

Notable Quotables

May 14, 2001 (Vol. Fourteen; No. 10)

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



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

“Respected” vs. “Controversial”

“Among the most controversial...Michael McConnell, who argued in support of banning homosexuals from the Boy Scouts.”

— **ABC’s Jackie Judd reporting President Bush’s first federal judge nominations, *World News Tonight*, May 8.**

“...Michael McConnell, a widely respected legal scholar who once clerked for Justice William Brennan, one of the court’s most revered liberal judges.”

— **Jim Angle on FNC’s *Special Report with Brit Hume*, same night.**

Indicted Democrat = Republican

“Now [Congressman James] Traficant is a Democrat, but this indictment is actually an embarrassment to Republican leaders. They gave him \$20 million last year for a project in his district in return for his support of the Republicans.”

— **Linda Douglass, ABC’s *World News Tonight*, May 4.**

Wolf Blitzer: “Jon, is this more of an embarrassment for Democrats or Republicans? He’s a Democrat who voted for the Republican Speaker.”

Jonathan Karl: “Well, James Traficant is a lifetime Democrat, but Democrats are very quick to point out not only did he voted for the Speaker, but that the Republicans have courted him aggressively. Republicans last year in Congress helped funnel some \$20 million in federal projects to Traficant’s district. So the spin from the Democrats here is that this is a Republican embarrassment.”

— **Exchange on CNN’s *Wolf Blitzer Reports*, May 4.**

Bush’s “Permanent Damage”

“During the campaign, Bush sounded like an environmentalist....And early on, he upholds Clinton restrictions on diesel fuel pollution. But since then Bush suspends a ban on new roads in national forests, proposes canceling new mining rules, reconsiders Clinton wilderness designations, considers opening the Arctic wilderness to oil drilling, reneges on a campaign promise to lower carbon dioxide emissions and now is about to cancel a plan to save endangered grizzlies by re-introducing them to wilderness areas out West, a concession to Idaho’s Governor....Concerned Republicans worry Bush may have already lost pro-environment Republicans and independents, voters crucial to the success of his presidency, to say nothing, they say, of the more permanent damage to the environment.”

— **Andrea Mitchell, NBC *Nightly News*, April 30.**

Shooting Down Missile Defense

“There is a little skepticism in the air here today. Some cynicism, too. The government has an idea of how to spend \$50 billion of your money. That’s BILLION. It will be spent on building a system to safeguard the national security — but by the government’s own assessment it will probably not be foolproof, it will unnerve America’s allies, and in the end it may cost considerably MORE than \$50 billion. A more critical assessment is that this system can never be made to work, that it will torpedo the basis of all arms control arrangements, and that in any event, any terrorist or ‘rogue nation’ that means to wreak havoc on U.S. soil can do so in ways that this system will not prevent.”

— **Peter Jennings in his “Jennings Journal” e-mail to viewers, May 1.**

“One other note. Critics often object to the animation in news reports because the animation usually has the systems working.”

— **Peter Jennings on the May 1 *World News Tonight* after a missile defense story which included animation.**

“President Bush is preparing a major speech on another controversial space program, the so-called missile defense shield designed to shoot down incoming missiles in space. This is a concept that’s at once feared and reviled, from Beijing to Moscow, from within Washington, D.C. to European capitals.”

— **Tom Brokaw, NBC *Nightly News*, April 30.**

Lauer’s Left-Wing Approach

“Critics of the President say he speaks like a moderate and acts like a conservative, that he does one thing and says another. How do you respond to that?”

“What about on the subject of the environment? During the campaign he, he portrayed himself as an environmentally friendly person. And now of course he’s, he’s either moved back or delayed several initiatives that would help clean up the environment.”

“In fairness though, he said that he will not go along with caps on carbon dioxide emissions from power plants, and he’s going to delay reductions in arsenic in drinking water.”

“The President’s gonna start talking about a national missile defense system. How is he going to make a case for that, Karen, when some of the fundamental tests of that system in the past have not come out well?”

“Is it worth pursuing that at a cost of billions of dollars?”

— **Matt Lauer’s questions to White House counselor Karen Hughes, April 30 *Today*.**

Vouching for False Ad

"Well there's nothing inaccurate in that ad."

— **Tim Russert to White House senior advisor Karl Rove, in reference to a DNC ad in which a little girl asks, "May I please have some more arsenic in my water, mommy?" and the announcer asserts: "George W. Bush tried to roll back protections against arsenic in drinking water and salmonella in school lunches," April 29 Meet the Press.**

Reality Check:

"While the commercial may be effective, it is not entirely accurate. For 60 years, the arsenic standard in drinking water has been 50 parts per billion. Three days before President Clinton left office, his administration decided to lower that to 10 parts per billion — starting in 2006. The Bush administration, in the meantime, is conducting a review."

— **FNC's David Shuster on Special Report with Brit Hume, April 27.**

Happy Earth Day — Bush Sucks

"To commemorate the 32nd annual Earth Day, President Bush today asked Americans to join him in renewing a commitment to protecting the environment. But Randall Pinkston tells us for many environmentalists, the appeal does not ring true."

— **CBS Evening News weekend anchor Jane Clayson introducing an April 22 story.**

"What about the rest of his performance? Aren't you concerned that some of these moves to erode some of the legislation designed to protect our environment, this stuff about arsenic and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, et-cetera? Don't you think that some of that is excessive in terms of undoing some of the good work done by the Democrats or the other progressives over the years?"

— **Geraldo Rivera to Governor Jesse Ventura, April 23 Rivera Live on CNBC.**

Ted Kennedy Too Conservative?

"Senator, there are some Democrats who say that as much money as is really needed for education will not be spent because of the tax cut that is on its way on a fast track through the Congress. Do you become, in cooperating with the President, do you become complicit in that?"

"As I understand this bill, he gives up, for now, on his voucher plan and you give up on some of the money that would have been spent for teachers and for the renovation of some crumbling schools. In some sense, is that a hollow compromise? I mean, does it really do much for schools and get more teachers in the system?"

— **Questions from Charles Gibson to Senator Ted Kennedy, May 3 ABC's Good Morning America.**

Bush's "Sniping"?

"Democrats ask what happened to Mr. Bush's vaunted promise to change the tone in Washington and put an end to partisan sniping?"

— **White House reporter John Roberts in a review of the first 100 days, seconds after he showed a DNC ad in which a little girl asks, "May I please have some more arsenic in my water, mommy?" Apr. 29 CBS Evening News.**

Clinton Better Than Partisan Bush

Peter Jennings: "He may call this a bipartisan triumph, but in fact, it's anything but at the moment."

Linda Douglass: "Well, that's absolutely right, Peter, because what the President did here was ram this budget through, bypassing a number of the normal independent analyses that are done inside of the Congress before one votes on a budget, so that the numbers really have not been analyzed as closely as they were, say, when President Clinton was President."

— **Exchange on ABC's World News Tonight, May 2.**

If You Really Care, Spend More

"There's a political storm brewing. In his campaign for President, George Bush repeatedly claimed children as his issue, even adopting the slogan of the Children's Defense Fund, to 'leave no child behind.' But in his administration's first budget there is no net increase in child care funding, only tax breaks for which low income families don't qualify. And so far Congress has no plan."

— **John Roberts, CBS Evening News, May 6.**

Alter's On-Air Gorbasm

"He's only the most important political leader alive in the world today, historically speaking....If you look over the course of our lifetimes, who was the most, well, you go back to Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt....If I look back over my lifetime, who is the world leader who changed things the most, and I don't actually think it is a close call."

— **Newsweek's Jonathan Alter on Mikhail Gorbachev, April 27 Imus in the Morning on MSNBC.**

Dial 1-900-ABC-Loves-Bill

Charles Gibson: "Have you ever — it just occurred to me — have you ever, in the first hundred days, consulted or called former President Clinton?"

President Bush: "No, I haven't."

Gibson: "To talk to him?"

President Bush: "No, I have not."

Gibson: "Don't feel the need?"

— **Exchange during taped interview aired on the April 25 Good Morning America.**

Notable Quotables

PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell

EDITORS: Brent H. Baker, Rich Noyes

MEDIA ANALYSTS: Geoffrey Dickens, Jessica Anderson, Paul Smith, Brian Boyd, Brad Wilmouth

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: Kristina Sewell

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: Liz Swasey

INTERNS: Ken Shepherd, Julie Hall

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