The date was March 18, 1987, and Sen. Alan K. Simpson of Wyoming was leaving the White House after a meeting with President Reagan. The Iran-contra episode was much in the news at the time, and Simpson found himself arguing with a reporter about the press corps' earlier questioning of Reagan on the subject. The reporter said something about the public's "right to know."

"That's a bunch of crap," Simpson shot back. "What kills me is that you go in there and have your good old fling, and that's great. But you know very well that you're not asking him things so you can get answers. You're asking him things because you know he's off balance and you'd like to stick it in his gazoo."

Gazoo?

Simpson, a Republican known for his blunt (and sometimes ribald) language, served 18 years in the Senate before retiring last year. By the late 1980s, he says, he was plumb fed up with the media and what he sees as their manipulation of the American public. Since the reporters "like to stick it to us," he reasoned, somebody should stick it to them. Over the next few years, as a result of several well-publicized tussles with reporters, he developed a reputation as perhaps the media's most vocal critic on Capitol Hill.

Simpson seems to be under the impression that he's come up with a new version of that familiar tale, "The Emperor's New Clothes." He writes as if he's revealing a naked truth that nobody else has been willing...
The passage discusses Simpson's views on the media and his book, Right in the Old Gazoo. Simpson, a visiting lecturer at Harvard's Shorenstein Center, criticizes the press for blaming bad reporting on competitive fervor and for erasing clarity. He also expresses disdain for the press's self-justification and offers anecdotes of his encounters with journalists. Simpson's book reflects on his role in the press and the media's potential to better serve the democratic process. The passage concludes with a humorous comment about the setting of an HBO special.