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QUOTE OF THE DAY

“Talk moderate, govern right.”

Columnist Molly Ivins, describing President Bush's overriding political philosophy

1. BUSH BUDGET TO SLASH HEALTH CARE FUNDING (news)

"Small programs across the Department of Health and Human Services face cuts under the budget President Bush will send Congress next week, according to a budget draft that shows reductions for rural health, disease prevention, child care and mental health initiatives. Also slated for cuts: minority health, aid to senior citizens and training for doctors at children's hospitals."

Associated Press, 4/3

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/national/AP-HHS-Budget.html>

2. BACKLASH TO GOP BUDGET MOUNTS IN SENATE (news)

"Democrats are commencing a weeklong assault on President Bush's economic plans as Republicans begin pushing a \$1.94 trillion budget for 2002 through an evenly divided Senate. With Vice President Dick Cheney on hand to break any tie votes, GOP leaders are predicting they will prevail in this crucial showdown over the new president's domestic agenda. Heading it is his proposed \$1.6 trillion, 10-year tax cut, along with plans to hold next year's spending increases to 4 percent, half what it was this year. Democrats have prepared a pile of amendments aimed at savaging the package, particularly Bush's tax plan. They say his tax cut is too generous to the rich and too big, threatening to drag the government back to the days of federal deficits while shortchanging prescription drugs, schools, debt reduction and other initiatives."

Associated Press, 4/3

<http://www.lasvegassun.com/sunbin/stories/bw-cong/2001/apr/03/040302260.html>

3. GRASSROOTS OPPOSITION TO TAX CUTS PLOT STRATEGY (news)

"Like their adversaries in the business community, foes of President Bush's tax cut proposals are organizing a grassroots effort that relies more on old-fashioned shoe leather than expensive mediabuy. Well-known figures such as Bill Gates, Sr., and Ted Turner are lending their names to the opposition to repealing the estate tax, but that has not translated into a well-heeled media campaign. "We don't have those kinds of resources," said Chuck Collins, whose Boston-based group, United for a Fair Economy, has been signing up investors and business leaders for the drive to preserve the estate tax. Collins said representatives of his group hope to meet with 15-20 senators — including those from Washington state, Maine, Oregon, and Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif. — over the upcoming Easter recess."

Congress Daily, Mitchell, 4/2

<http://www.nationaljournal.com>

4. ESTATE TAX REPEAL LEAVES 'NO HEIR BEHIND!'

"President Bush won't rejoice this baldly when the House passes his estate tax repeal this Wednesday, but the tacit battle cry of his tax plan is "leave no heir behind!" Dubya's call to scrap the "death tax" frames in its purest form the clash of values raging in Washington. Now, before the predictable cries of "socialist" ring out, let me declare some self-interest here: My family would win big from an estate tax repeal. So, of course, would the Bush and Cheney clans, and those of their Cabinet, whose children stand to gain a whopping \$200 million among them — not that anyone's questioning anybody's motives. But making estate tax repeal a national priority today is a sad detour in our long moral climb from the primordial stew toward whatever more evolved destiny awaits us."

Tribune Media Services, Miller, 4/3

<http://www.chicago.tribune.com>

5. GOP BUDGET PITS PRINCIPLES AGAINST LOYALTY TO BUSH FOR MANY SENATORS (editorial)

"The Senate is being asked by the administration to turn a blind eye to the budget implications of the tax cut, which is certain to cost far more than \$2 trillion when it is carried out, using up nearly all the available surpluses and leaving next to nothing for health, education and other needs. Yesterday Mr. Bush belittled the idea that government would have to cut spending. But the more the Senate is allowed to examine the full dimensions of the tax cut and the spending cuts attached to it, the more the senators might rethink the rush to approve it. Leadership comes in many shapes. Frantically passing something out of loyalty to any president is not one of them."

New York Times, Editorial Board, 4/3

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/03/opinion/03TUE1.html>

6. EVEN SOME FREE TRADERS WANT LABOR AND ENVIRO STANDARDS ENFORCED (news)

"A key House Democratic leader on trade indicated Monday that he would insist on the use of sanctions to enforce labor and environmental provisions of trade agreements. Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee ranking member Sander Levin, D-Mich., suggested that labor and environmental provisions must be treated on a par with trade deals' commercial provisions, which countries violate at the risk of incurring sanctions."

CongressDaily, Koffler, 4/3

<http://www.nationaljournal.com>

7. MINIMUM WAGE BILL TO COME UP SOON (news)

"Senate Republican and Democratic leaders are close to an agreement that would allow a minimum wage bill to be debated sometime next month, officials said Monday. "This is going to be done, and it's going to be done sooner rather than later," Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., told reporters Monday. "We're looking at doing a freestanding bill some time in May." Senate officials said Lott and Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle have been negotiating a "consent agreement" that would call for a vote before Congress goes on its Memorial Day recess."

Associated Press, 4/2

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/04/02/minimumwage.ap/index.html>

8. UNIONS TO FIGHT BUSH'S ANTI-LABOR EXECUTIVE ORDERS (news)

“Construction unions, stung by unfriendly presidential actions and internal dissension, vowed on Monday to overturn a White House order that bars them from negotiating terms for federally financed projects. Unveiling plans to fight the order in Congress and in court, AFL-CIO Building-Construction Trades Department President Edward Sullivan expressed a sense of betrayal at President Bush's move against so-called project labor agreements. Bush issued four orders on Feb. 17, including one that effectively prohibits project labor agreements, which are negotiated agreements between unions and builders that set wages and benefits for all workers and companies -- including those that are nonunion -- on a given federally paid construction project. As part of the deal, the unions agree not to strike.”
Reuters, Szekely, 4/3

http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/nm/20010402/pl/bush_labor_dc_1.html

9. THE REAL CAUSE OF THE ENERGY CRISIS (editorial)

“Last summer when San Diegans were shocked by the huge increases in their electric bills, I laid the blame squarely at the feet of the wholesale energy generators and marketers. Few agreed with me at that time. And I wasn't surprised. After all, there was plenty of blame to go around. Yes, the state's deregulation plan was fatally flawed. The state's utilities should have foreseen the chaos it would bring. But

instead, they endorsed a plan that left us vulnerable to out-of-state suppliers who took advantage of that vulnerability. Yes, the transmission grid needs work. There are problems getting power from one end of the state to the other. Yes, supply is tight. We need to find new sources -- clean, affordable, reliable sources -- of electricity. And we are -- 25 new generation plants have been approved since

this crisis first broke. But tight supply does not explain the outrageous prices. As we have learned in recent weeks, there was excess electric generation capacity that was not used -- even during the worst days of our blackouts. And now, there is evidence that the energy wholesalers have overcharged consumers.”

San Diego Union-Tribune, Rep. Filner, 4/1

<http://www.uniontrib.com>

10. COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATISM SHOWS ITS TRUE COLORS (editorial)

“T-ball on the White House lawn; oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve. Now we know: That is the essence of George W. Bush, compassionate conservative. As a candidate, Bush defied efforts to get him to define the mysterious but benign-sounding political label. He just used it cynically to lull the political middle. The gullible were lulled. How could anything that included a reference to compassion be all bad? Like campaign finance reform, it was hard to be against. But it's getting easier. Today, the phrase that marketed a presidential candidate mocks more than it soothes. Charm and personality lulled half the country last November. Unlike his father, George W. Bush didn't ask anyone to read his lips. After he figured out how to lose the sneer, he just kept them curling up, in a compassionate conservative smile. Now, the laugh's on us.”

Boston Globe, Vennochi, 4/3

http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/093/oped/Too_much_conservatism_too_little_compassion+.shtml

11. WHY ARE WE SO SURPRISED ABOUT BUSH'S ENVIRO RECORD? (editorial)

“Time to ease up on George W. So what that he tore up the Kyoto agreement, which had been painstakingly hammered out among 100 nations in an attempt to control global warming. Bush doesn't know any better, and why should he, since he never seemed to think that there was a world out there worth visiting, let alone saving. Sure Bush is for clean air--as long as it doesn't hurt oil company profits. Why, when the black smoke in his hometown of Odessa got so nasty that you had to turn on your headlights in the daytime, Gov. Bush went so far as to politely ask the big oil companies to come up with a plan to regulate themselves. They're still working on it.”

Los Angeles Times, Scheer, 4/3

<http://www.latimes.com/news/comment/20010403/t000028331.html>