**Blame**

**A Lodi, California, city employee is suing the city for damages after he backed a dump truck into his own parked car. Curtis Gokey, 51, has admitted that he caused the accident, but argues that because the “city’s vehicle damaged my private vehicle,” the city owes him $3,600. The city disagrees. “This is just one of these things where you go. ‘No, the citizens of Lodi are not going to pay for his error,’” said Steve Schwabauer, an attorney for the city. *(The Week magazine, March 31, 2006)***

**Arson aboard ship is “an act of God,” according to the Harter Act in the maritime laws. Doesn’t mean the fire-setter can’t be prosecuted for the crime. But it relieves everybody of civil responsibility, meaning you can’t sue for damages. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Afghanistan: Who is to blame?: As Republicans savage President Biden over the botched Afghanistan pullout, Americans shouldn’t forget Donald Trump’s “role in this tragedy,” said Frida Ghitis in CNN.com – “and it’s a doozy.” Trump and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo “set the stage” for this debacle with their disastrous Taliban peace agreement of February 2020. Eager to deliver on his “America First” pledge to end U. S. involvement in Afghanistan before the election, Trump “cluelessly sabotaged peace talks” by announcing troop reduction without extracting any concessions from the Taliban. Then he agreed to pull out all our troops by May 2021 and support the release of 5,000 Taliban prisoners – “one of the worst deals ever negotiated by an American president.” Trump even phoned Taliban leader Abdul Ghani Baradar, and said “the relationship is very good that I have with the mullah.” No wonder that former Trump national security advisor H. R. McMaster called it “a surrender agreement” that doomed the Afghan government. Yet, with typical gall, Trump and Pompeo are now attacking Biden for the U. S. pullout, said Max Boot in The Washington Post. Pompeo not only led the “peace” negotiations but also arranged the prison release of Baradar, then met and posed for photos with him, “thereby legitimating the Taliban and disheartening the Afghan military.” Biden deserves plenty of criticism for the chaos in Kabul, but if Trump were in office, the pullout would have been even worse. Shifting blame to Trump is a diversionary tactic, said David Harsanyi in NationalReview.com. Biden could have refused to honor his predecessor’s deal, just as he reversed most of his other policies. Our “shameful withdrawal” is on him alone. Nonsense, said Max Berger in NBCNews.com. After two decades of delusion, mistakes, and lies, the blame runs deep. And let’s not forget the “neoconservative cabal” in George W. Bush’s administration who sent us to Afghanistan in the first place. Their dream of rebuilding Middle East nations into “Western-friendly” liberal democracies “was a fool’s errand” built on “greed and hubris,” and cost us “trillions of dollars and thousands of lives” and inflicted severe damage on America’s credibility. That’s what conservatives are really mad about, said Caroline Orr Bueno in NewRepublic.com. By “ripping off the Band-Aid of false hope, Biden has ended the “national fiction” they promoted – that this tragically misguided adventure could ever have a happy ending. *(The Week magazine, September 3, 2021)***

**Ziggy says to the computer in front of him: “Human error? You always say human error!” *(Tom Wilson, in Ziggy comic strip)***

**If the ancient Greeks weren’t sure who’d fathered the baby, they said it was the child of their greater god, Jupiter. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The first time that Adam had a chance, he laid the blame on woman. *(Mary Astor, British politician)***

**It’s been said that behind every successful man stands a woman! So that’s it – it’s all Gladys’ fault! *(Art & Chip Sansom, in The Born Loser comic strip)***

**Joe Biden is getting blamed for things he can’t control, said Derek Thompson,**

**in TheAtlantic.com. When he took office, 1 percent of Americans had been vaccinated; now 71 percent are. Is the pandemic behind us? No, but Biden’s hardly responsible for “viral mutations he didn’t ask for,” or for the fact that millions of misinformed Americans chose to stay unvaccinated. *(The Week magazine, December 31, 2021 / January 7, 2022)***

**Quote from the boss: “I didn’t say it was your fault. I said I was going to blame it on you.” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**Bad week for: The buck stopping here, after President Trump explained the painfully slow rollout of coronavirus testing on the fact that "we inherited a broken test" from the Obama administration. The first test anyone developed for the coronavirus came out in January, 2020, nearly three years after Trump's inauguration. (*The Week magazine April 17, 2020)***

**He who cannot dance puts the blame on the floor. *(Hindi proverb)***

**I swear it wasn’t my fault – the cat made me do it! *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Smokers say the leading cause of furniture fires is drinking. Drinkers say the leading cause of furniture fires is smoking. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**“It’s your fault the check bounced. Why didn’t you tell me you were going to run to the bank the very same day!” *(From the Landlord Protection Agency, thelpa.com, as it appeared in Reader’s Digest)***

**Grandpa: “Okay, okay! I’ll give you my honest opinion, even though it’ll put me in the doghouse. I don’t much care for your new clothes. In fact, I can’t stand ‘em. There. I said it. So do your worst.” Grandma: “Oh, thank goodness! I don’t like them either, but I didn’t want to hurt Sylvia’s feelings. Now I can just blame it on you. *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**“I’ve invented a computer that’s almost human,” boasted one scientist to another.” “You mean it can think?” asked his colleague. “No. But when it makes a mistake, it can put the blame on some other computer.” *(The Right Hand)***

**Doctor: “Your tests show that your condition is hereditary.” Patient: “Good! Send the bill to my parents.” *(The Saturday Evening Post cartoon)***

**$5.25 million is what a jury awarded six high school band members and a chaperone in Alice, Texas, who contracted tuberculosis from a bus driver. The award followed a guilty verdict of negligence against Garcia Holiday Tours and the driver, Raul Garcia, no relation to the company owners. The driver coughed repeatedly during a 2004 trip and was diagnosed with active tuberculosis nine days later. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, September 2l, 2007)***

**On the way to work each morning I stop at a convenience store for a cup of coffee. A young woman who arrives at the same time always has two cupcakes and a soft drink. One morning, however, she ordered only a soda. “What, no cupcakes?” the waitress asked her. “No,” she answered grinning. “I’m not eating any more cupcakes. They make my clothes shrink!” *(Phyllis P. Willis, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Thornapple: “But Chief, how can you say the design flaw in our new tea cozy is my fault? You know it isn’t!” Chief: “I didn’t say it was your fault, Thornapple. I merely said I was going to blame you!” *(Art and Chip Sansom, in The Born Loser comic strip)***

**Dennis says to his Mom: “Don’t blame me! It’s your job to make me behave!” *(Hank Ketcham, in Dennis the Menace comic strip)***

**We are responsible for each other, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that you are my fault. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Poll watch: 54% of Americans say President George W. Bush is most responsible for the country’s economic problems, while 29% blame President Obama. 9% say both are to blame. *(The Washington Post/ABC News Poll, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 24, 2012)***

**The search for a scapegoat is the easiest of all hunting expeditions*. (Dwight D. Eisenhower, in At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends)***

**To err is human. To blame it on the other guy is even more human. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**That’s their excuse, anyway: Excrement dumped out of windows into the streets in 18th-century London contaminated the city’s water supply and forced locals to drink gin instead. *(Liza Lentini & David Mouzon, in Discover magazine)***

**An expert is someone called in at the last minute to share the blame. *(San Ewing, in Mature Living)***

**Dan: “You mean Sylvia’s gone to Malaysia to look for me?” Grandpa: “’Fraid so. It’s my fault, Dan. I should’ve tried to stop her.” Grandma: “No, no. It’s my fault. I’m the one who got her all worried and upset.” Grandpa: “She’s right. It’s her fault. I just said it was my fault to be polite. *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**Dr. Brown, an eye doctor in Texas, came out of a supermarket and found his fender bashed in. A note left on the front seat had the name and phone number of the culprit. When he called and identified himself, there was a long silence before the woman on the line exploded, “Dr. Brown! I told you three months ago I needed glasses.” *(Shirley Louther, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Don’t find fault. Find a remedy. *(Henry Ford)***

**Forget blame. The best recruiters will tell you it doesn’t matter who was at fault. Unless you’re a darn good swimmer, don’t burn bridges. *(Harvey Mackay, in Outswimming The Sharks)***

**Frustration is not having anyone to blame but yourself. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Over 300 years ago, English clergyman-historian Thomas Fuller wrote a line that has as much sting today: “Accusing the times is but excusing ourselves.” *(Sydney J. Harris, Publishers-Hall Syndicate)***

**A California man is suing two Las Vegas casinos for making it easy for him to lose $5.5 million since 1995. Shibley Horaney says the MGM Mirage and MGM Grand exploited his gambling addiction by offering him free hotel rooms, transportation, and bottomless credit lines. “There are lots of cases where people make their own decisions and choices and then turn around and sue the casino,” said a spokesman for the Mirage. *(The Week magazine, February 4, 2005)***

**While eating her dinner that she doesn’t like, Dolly says: “But I didn’t turn up my nose, Mommy. God did it.” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**As the child kneels by his bed he closes his eyes and says to God: “Help me to take the blame even though it’s always that Rick Kirkman’s fault.” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

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**55% of American drivers say they’re changing their driving habits as a result of high gas prices. 36% say recent events in the Middle East are to blame for high prices, while 33% blame oil companies, 11% blame President Obama and Democrats, and 6% blame congressional Republicans. *(McClatchy Newspapers-Marist poll, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 6, 2011)***

**One morning a couple apporoached the observation tower where I worked at Mount Mitchell State Park in North Carolina. “Young man, can you help us?’ the woman asked. “We’ve looked but can’t find the highest peak this side of the Mississippi. All the mountaintops seem to be lower than this one.” Since Mount Mitchell is the highest peak, I replied, “Ma’am, you’re standing on it.” “But of course,” she said. “How silly of my husband.” *(Stanley C. Hoyle, in Reader’s Digest)***

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**Our culture peculiarly honors the act of blaming, which it takes as the sign of virtue and intellect. *(Lionel Trilling)***

**We believe that to err is human. To blame it on someone else is politics. *(Former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey)***

**When things don’t go well they like to blame Presidents; and that’s something that Presidents are paid for. *(John F. Kennedy)***

**One evening my sister was sleeping in her bedroom upstairs when her eight-year-old son, Jason, was in his room on the first floor. Suddenly she was awakened by a loud crash. A van had run off the road, smacked into the side of the house and came to a stop in the living room. Her first thought was of her son. “Jason!” she yelled out – and from downstairs her son yelled back, “I didn’t do it, Ma!” *(Tammy Bonneau, in Reader’s Digest)***

**The man who can smile when things go wrong has thought of someone else he can blame it on. *(Robert Bloch, author)***

**Obviously certain mistakes were made in creating the universe, but nobody wants to take the blame. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Boss to employee: “We’ve decided, Sherman, to give you more responsibility. From now on, you’ll be responsible for everything that goes wrong.” *(Marty Lowe, in The Wall Street Journal)***

**Proud Mom: “Come on, Jim, April’s concert begins in 45 minutes – and the taxi’s waiting! Her band will be playing at the Metro Center for the first time! I am so excited! It’s because of you she’s a musician. You taught her to play the guitar. You sent her for lessons – you listened to her practice. You taught her to sing harmony and to put feeling into everything she did! If she becomes a rock star, it’s because of you!” Jim: “I get blamed for everything.” *(Lynn Johnson, in For Better or For Worse comic strip)***

**Don’t ascribe to malice that which is adequately explained by incompetence. *(Napoleon Bonaparte)***

**Nothing is easier than fault-finding; no talent, no self-denial, no brains, no character are required to set up in the grumbling business*. (Robert West, in Bits & Pieces)***

**Bad week for: Accountability, after Texas Governor Rick Perry said the massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico should not be blamed on the oil industry, calling such spills “acts of God that cannot be prevented.” *(The Week magazine, May 14, 2010)***

**We only have one person to blame, and that's each other. *(Barry Beck, New York Ranger, on who started a brawl during the National Hockey League Stanley Cup playoffs, in Catholic Digest)  
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When government accepts responsibility for people, then people no longer take responsibility for themselves. *(George Pataki)***

**People may fail many times, but they become failures only when they begin to blame someone else. *(Bits & Pieces) 29018***

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**To err is human; to blame it on the other party is politics. *(Bill Vaughan, NANA)***

**MARGINAL NOTE: Quarrels wouldn’t last long if the fault were only on one side. *(Country Extra magazine)***

**Marriage counselor to couple: “I think rationing might save your marriage. You take the blame on even days, Mrs. Figby, and your husband takes the odd days.” *(Lichty, Publishers-Hall Syndicate)***

**Billy: “That rock tripped me!” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents, the second half by our children. *(Clarence Darrow, lawyer)***

**This tendency to blame was illustrated by an episode in Charles Schultz’s Peanuts comic strip where Charlie Brown informs Lucy that he has received bad grades on his report card. When Lucy inquires as to how his parents will react to this news, Charlie tells her they will do the normal thing – blame the teacher. The underlying message in all this is often, “If only somebody else had done something differently, I wouldn’t be in the predicament I’m in. It’s their fault and I’m not responsible*.”* *(Charles Dickson, in New Realities magazine)***

**The man who can smile when something has gone wrong may have just thought of someone he can blame it on. *(Leslie B. Flynn & Bernice Flynn, in Humorous Incidents and Quips for Church Publications, p. 57)***

**I praise loudly; I blame softly. *(Catherine II)***

**Of all of history’s killers, it’s believed Joseph Stalin was responsible for killing the most people. He’s blamed for the deaths of 20 million. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**People are inclined, when in the wrong, to lay the blame on others. We’re like the small boy, who was standing on the cat’s tail. His mother, hearing the terrible commotion, called from an adjoining room: “Tommy, stop pulling that cat’s tail!” “I’m not pulling the cat’s tail. I’m standing on it. He’s the one that’s doing the pulling.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**What I do now is all my dad's fault, because he bought me a guitar as a boy, for no apparent reason. (*Rod Stewart, British rock icon)***

**A Chicago woman sued a grocery store this week for injuries allegedly sustained after slipping on grapes. The woman’s lawyer, Mark Solmor, said that “produce sections are notoriously dangerous” because of such hazards as watermelon juice, stray cherry tomatoes, and most of all, grapes. “They are very stealthy, those grapes,” said Solmor. “They are small, they are round, and they roll.” *(The Week magazine, April 2, 2010)***

**Teamwork means never having to take all the blame yourself. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**Mom: “Max, what did you do to your arm?” Max: “I fell out of a trash can.” Mom: “How did that happen?” Max: “It was Louis’ idea.” Mom: “Louis pushed you out of a trash can?” Louis: “No!” Max: “No. but he said it could fly!” Louis laughing says: “But he believed me!” *(Jerry Biddle, in Shirley & Son comic strip)***

**Few people will turn to themselves to take responsibility for their actions until they have exhausted all opportunities to blame someone else. *(Larry Winget)***

**Bad week for: Blaming the staff, after North Korea reportedly executed four top officials whom dictator Kim Jong Un faulted for the failure of his second summit with President Trump. The Dear Leader reportedly also demoted his right-hand man and his sister. *(The Week magazine, May 3, 2019)***

**Democrats say those on the right are to blame. Republicans say it is the left. Both are correct. We are all to blame. And we are all part of the solution. (Jim Paloucek, in The North Platte Telegraph)**

**Good week for Woke epidemiology, after the World Health Organization urged against saying that people are “transmitting Covid-19,” “infecting others,” or “spreading the virus,” because that wording “assigns blame.” Instead, we should refer to people “acquiring” the virus. *(The Week magazine, March 13, 2020)***

**When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don’t blame the lettuce. You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need fertilizer, or more water, or less sun. You never blame the lettuce. Yet if we have problems with our friends or our family, we blame the other person. But if we know how to take care of them, they will grow well, like the lettuce. Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and arguments. That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding. If you understand, and you show that you understand, you can love, and the situation will change. *(Thich Nhat Hahn, in Peace Is Every Step)***

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