

## **Did You Know That Dick Cheney Is Praying For Tim Johnson?**

*Published in December 2006 on the Huffington Post, this post was taken down after just two days because some readers found it “offensive.”*

Washington, DC—An anonymous source in the office of Vice President Dick Cheney has furnished the following transcript of his prayer for Tim Johnson, newly elected Democratic Senator of South Dakota, who was rushed to George Washington Hospital on Wednesday, December 13 with a brain hemorrhage and is now in critical condition after brain surgery.

“Sir—and I call you Sir because I have no doubt, no doubt at all, that you’re a sir, no matter what these lesbo-maniacs call you, you won’t ever find me calling you Ma’am, no sir—anyway sir, let’s get one thing straight up front: I don’t kneel. Ever. I salute my chief, I salute the stars and stripes, I salute our fighting men in the war against terror, I even kiss Karl’s ring now and then, but I don’t kneel to anyone, not even you, and I’m sure you won’t take that personally. It’s just the way I am. Other presidents and vice presidents before us, you know, have sometimes knelt down in times of crisis. Lincoln maybe, in the civil war. And in the dark days of Watergate, some say, Dick Nixon hit the floor with Henry the K. And I’m sure that Clinton must have tried it once or twice in the hope of staving off impeachment, which of course he never did—though the slimy bastard finally beat the rap, and I have to say I’ve never forgiven you for letting him do it. But these guys--these oval office kneelers--they all traded away the powers of the office in return for some quick fix. I won’t do that. I want to leave this office—the office of the vice president, and the office of the president too, insofar as I control it, which of course I do—I want to leave both offices stronger than they were when we came in. So I

don't kneel, sir. I speak to you from a chair in my office that is reserved only for me. And here's what I have to say.

You know, because you know everything—sometimes I think you know even more than Karl, but of course that's impossible—anyway, you know of course that the Democrat party now holds the Senate by a bare majority of 51 to 49. And you know what the Democrat party will try to do us, to the war on terror, to American families, to American values, to the institution of marriage (lay off my daughter, by the way, that's a private matter), to the right to bear arms against all enemies, foreign and domestic (especially liberals), to the system of free enterprise, and above all to the Republican party. If the Democrat party gets control of the Senate, they will do all they can to undo what the president and I have done since we took office. They will take back our tax cuts. They will thrust their greedy hands into the pockets of hard-working American taxpayers. They will make the very richest of us—the people who make this economy grow, who build new businesses, who create jobs all around the country, who generously fund the Republican party and its greatest causes, like the war on abortion and a Marriage Amendment—they will make the richest of us pay even more in taxes than the intolerable pittance we are paying right now. And they will insist that we in this administration fight terror with our hands tied behind our backs, that we tell everyone—al Qaeda included, of course—just where in the world we are holding terrorists, that we charge every one of those terrorists with a specific crime (as if terrorism itself wasn't enough!), that we give every one of them the right to a complete trial, soup to nuts, access to all evidence, even classified information—hell, might as well hand them the keys to the CIA. And that's only the beginning. If the Democrat party takes over the Senate, they'll insist on drastic action against this phony scare called global warming—as if they'd never heard of air conditioning, for heaven's sake. They'll rant and rave about carbon emissions, as if they didn't know that we're all exhaling carbon dioxide every day of our lives (see I know a thing

or two about chemistry myself). They'll choke the coal industry. They'll pile one regulation after another on the backs of American corporations until they suffocate. They'll want gay marriage in every state and abortion on demand in every town. Worst of all, they'll try to make us cut and run from Iraq, just when we're about to turn the corner, just when the Sunnis and the Shiites are about to kill each other off entirely, once and for all, and leave the region's oil fields safe at last for American investors.

Sir, you don't want that, I don't want it, the president doesn't want it, and regardless of how they voted in the last election, the American people don't want that either. That's why I'm praying today for Tim Johnson. If he dies, Governor Rounds of South Dakota—a good Republican, I can assure you of that—will replace him with a Republican, which would give us 50 seats in the Senate, and then of course I could tip the balance in any tie vote.

Johnson is now recovering from his operation, they say, but still in critical condition. And in spite of what we've been told about his chances, I'm betting he's in pain. And even if he survives, even if he has a pretty good chance of full recovery, I'm betting he's likely to end up permanently incapacitated, with the fate of the Senate and the fate of the country and the fate of the entire world hanging in the balance. Don't let that happen, sir. Put him out of his misery. Now. “

**FOLLOW-UP POST  
NOW THAT CHENEY'S PRAYER FOR JOHNSON HAS  
OFFENDED YOU, MAY I TELL YOU WHAT OFFENDS  
ME?**

[Posted on *The Huffington Post* in December 2006 and taken down in about 30 minutes]

For the first time since I started blogging here last winter, one of my posts has been found so offensive that it's been yanked from the site.

Here's a sample of the outrage sparked by my transcript of Dick Cheney's prayer for Tim Johnson:

"This is a shameful column, Mr. Hefferman. This is just the kind of hyper-disrespectful stuff that the Republicans love to use against their straw-man opposition. This is a blog site, but you should show some discipline as a journalist. We need worthwhile opposition, not polarizing nonsense. I'm shocked this blog allowed this stuff to be posted."

**By: goofy2 on December 16, 2006 at 09:28pm**

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Several others thought better of the piece (it would be hard to think worse, of course), and the very last person to post a comment on it (which was also a comment on all the others) wrote as follows:

"There is nothing wrong with this post, as I am sure that Heffernan is not praying for Tim Johnson to die. In fact, I hope that nobody is because that would be sickening in my opinion. But personally, I think that that was one of the best rips on Cheney that I have ever read. "Lesbo-maniacs," that had me rolling, especially with knowledge of Cheney's stance on these things. If you have any political knowledge at all, you know that many of the statements here are actually based around Cheney's own personal statements on issues, and that this was just for satire, nothing else. Heffernan's job is to do up both serious and satirical articles, and this one should get an award. Great job Jim. Hope to see more stuff soon."

**By: DemocratExtemperDave on December 17, 2006 at 02:02am**

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Thanks, DED. In a roomful of people throwing eggs and rotten tomatoes at me, it's great to get even one bouquet.

But since I doubt that DED's comment will satisfy my detractors, let me simply ask them three questions: 1. Is it offensive to discuss the political implications of the illness of a United States Senator? 2. Do you believe that Vice President Cheney really wants Senator Johnson to recover, or that he considers Johnson's recovery more important than the Republican agenda? 3. Do you believe that any one of Johnson's family or friends believes either 1 or 2?

If you answered yes to question 1, you must be offended by just about every news story published on him so far, and so presumably have stopped reading newspapers and visiting web sites, including this one. If you answered yes to question 2, you must have been spending the last six years on the moon. And if you answered yes to question 3, you must believe that Johnson's friends and family live there too.

Let me tell you what my crime was. In the virtual hospital room that surrounds the bed on which Senator Tim Johnson is now slowly but surely recovering from brain surgery (for which I am profoundly grateful), I was barbarous enough to note the presence of a gigantic elephant. This is the elephant that trampled its way into a wholly unnecessary war that has so far killed nearly three thousand American soldiers, that has injured twenty thousand of them (many maimed for life), that has taken the lives of at least thirty thousand Iraqi civilians, that has cost us over three hundred billion dollars, and that has drained our armed forces to the point of exhaustion. That is what I find offensive.

Satire is a provocative form of expression. Its traditional enemies are vice and folly, which it attacks by means of ridicule. If the hide

of this war-mongering elephant—the very embodiment of vice and folly-- is ever to be pricked, satire alone can do it.

With the click of a key, Huffpost has deleted my transcript of Cheney's prayer. If the click of any key could delete the suffering and death and misery that we have inflicted on Iraq, I would cheerfully crawl on my hands and knees through ashes and broken glass to beg the forgiveness of everyone who found the prayer offensive. But until you can find a way to delete the war, please don't ask me to apologize for my previous post. .