

Channel Surfing

Written by Garry Lee Wright
Tuesday, 29 May 2001 18:00

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(click) “ ... our special guest tonight is former President Bill Clinton, who’s just scheduled a paid appearance at a success seminar with TV host Montel Williams and a group of – believe it or not – motivational speakers. Welcome, Mr. President.”

“Thanks, Tim. But I can’t *hear* you ... ”

“I said, ‘*Welcome, Mr. President!*’ ”

“Much better! Wow, it’s great to be alive! And just remember: You’re not outstanding if you’re not out selling! Got that?”

“Yes, I do.”

“I can’t *hear* you ... ”

“*Yes, I do.* ”

“Great. Now, here are some calisthenics I learned from the prime minister of Japan. But first – hey, mind if I call you ‘Mr. Prospect’?”

(click)

“ ... on tonight’s episode of NBC’s *The Runner*, which is the new reality show created specifically to attract product placements and advertiser tie-ins. Tonight, our ‘runner’ has just two hours to order a super-duper skillet scramble at every Lenny’s Restaurant in downtown Milwaukee, then he’ll have emergency surgery – courtesy of the board-certified professionals at Humana Hospital – after being run over by a brand-new, 2001 Oldsmobile Bravada ... ”

(click)

“ ... now that Mr. Bush’s tax cut has finally passed the Senate, can you explain how it will affect the average American?”

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“Gladly. Let’s take a typical family. Two adults, two children, and an annual income of, say, two million dollars a year ... ”

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“ ... persistent rumors that Senator Jim Jeffords left the Republican Party not to serve as an independent, but because he wants Vermont to secede from the Union and form a new country run by activist-entrepreneurs Ben and Jerry. Sam, are you familiar with them?”

“Yes, indeed. And let me say that if they make foreign policy as well as they make ice cream, I’d certainly be ... ”

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“Two million a year? Isn’t that a little high?”

“Call it a million five. Now, depending on how many swimming pools they have ... ”

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“ ... tonight’s debate takes a look at Indian sports-team mascots: Are they a touching tribute or an insensitive slam? Our panelists are Charles Whitcomb, whose NCAA committee is investigating Chief Illiniwek, Chief Osceola, and the Fighting Sioux logo at North Dakota, plus Fred ‘Buster’ Baxter, president of the not-for-profit FWSATCCAI, which stands for ‘Fans Who Are Sick of All This Crybaby Crap about Indians.’ Buster, what’s your group’s position?”

“We just don’t understand the objection, that’s all. These Native American symbols have been around for years and years, and they’re treated with the utmost honor and respect by sports fans everywhere. For crying out loud, don’t they *want* us to honor them?”

“I guess not.”

“Well, screw ‘em, then. We can always get the San Diego Chicken.”

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“ ... the movie *Pearl Harbor*, which is expected to be the summer’s biggest blockbuster. So, how difficult was it to make a war atrocity into a romantic feature film?”

“Pretty tough, Katie. But we think we came up with a good date movie. Of course, for the Japanese market, we had to cut out all the battle stuff.”

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“But what if they don’t *have* a swimming pool?”

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“That’s the beauty of this thing. They can *inherit* one – and not pay a cent in estate taxes! ... ”

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“ ... but before we run out of time, let’s welcome Robert Blake, former star of TV’s *Baretta* and the man who’s been at the center of the controversy. Mr. Blake, what’s your side of the story?”

“Real simple, Larry. We wuz havin’ dinner and I realized I only lef’ 14 percent as a tip, not my usual 15 percent. I’m a big spender, see? Dat’s the name a dat tune. So I went back to the restaurant a put another quarter onna table, and when I returned to the car, that’s when I realized that I shot my wife in the head. I mean, somebody else shot my wife in the head. I mean – hey, who you gotta grease to get some Perrier around here?”

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