

Notable Quotables

July 23, 2001 (Vol. Fourteen; No. 15)

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



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

Not If the TV Networks Have Anything To (Not) Say About It

"I don't think the rest of the Democratic Party is going to get tarred by Gary Condit."

— ABC political analyst George Stephanopoulos on the July 9 *Good Morning America*. An MRC analysis of the 179 Condit stories on ABC, CBS and NBC morning and evening news shows from May 14 through July 11 determined that only 14 stories, or eight percent, identified the Congressman as a Democrat.

Condit's Not a Real Democrat...

"A political maverick who rides a Harley, Condit founded the 'blue dog' coalition of conservative Democrats....He was the kind of guy, when you were working for Democrats in the House, you could never count on his vote."

— ABC's George Stephanopoulos on the June 25 *Good Morning America*.

"Condit is a Democrat who often votes with the Republican opposition, but also is popular as a personal service Congressman."

— ABC's Brian Rooney on *Good Morning America*, July 9.

"He is one of about 30 conservative 'blue dog' Democrats who cannot be counted on to vote the party line."

— Evan Thomas and Karen Breslau in "Behind the Smile: From preacher's kid to pol with a taste for motorcycles and mosh pits, the odyssey of Gary Condit," *Newsweek's* July 23 issue.

"He's a so-called 'blue dog' Democrat, meaning an ultra-conservative Democrat."

— *Newsweek's* Howard Fineman on MSNBC's *Hardball*, July 12.

...And Conservatives Elected Him

"Modesto, California, in the middle of the state's central valley. A major agricultural area with lots of farms and cattle. A politically conservative place where the average home goes for around \$190,000. They call it 'Condit Country' around here and six-term Congressman Gary Condit, a 53-year-old right-wing Democrat, has won re-election by huge margins."

— NBC's George Lewis on *Today*, July 2.

"He's from a conservative, culturally conservative district in central California, one that voted for George W. Bush in the presidential election."

— *Newsweek's* Howard Fineman on the July 12 *Today*.

Everyone Is a "Conservative"

• Peter Jennings: "In Washington today, Congressman Gary Condit's Chief-of-Staff issued a statement to say that Mr. Condit will be forthcoming with his constituents about the case of Chandra Levy in good time. But in the meantime, the statement went on, *conservative* political groups should not exploit Miss Levy's disappearance for their own purposes..."

• ABC News reporter David Wright: "Deep in California's heartland the 18th congressional district is farm country — *conservative*, mostly white, small town America....Many constituents still relate to Condit's *conservative* politics, just not to his family values."

• — Story on ABC's *World News Tonight* which failed to identify Condit as a Democrat, July 17.

No Moderation At All

• "The thing I'm curious about is why Dick Armey and Tom DeLay just seem to steam ahead with a conservative approach. They've been like this for a couple of years. Is there just no, no moderation at all? Is there something that can bring them back to the center? Can George Bush do it?"

• — *Time* Washington Bureau Chief Michael Duffy on PBS's *Washington Week in Review*, July 13.

Nickels & Dimes Are For the Rich

• "You and I are fortunate enough to be basically laughing about this right now, about pennies right now, but isn't it somewhat elitist to claim pennies have out-lived their usefulness when so many are struggling to make ends meet and we argue about pennies on the minimum wage?"

• — Bryant Gumbel to Republican Congressman Jim Kolbe, who has introduced a bill seeking to phase out the one cent coin, CBS's *Early Show*, July 17.

Feminine and a Hard Worker

• "Giving Senator Clinton her due, though we talk about her feminine wiles, she has also won a great deal of respect by working very, very hard, and by not pulling any kind of prima donna act. Her Secret Service detail is very much in the background. She goes to all sorts of meetings that some people, in the past, have not attended. For example, I know she goes to a meeting over at the House of Representatives with all the folks from New York, which, I guess, Moynihan never attended, right?"

• — Katie Couric's observation to Gail Sheehy, discussing a gushing profile of Hillary Clinton that Sheehy wrote for the August issue of *Vanity Fair*, on NBC's *Today*, July 16.

Media in Mourning

"There is a dead end to report tonight for campaign finance reform, one of the highest profile issues on the agenda in Congress and in the last election. The issue has been derailed tonight by a procedural vote on ground rules that the Republican leadership in the House had for debating the measure....John McCain, one of the bill's sponsors, called the procedural block, quote, 'the last refuge of scoundrels.' GOP Whip Tom DeLay said the measure's supporters simply don't have the votes to pass it."
— **Anchor Brian Williams, July 12 NBC Nightly News.**

Run, John, Run

"Campaign finance reform, which would have cut off those unlimited, back-door contributions called soft money, got derailed again last week....But here's the irony: McCain has been saying all along he has no plans to run for President as a third-party independent candidate. But doesn't this give him the perfect excuse? The script writes itself. Both parties are so beholden to the big-money interests, it will take someone else to clean up the mess, and on and on and on. Now, I have no idea what McCain will do, but you could make the case that the only person who came out of this stronger politically than he went in is McCain because it gives him that issue to run on. I'm not sure that's what opponents of campaign finance reform had in mind."
— **Bob Schieffer's closing commentary on CBS's Face the Nation, July 15.**

Jane Feels McCain's Pain

"You've worked so hard on campaign finance reform. If it doesn't go your way how disappointed will you be?"
— **Question from Jane Clayson to Senator John McCain on CBS's Early Show, July 9.**

NBC vs. NBC

"A new report that could cast a cloud over another of the President's proposals — to put some Social Security funds in private investment accounts. The study shows popular 401(k) retirement savings plans lost money last year, dipping in value along with the stock market decline, and still showing weakness in the first six months of this year."
— **Brian Williams on the July 9 NBC Nightly News.**

"Experts say the most important rule of all is to put every dollar you're allowed into your 401(k), every year, no matter how you did last year. That's your best hope of living well in retirement."
— **NBC's Lisa Myers a few moments later in the subsequent story.**

Frankly, I'd Rather Be Nuked

"I'll lay my cards on the table: I think anti-ballistic missile defense systems are a bad idea and this is something I've thought for 20 years."
— **CBS's Chief Washington Correspondent Bob Schieffer on Imus in the Morning, simulcast on MSNBC, on July 17.**

Conservatives Repelled Jeffords

Wall Street Journal columnist **Paul Gigot**: "Judging by what we heard from, from Senator Schumer, the Democrats look like they're going to oppose anybody to the left of, of, you know, Larry Tribe or Cass Sunstein or some of these liberal academics. So...if they're going to defeat anybody who has any real conservative leanings, send up a conservative. Send up another one if they defeat one. Send up a third, send up a fourth. Your base is going to like it and ultimately they can't defeat everybody."
Tim Russert: "But is that the same attitude that drove Senator Jeffords from the Republican Party?"
— **Exchange on NBC's Meet the Press, July 1.**

More Global Warming Hysteria

"Glaciers are receding. Oceans are rising. Alaska is thawing. As officials from nearly 180 nations start to gather Monday in Bonn, Germany, to confront the vexing problem of global warming, the issue is no longer whether it is real, but what should be done about it."
— **Opening of July 16 USA Today front-page article, "Six ways to combat global warming," by Traci Watson and Jonathan Weisman.**

Too Late For Clinton to Resign

Newsweek's Jonathan Alter: "I just know that at this point, that Condit should resign. Because at a minimum, he was obstructing an investigation."
Don Imus: "By lying."
Alter: "By lying to the police....Everybody should be calling for him to resign, whether he had anything to do with her disappearance or not. In a real serious matter, he was not straightforward."
— **Exchange on Imus in the Morning radio show, simulcast on MSNBC, July 12.**

Way Too Much Information

"After pepperoni pizza and banana milkshakes once, I dreamed about Bill Clinton."
— **ABC's Diane Sawyer talking with her Good Morning America co-host Charles Gibson about a study which claimed sleeping Republicans have three times as many nightmares as sleeping Democrats, July 10.**

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