. But no one thought his team would choose slaughterhouses over schoolchildren, even if only for a day. What connects these decisions is a preference for folks he knows: his oil-field buddies (mirrors of himself), corporate executives and captains of industry, from the Halliburton honcho to the Terminix franchisee."

— Margaret Carlson's "Public Eye" column in the April 16 *Time* magazine.

## The Up Side of Rioting

"In a week of uncomfortable truths, none has been more uncomfortable than this: It took riots to make people here understand how deep are the racial divisions, and it took rioting for people to feel the urgency required to close those divides. Three decades ago this city was also rocked by race riots. For a while then, race was an important issue. But the neighborhoods destroyed then remain scarred today. The urgency passed. And there are many people here, black and white, who worry that history again will repeat itself."

— ABC News reporter Aaron Brown on the riots in Cincinnati against the police, April 15 *This Week*.

## Scolding Bush

"Indeed, the Clinton administration had been very tough during the political campaign about China. Some people think that, in fact, exacerbated this particular incident, from the Chinese point of view."

— Peter Jennings, confusing Clinton with Bush in an ABC News special report, immediately after President Bush's Rose Garden remarks about the release of Americans in China.

## CBS's Environmental Activism

"Fairly or unfairly, critics of President Bush's environmental policy believe the only green policy he's displayed is the color of big business money. Today the President made moves to change that image, upholding a new rule on industries pumping lead into the environment. So, is the Bush push really getting the lead out, or just blowing smoke?"

— Dan Rather, April 17 *CBS Evening News*.

**Bryant Gumbel:** "At the risk of starting an argument, are you a believer in global warming?"

**Mark McEwen:** "Absolutely."

**Jane Clayson:** "Of course."

**Julie Chen:** "Yeah."

**Gumbel:** "So am I....And you wonder what it's gonna take. I mean, is it gonna take some kind of a real catastrophe? I mean, does an iceberg have to come floating down the Hudson before somebody stands up and goes, 'Oh, yeah?'"

— Exchange during CBS *Early Show's* co-op time at 7:25am on April 18.

## President McCain Would Fix It

"Out of control medical costs, a problem candidate Bush promised to solve. But almost 100 days later, gridlock in Washington, no progress on Medicare reform. Prescription drugs: As in the campaign, Bush still proposes covering only low-income older Americans at first, a non-starter for Democrats. Uninsured Americans: Bush promised tax credits so six million people can buy coverage, but even that would still leave 37 million people with no coverage at all. And still no patients' bill of rights, legislation to make HMOs more accountable. The White House says that would drive up insurance costs, but today the bipartisan Congressional Budget Office says a patients' bill of rights would increase costs less than one percent a year. Even some Republicans, like John McCain, are joining Democrats opposing Bush."

— Andrea Mitchell, *NBC Nightly News*, April 24.

## Lack of Typical Bias "Liberating"

"[*New York Times* Managing Editor Bill] Keller said the *Times* decided not to have each piece [of the winning series] 'build up to a fourth or fifth paragraph where the writer stood back, cleared his throat and told you what to think. We trusted readers would draw their own conclusions and maybe disagree.' For a newspaper that specializes in 'giving you a little editorial elbow in the ribs,' he said, the lack of a pointed theme was 'kind of liberating.'"

— *Washington Post* story by Howard Kurtz quoting Keller on why the *New York Times* won a Pulitzer Prize for a series on racial relations, April 17.

## Free Salaries For New Mothers

"The U.S. is actually the least generous of the industrialized nations. In Sweden, a new mother gets 18 months of maternity and parental leave, and she gets 80 percent of her salary for the first year. Mother or father can take the parental leave any time until a child is eight. England gives 18 weeks maternity leave. For the first six weeks, a mother gets 90 percent of her salary from the government and \$86 a week thereafter. German women get two months of fully paid leave after giving birth. The government and the company kick in, and either parent has the option of three full years in parental leave with some of their salary paid and their jobs protected."

— Peter Jennings, April 19 *World News Tonight*, right after a story on a study showing more aggression in children who attend day care.

## Strictly Conservative "Nonsense"

"I'm not liberal. First of all, I finally decided to get rid of those two words, 'liberal' and 'conservative.' I don't know what they mean anymore. I mean, I've come down to 'sense' and 'nonsense.' It makes sense to me, it's got nothing to do with conservative or liberal, it makes sense to me that hunters be allowed to have rifles. It makes no sense to me that there are 200 million handguns in American cities. I have always believed that if you get the NRA out of the way, decent reasonable Americans would figure out a way to respect the Second Amendment and get guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them."

— Don Hewitt, Executive Producer of *60 Minutes*, on CNN's *Larry King Live*, April 11.

## Gumbel's Racist World

**Bernard Goldberg:** "Once you prove yourself in the NBA, it doesn't matter if you're from Kansas or from Yugoslavia, you're accepted because I think in basketball, and in sports in general, it is a meritocracy. And once you prove yourself, that's good enough for everybody. Race really isn't that important if you're good."

**Bryant Gumbel:** "If that's the case, it may be the only place in America that it works."

— Exchange on HBO's *Real Sports* after Goldberg's story on how there are few white players in the NBA, April 16.

## How Do You Define "Support"?

"Poll: Bush Tax Cut Has Some Support"

— Associated Press, April 11, 11:12 am.

"Poll: Bush Tax Plan Lacks Support"

— Associated Press, April 11, 7:49 pm.

Contrasting headlines noted by *The Washington Post's* Howard Kurtz on April 16. In the AP survey, 48 percent supported Bush's plan and 32 percent opposed it.

## Notable Quotables

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