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### QUOTE OF THE DAY

**“They are willing to destroy Medicare so they can continue to worship at the altar of tax cuts of a magnitude this country can't afford.”**

*Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), on the GOP's obsession with enacting a huge tax cut for the wealthy while cutting health care and environmental spending (Washington Post, 4/5)*

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## ***SUMMARIES***

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### 1. CHINA CRISIS ESCALATES PRESSURE TO REVOKE FAVORED TRADE STATUS (news)

“Just a few days ago, American businesses were looking forward to a potentially landmark year in economic relations with China, with Beijing apparently removing some of the last roadblocks to its membership in the World Trade Organization. But the standoff over the collision of a U.S. Navy aircraft and a Chinese fighter is arousing worries among business executives that U.S. trade with China -- a market of major importance for multinationals -- could suffer a serious setback unless the incident is swiftly resolved. Members of the business community voiced unease yesterday that if the episode produces a prolonged rise in Sino-American tension, China's entry into the WTO could be derailed, especially if Congress deploys trade as a weapon against Beijing. The prospect of China joining the global trade body has been a top goal for corporate America, which is eager to exploit new export and investment opportunities arising from a reduction in Chinese barriers to foreign goods.”

Washington Post, Blustein, 4/5

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A40563-2001Apr4.html>

### 2. LAWMAKERS URGE U.S. TO REVOKE TRADE STATUS WITH CHINA (news)

“China's new normal trade status with the United States could be on the congressional chopping block as lawmakers vent their anger over China's refusal to free 24 crew members of a U.S. spy plane damaged in a collision with a Chinese jet fighter. Lawmakers rejected either a violent confrontation or a U.S. apology for the incident -- Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott dismissed the idea of an apology as “absolutely ludicrous.” But some in Congress may back out of a planned China trip scheduled to start Saturday. And the trade status was up for grabs. Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., who opposed granting China permanent normal trade relations last year, introduced a bill Wednesday to revoke it. “A favored trading partner with our country would follow proper protocol and not continue to hold our service men and women, along with our equipment, after being asked for their return,” said Hunter, who wrote the bill with Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo.”

Associated Press, 4/5

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/04/05/congress.china.ap/index.html>

### 3. GREENSPAN PUSHES FAST TRACK AND NO LABOR/ENVIRO STANDARDS IN TRADE DEALS (news)

“Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan, testifying before the Senate Finance Committee today, reiterated his support for fast track trade negotiating authority, but said labor and environmental agreements should not be required in legislation granting such authority.”

CongressDaily, 4/4

<http://www.nationaljournal.com>

### 4. WHITE HOUSE SLOWS DOWN PUSH FOR FAST TRACK (news)

“The White House is unlikely to issue a detailed fast track proposal by the time President Bush travels to the Summit of the Americas in Quebec later this month, dashing once high hopes in the business community and among free trade advocates. According to sources familiar with White House deliberations, Bush aides are retrenching on the issue of presidential trade negotiating authority, searching for a recipe that will satisfy Democratic demands that labor and environmental issues be etched firmly into trade agreements.”

CongressDailyAM, Koffler, 4/5

<http://www.nationaljournal.com>

### 5. FINALLY, THE SENATE DOES SOMETHING SMART ON TAXES (news)

“The Senate voted yesterday to slice President Bush's \$1.6 trillion tax cut by nearly a third to provide more funds for education and debt reduction, dealing an unexpected and significant blow to the administration's top legislative priority. The Democratic proposal picked up the backing of 49 of the chamber's 50 Democrats as well as three Republican moderates who said the president's proposed budget outline devotes too much money toward cutting taxes and not enough toward other domestic priorities. Republicans immediately signaled they would attempt to reverse the decision before the chamber completes final action on a budget blueprint this week.”

Washington Post, Kessler, 4/5

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A40720-2001Apr4.html>

### 6. HOUSE VOTES FOR ESTATE TAX REPEAL THAT BENEFITS WEALTHIEST 1% (news)

“Finishing work on its third and final installment of President Bush's \$1.6 trillion tax-cut package, the House voted Wednesday to kill the estate tax. The bill was approved 274-154, with the support of 58 Democrats, after an emotional debate that pitted rich against poor in a confrontation over who should carry the tax burden.”

Dallas Morning News, Dodge, 4/5

[http://www.dallasnews.com/national/330150\\_estatetax\\_05na.html](http://www.dallasnews.com/national/330150_estatetax_05na.html)

### 7. SENATE VOTE ON TAXES A ‘LIGHTNING BOLT OF COMMON SENSE’ (editorial)

“After only a few rumbles of warning, a lightning bolt of common sense struck the US Senate yesterday as a majority backed a substantial reduction in President Bush's ill-advised tax cut proposal. Majority leader Trent Lott was scrambling last night for the votes to restore the centerpiece of Bush's economic platform - a tax cut usually estimated at \$1.6 trillion over 10 years - to the Senate budget resolution. But

the vote sent a clear signal that the president will likely have to bargain down to a more sensible figure in order to get a tax bill through Congress.”

Boston Globe, Editorial Board, 4/5

[http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/095/editorials/Tax\\_cut\\_wisdom+.shtml](http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/095/editorials/Tax_cut_wisdom+.shtml)

#### 8. GOP PUSHES TAX CUTS FOR THE FEW OVER EDUCATION (news)

“The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities released a report showing the \$1.6 trillion the Bush budget shows for the tax cut over the next ten years is 40 times the amount the budget shows for increased funding to improve the nation’s education system.”

CBPP, 4/3

<http://www.cbpp.org/4-3-01bud.htm>

#### 9. ADMINISTRATION PUSHES TO DROP SALMONELLA TESTS FOR BEEF (news)

“The Bush administration has proposed dropping testing for salmonella in ground beef for the federal school-lunch program. The salmonella tests, ordered last June by the Clinton administration, were met with fierce opposition by the meat industry. Dr. Ken Clayton, acting administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service at the Agriculture Department, “They caught five million pounds of meat that had salmonella in it last year that they wouldn’t have caught, and they won’t catch it next year,” he said. The proposal means that “neither federal inspectors nor companies involved will test for a potentially deadly pathogen in meat going to millions of school children nationwide,” said Carol Tucker Foreman, director of the Food Policy Institute of the Consumer Federation of America and a former Agriculture Department official in the Carter administration. Senator Richard J. Durbin, an Illinois Democrat who sits on the agriculture subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, was also critical of the change and threatened Congressional action. “First, it was arsenic in drinking water. Now it’s salmonella in school lunches. Where will it end?”

New York Times, Burros, 4/5

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/05/education/05MEAT.html>

#### 10. WHITE HOUSE TO CUT ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AT TIME OF ENERGY CRISIS (news)

The Bush administration plans to cut programs intended to make buildings and factories use less energy and to generate more power from the wind and the sun, people who have seen the administration’s budget proposal say. The cuts, being proposed despite the administration’s contention that the nation faces an energy crisis, would reduce the Energy Department’s overall spending on energy efficiency and renewable energy by about \$180 million, or 15 percent, though some people involved in the process said the administration had talked of cuts of up to 30 percent.

New York Times, Kahn, 4/5

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/05/politics/05BUDG.html>

#### 11. BUSH BUDGET PROPOSES SEVERE CUTS IN A VARIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS (news)

“President Bush is likely to ignite more controversy over his environmental policies with the release next week of detailed budget plans including big cuts in conservation and energy-efficiency programs. Democratic strategists say that environmental issues are fast becoming Mr. Bush’s biggest political weak spot because of their popularity with middle-class voters. Democrats and their allies among environmental groups are planning to highlight the cuts next week and again on April 22, Earth Day. “We expect the president’s budget is going to be the next big attack on the environment,” said Alyssandra Campaigne of the Natural Resources Defense Council. Based on Mr. Bush’s previously released budget outline, environmentalists now estimate that he will propose cutting environmental spending by 10%, including reductions at the Environmental Protection Agency, the Energy and Interior departments, and the Army Corps of Engineers. The Energy Department would endure the biggest cuts, expected to total as much as \$120 million from research programs that promote energy efficiency in manufacturing processes, appliances and building design.”

Wall Street Journal, McKinnon, 4/5

<http://interactive.wsj.com/articles/SB986421713100293125.htm>

#### 12. GOP SENATORS TO OPPOSE DRILLING IN ALASKA (news)

“With support for President Bush’s tax cut slipping among Republican Senators, a number of moderates are also lining up to oppose one of the administration’s most controversial priorities, oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman Bob Smith (R-N.H.), who opposes drilling in the Alaskan refuge, said seven to eight Republicans are now against the plan, making its passage in the Senate an uphill battle.”

Roll Call, Crabtree, 4/5

<http://www.rollcall.com/pages/news/00/2001/04/news0405b.html>

#### 13. PUBLIC HEALTH IN PERIL (editorial)

“It was almost exactly a year ago, during a campaign appearance in Pennsylvania, that George W. Bush said: “Every environmental issue confronts us with a duty to be good stewards. As we use nature’s gifts, we must do so wisely. Prosperity will mean little if we leave future generations a world of polluted air, toxic lakes and rivers, and vanished forests.” He said it with a straight face. He must have known, even as he spoke, that his home state of Texas was an environmental disaster zone. The Sierra Club summed the matter up as follows: “Texas ranks first in toxic releases to the environment, first in total toxic air emissions from industrial facilities, first in toxic chemical accidents, and first in cancer-causing pollution.” There is no telling how much bad news lies ahead. On a whole range of issues, the president appears committed to bringing the Texas model to the rest of the nation.”

New York Times, Herbert, 4/5

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/05/opinion/05HERB.html>

14. REPORT: ADMINISTRATION FINALIZES PLANS TO DRILL IN NATURE PRESERVES (news)

"Millions of acres of federal land that contain protected wildlife and scenery would be opened for oil and gas drilling under a plan being finalized by the Interior Department. The draft recommendations, obtained by USA TODAY, are contained in a report being prepared for a Bush administration task force, chaired by Vice President Cheney, that is developing a national energy policy. They offer the first details of how the administration might implement President Bush's repeated pledge to expand domestic energy development with more aggressive drilling on federal lands."

USA Today, Kenworthy, 4/5

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/washdc/2001-04-05-energydrilling.htm>

15. PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS OFFERS COMPREHENSIVE MEDICARE PRES. DRUG BILL (news)

On behalf of the [Congressional Progressive Caucus](#), Rep. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) introduced a "comprehensive" Medicare prescription drug benefit package -- called the Medicare Extension of Drugs to Seniors Act ([HR-1512](#)) -- which would "provid[e] the strongest benefit to the most seniors of any plan" in Congress, according to a Progressive Caucus press release. The bill, which has 24 co-sponsors, would "bring American prices" for pharmaceuticals "into line" with prices abroad through [drug reimportation](#). In addition, the legislation would require drug companies to return "taxpayer funded" pharmaceutical research "to consumers in the form of reasonable prices." The plan would cover 80% of all seniors' drug costs."

American Health Line, 4/5

<http://www.nationaljournal.com>

16. ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN AND TAX-CUT HYSTERIA JEOPARDIZES PRES. DRUG REFORM (news)

"The economic slowdown has put at risk one more political dream: a Medicare prescription-drug benefit.

The drug benefit had a starring role in last year's elections, but its prospects for enactment this year have faded. With the economy faltering, lawmakers in both parties are increasingly worried that projected budget surpluses might not materialize, and their energies are focused principally on the tax-cut debate."

Wall Street Journal, Lueck, 4/5

<http://interactive.wsj.com/articles/SB986439071737645856.htm>

17. REPORT: INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN AFFORD TO FIGHT AIDS IN AFRICA (news)

"Millions of people with AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa could be treated with sophisticated antiretroviral drugs for about \$1,100 per patient annually, according to a Harvard study released yesterday. The study, signed by 128 Harvard researchers, physicians and economists, argues that the price is one that the world's richest nations can easily afford to pay and calls for 3 million Africans to enter treatment within the next five years. The \$1,100 figure covers the drugs themselves -- calculated to be provided "at cost" by pharmaceutical companies -- as well as clinical trials and epidemiological studies conducted by international experts to gauge the effectiveness of various treatment approaches. The proposal also calls on wealthy nations to dramatically increase their current expenditures for international AIDS programs and to pool their donations into a "global trust fund" jointly administered by the U.N. AIDS program and the World Health Organization."

Washington Post, DeYoung, 4/5

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A38860-2001Apr4.html>

18. A FAIRNESS AGENDA FOR THE BUSH ERA (news)

"What is in store for low-income Americans under a Bush Administration? What victories, if any, can progressives realistically hope to win? President Bush's performance is already deeply troubling. So far he looks more like Ronald Reagan than President Bush I. Far-right ideologues are showing up in sub-Cabinet jobs, and little in Bush's substantive agenda cuts the other way. The Democratic opposition appears unable to gain traction. And a recession seems imminent, a prospect that lends special urgency to the fast-approaching time limits imposed by the 1996 welfare law."

The Nation, Edelman, 4/23 issue

<http://www.thenation.com>