

Notable Quotables

October 29, 2001 (Vol. Fourteen; No. 22)

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



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

U.S. Is Using Kids As War Pawns

"Behind the scenes there are quiet grumblings about this dollar drive. There are concerns that American children are being used in a propaganda campaign. But school officials said they wouldn't dare air those concerns publicly, not when America appears to be swept up by symbolism."

— ABC's Michele Norris on the October 12 *World News Tonight*, referring to President Bush's appeal that U.S. children contribute \$1 each to help Afghan children.

Soliciting Anti-American Views

Reporter Dan Harris: "According to al-Jazeera, U.S. attacks on a village near Kandahar killed 93 civilians on Tuesday, including 18 members of one family. There has been no independent confirmation. Across the border in the Pakistani town of Quetta, five people arrived today at a hospital with injuries they say they suffered in another U.S. attack....This boy is one of the injured. His uncle says he had heard American radio broadcasts promising civilians wouldn't be targeted, but he says his village was nowhere near any Taliban positions. Abdul Jabar is the doctor in charge."

Harris to Jabar: "How do you feel when you see these kids?"

Jabar: "I feel very sad."

Harris: "Angry?"

Jabar: "Yes. My sympathies are with the Afghanis."

Harris: "Angry at the United States?"

Jabar: "Yes."

Harris: "Everyone we spoke with at this tiny hospital said the ongoing raids have made the population here and across the border angry at the U.S. and supportive of the Taliban."

— ABC's *World News Tonight*, October 23.

Equally Valid View of "Freedom"

"To Western ears, calls for blood-soaked martyrdom are an alien concept, but consider the way things are for millions of Muslims of all ages: If you were born into grinding poverty where upward mobility isn't even a dream, and have little to sustain you in life beyond religion, you too might find yourself screaming for the new Messiah with a \$5 million price on his head....Everywhere you go in the world you will hear some version of the words 'we are a freedom loving people,' but like beauty, freedom is a perception that lies in the eye of the beholder, and we ignore other nations' versions at our peril. The most dangerous perception of all may be that one's own side has an exclusive claim to either the truth or patriotism."

— Allen Pizzey on CBS's *Sunday Morning*, October 14.

60 Minutes: They Hate Us...

"One of Osama bin Laden's goals has been to instigate a war between the West and Islam. We have seen demonstrations growing, spreading all across that region. Is it possible that somehow he has smoked us out, that he has gotten us into this situation that he set out to get us into?"

"I haven't seen a single demonstration in that part of the world for us. I haven't seen that the people are rising up and saying, 'Oh yes, it's wonderful that we're going to root him out.' And in fact, I just keep hearing more and more of this spreading hatred for us."

"With all due respect, it does seem that the populations of these countries as we continue to bomb and as we continue to have missiles go off course and hit civilians, that we are instigating not support for us, but a growing sense that we're bullies."

— Lesley Stahl's questions for National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice on CBS's *60 Minutes*, October 14.

...They Hate Us Not

"From the day America began its war on terrorism, this is what the world has seen of Pakistan: street protests, angry people, fundamentalists demanding their government stop siding with the United States....But look off to the sidewalk, the shopkeepers aren't joining in. In fact, nor is most of the country....That's because most Pakistanis are, in fact, moderate Muslims, part of the vast so-called 'silent majority.' They want nothing more than to be part of the modern world and they are resisting being dragged under by a medieval interpretation of Islam."

— CNN's Christiane Amanpour, in a report during the following week's *60 Minutes*, October 21.

ABC: So Far, War Is a Tie

"When Taliban soldiers escorted foreign journalists to the outskirts of Jalalabad, they said civilians had been killed here. They said Taliban troops are still alive and well-armed and that the bombing isn't fazing them. 'We just laugh at these bombs,' one of the Taliban escorts said....As for the U.S. efforts to befriend people, those American food packets rained from the skies in parts of Northern Afghanistan this weekend. People walked for miles to get them. 'I don't know how to use these packages because I can't read,' says this woman. 'I only know it's food.'...It's early days, but so far this is a war without any clear-cut victories or defeats. That's true of the bombings and of the battle for public sympathy."

— ABC's David Wright, Oct. 12 *World News Tonight*.

Unverified Taliban Claims = News

"At this chaotic border crossing today, new arrivals, refugees from Kandahar. They say after a few days of bombs falling outside the city, now they are hitting the city center. 'Today a bomb exploded on a house,' this man says. Eight women and their children died on the spot. Two other men told us that same story. There are other stories, too. 'I saw civilians die,' he says. 'Yes, this morning I saw 20 or 25 killed myself.' The Taliban believes more than a hundred civilians have died in the bombings, but there's no way to verify any of it."

— ABC's Bob Woodruff, October 11 *World News Tonight*.

NPR: Scouts for the Taliban

"[Loren Jenkins, senior foreign editor of National Public Radio] says his marching orders to the troops are to try to find where the Americans are. 'The game of reporting is to smoke 'em out,' he says. Asked whether his team would report the presence of an American commando unit it found in, say, a northern Pakistan village, he doesn't exhibit any of the hesitation of some of his news-business colleagues, who stress that they try to factor security issues into their coverage decisions. 'You report it,' Jenkins says. 'I don't represent the government. I represent history, information, what happened.'..."

"At NPR, Jenkins's operating theory about information from the military is that 'in one form or another, they never tell you the truth. They've been proven wrong too many times.'"

— Excerpts from an October 12 column by the *Chicago Tribune's* Steve Johnson.

Fearing Bush Propaganda Win...

"You're a network news boss. Condi Rice is on the phone. She wonders if, just possibly, you might consider doing the administration a favor: Stop running those Osama bin Laden videos, live and unedited....You think about it. On the one hand, you don't want to hand the White House a propaganda victory by imposing a blackout on the other side. But what if there are coded messages? (Of course, how would you know?) You don't want to play into a murderer's hands....What to do?"

— *Washington Post* media reporter Howard Kurtz in his online "Media Notes" column on October 11.

...& Unfazed By Enemy "Signals"

"I thought this falls in the category of crying wolf. I think there are times when the President will want to have some information not be aired, and this is just foolishness, the idea that he's sending a signal. I don't care if he's sending a signal, it's been all over the entire Arab world. The only people who wouldn't see it would be Americans."

— NPR's Nina Totenberg on *Inside Washington*, Oct. 13.

Alarmed By Pledge of Allegiance

"The American Civil Liberties Union is very concerned about your resolution. They are saying basically that those young people who choose not to participate could be targeted for harassment. And the New York City school system has a lot of people, a lot of students and perhaps even teachers who are not American citizens, isn't that correct?"

"...Perhaps the school systems across the country really should be thinking about renewing a lesson about tolerance?"

— NBC's Ann Curry to school board head Ninfa Segarra, about a new policy of having the Pledge of Allegiance recited in New York City public schools, Oct. 19 *Today*.

Nostalgic For Visionary Clinton

"Throughout his eight years in office, President Clinton warned us that the next great menace was international terrorism....He also brought unprecedented prosperity to our nation, and because of that, President [Bush] can use the surplus Mr. Clinton left behind to pay for many of the nation's needs in this time of crisis....This lecture series is about the human spirit. To me and millions of others, President Clinton has always personified that. He is the man from Hope, and that is what he has given us, hope. We miss him. Thank you, Mr. President."

— Former UPI White House reporter Helen Thomas introducing Bill Clinton at an Oct. 9 Greater Washington Society of Association Executives lecture shown on C-SPAN.

Help the Poor or Be a Republican

"Edward C. Murphy's life brimmed with contrasts and deep loyalties. He was a staunch Republican who invested in real estate and race horses. But he also helped non-profit groups raise money for food and clothing for poor children."

— First paragraph of October 19 *New York Times* obituary for a man killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

What Urge?

"So many business deals, so much oil, all those big players with powerful connections to the Bush administration. It doesn't add up to a conspiracy theory. But it does mean there is a significant MONEY subtext that the American public ought to know about as 'Operation Enduring Freedom' blasts new holes where pipelines might someday be buried."

— Former *Time* reporter Nina Burleigh in an October 11 commentary for the left-wing Website TomPaine.com.

"I think the events of September 11 unhinged people to such a degree that they, many people lost their — temporarily one hopes — lost their urge to be unbiased."

— Burleigh speaking October 10 at a Close-Up Foundation session with college students carried on C-SPAN.

Notable Quotables

PUBLISHER: L. Brent Bozell

EDITORS: Brent H. Baker, Rich Noyes

NEWS ANALYSTS: Geoffrey Dickens, Jessica Anderson, Brian Boyd, Brad Wilmoth, Ken Shepherd, Patrick Gregory

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: Kristina Sewell

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: Liz Swasey

DIRECTOR OF EDITORIAL SERVICES: Tim Jones

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