

Notable Quotables

May 5, 2008 (Vol. 21; No. 9)

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



America's
Media Watchdog

Must Ignore Wright Debacle

"Every time he [Reverend Jeremiah Wright] appears, he just gives legitimacy and a hunger by those who oppose Barack Obama to re-run those tapes, to keep him at the center of controversy, to let this overhang and define Barack Obama, when it has, you know — it has very, very little to do — it's a very marginal piece of who Barack Obama is and what he stands for. And it takes attention away — we have huge, huge problems facing this country....I think it's time for him to get off the stage and frankly, for the media, I suggest, to move on."

— CNN senior political analyst David Gergen following Wright's speech to the National Press Club, April 28.

Obama Merely Wright's "Victim"

Anchor Brian Williams: "Reverend Wright's speaking engagements these days are a problem for the Obama campaign. One veteran politico today called it a 'circus' and a 'sideshow.'"...

Reporter Andrea Mitchell: "Wright's appearances were an unwelcome distraction for Barack Obama.... Supporters described the whole thing as a media circus...."

Jonathan Capehart, *Washington Post*: "Unfortunately, the victim in all of this is going to be Senator Obama's campaign."

— *NBC Nightly News*, April 28.

Jeremiah Wright: Patriotic Sage

"What is your notion of why so many Americans seem not to want to hear the full Monty — they don't want to seem to acknowledge that a nation capable of greatness is also capable of cruelty?"

"Did you ever imagine that you would come to personify the black anger that so many whites fear?"

— PBS's Bill Moyers questioning Jeremiah Wright for an interview broadcast on his *Bill Moyers Journal*, April 25.

"[Jeremiah] Wright's mere association with Obama has become political dynamite for Obama's enemies. But the soft-spoken man who sits down with Bill Moyers couldn't seem more different from that fire-brand preacher we've all seen in those soundbites.... There's plenty in Wright's background that speaks to his patriotism. He was among the first black U.S. Marines during Vietnam. As a corpsman in 1966, he served on the medical team that cared for President Lyndon Johnson. The White House gave him three letters of commendation."

— ABC's David Wright, *Good Morning America*, April 25.

Feeling Barack Obama's Pain

"There's no precedent for this: Barack Obama has dis-owned his pastor.... This is a big deal for the Obama campaign — but also, you have to believe, for Barack Obama as a person. Imagine having to publicly denounce the minister who married you, who baptized your kids, who prayed with you the day you announced your candidacy for President.... For Obama, whose own father abandoned him as a child, this must have been another painful break."
— ABC's David Wright, *Good Morning America*, April 30.

Seething Over ABC's Approach

"It was another step downward for network news — in particular ABC News, which hosted the debate from Philadelphia and whose usually dependable anchors, Charlie Gibson and George Stephanopoulos, turned in shoddy, despicable performances.... Gibson and Stephanopoulos dwelled entirely on specious and gossipy trivia that already has been hashed and rehashed.... [Stephanopoulos] looked like an overly ambitious intern helping out at a subcommittee hearing, digging through notes for something smart-alecky and slimy. He came up with such tired tripe as a charge that Obama once associated with a nutty bomb-throwing anarchist. That was '40 years ago, when I was 8 years old,' Obama said with exasperation."
— *Washington Post* TV critic Tom Shales in an April 17 review of the previous night's ABC debate.

"The campaign may have seemed dirty. It had nothing on one of the moderators of the debate tonight."
— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann teeing off the 10pm EDT post-debate edition of his *Countdown* program, April 16.

Not Really a "Secret" Weapon

"The shower of indignation on Charlie Gibson and George Stephanopoulos over the last few days is the clearest evidence yet that the Clintonites are fundamentally correct in their complaint that she has been flying throughout this campaign into a headwind of media favoritism for Obama.... If Obama was covered like Clinton is, one feels certain the media focus would not have been on the questions, but on a candidate performance that at times seemed tinny, impatient and uncertain. The difference seems clear: Many journalists are not merely observers but participants in the Obama phenomenon."

— *The Politico*'s John Harris and Jim VandeHei in an April 18 article headlined: "Obama's Secret Weapon: The Media."

Evil GOP Will “Swift Boat” You

“In the last presidential election, John Kerry, a decorated military veteran, was ‘Swift-boated’ as being unpatriotic. Why do you dismiss the kinds of questions that are going to be the bread and butter of the Republican campaign, if you become the nominee?”

— NBC’s Ann Curry to Barack Obama on *Today*, April 22.

Scolding “Nasty” Republicans

Fill-in anchor Harry Smith: “The first day of the rest of the campaign, and if you think it can’t get nastier.”

Female narrator in ad: “He’s [Barack Obama’s] just too extreme for North Carolina.”

Smith: “-Republicans roll out a new attack ad....”

— Opening of the *CBS Evening News*, April 23.

NBC: Tax Cuts “Don’t Add Up”

Anchor Brian Williams: “Some critics say his [Senator John McCain’s] economic plan, which centers on more tax cuts, doesn’t add up.”...

Reporter Kelly O’Donnell: “McCain’s core idea: lower taxes and make up lost revenue with cuts in government spending. But critics and some economists argue McCain’s math is wrong, that his plan would tilt toward the wealthy, swell the deficit, and not trim enough.”

— *NBC Nightly News*, April 15.

Iraqis: Nicer than the U.S. Army

CBS News photographer Richard Butler: “I was relieved that my captivity wasn’t as harsh as I have witnessed being applied to suspects taken from Afghanistan.”

CBS reporter Allen Pizzey: “You were saying it is better to be kidnapped by Shi’ites in southern Iraq than by Americans in Afghanistan?”

Butler: “I was pleased I wasn’t being waterboarded in Guantanamo or being held for six and a half years like an al-Jazeera cameraman.”

— Interview posted April 28 on *CBSNews.com* recounting the two months Butler was held captive by Iraqi insurgents near Basra.

Ruing “Very Conservative” Pope

“He [Pope Benedict XVI] is very conservative. And I know a recent poll says 62 percent of Catholics believe the church isn’t reflective of their views. Does that mean entertaining issues like women as priests or use of birth control will be really off the table as long as he’s Pope?”

— CBS anchor Katie Couric to Father Thomas Williams on the April 15 *Evening News*.

Spluttering Over Rush’s “Chaos”

“What kind of klutz do you have to be to take orders on how to vote from Rush Limbaugh and to change your party identity so that you can vote against, for somebody to screw the other party? What do these people got to do — they have a lot of free time, I’ll tell you that.”

— MSNBC’s Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, April 16, talking about Limbaugh encouraging GOP voters to go for Hillary Clinton in Democratic primaries.

“Evil” 18th Century “Neanderthal”

CBS’s Lesley Stahl: “I’m surprised at how many people really, really hate you. These are some things we’ve been told: ‘He’s evil;’ ‘He’s a Neanderthal;’ ‘He’s going to drag us back to 1789.’ They’re threatened by what you represent and what you believe in.”

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia: “These are people that don’t understand what my interpretive philosophy is. I’m not saying no progress. I’m saying we should progress democratically.”...

Stahl: “But his critics argue that originalism is a cover for what they see as Justice Scalia’s real intention: to turn back some pivotal court decisions of the ‘60s and ‘70s. He’s been labeled a ‘counterrevolutionary.’”

— CBS’s *60 Minutes*, April 27.

Brian Envies Swedish “Whip”

Anchor Brian Williams: “There’s another reason to be green with envy about the Swedes. We’re told they are living green lives, showing kindness to the planet, and saving a ton of energy in the process....”

Reporter Anne Thompson: “Sweden’s official colors are blue and yellow, but it lives green....But even here in [Vaxjo, Sweden] Europe’s greenest city, some ways of life are much harder to change, like trying to convince people to ride on two wheels instead of four. Mayor Bo Frank thinks he knows how.”

Mayor Bo Frank: “You live with the whip and the carrot. The whip is to make it more expensive to use fossils, and the carrot to make it more inexpensive to use alternatives.”

— *NBC Nightly News*, April 21.

We’re “Behind” China’s Dictators

“Plastic bags are without a doubt emerging as one of the worst, stupidest things that we’re doing for the environment....When China is ahead of us in banning these things, when other countries around the world are banning these things that — we, we need to get in line with that and catch up.”

— Actor Ed Norton on NBC’s *Today*, April 22.

Notable Quotables

PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell III

EDITORS: Brent H. Baker, Rich Noyes, Tim Graham

NEWS ANALYSTS: Geoff Dickens, Brad Wilmouth, Scott Whitlock, Matthew Balan, Kyle Drennen and Justin McCarthy

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: Michelle Humphrey

INTERN: Lyndsi Thomas

May 5, 2008 (Volume 21; No. 9)

Published bi-weekly by the
Media Research Center
325 South Patrick Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Telephone: (800) 672-1423

For daily bias updates and the latest from the MRC, visit our Web site: <http://www.MRC.org>

