

# Notable Quotables

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A bi-weekly compilation of the latest outrageous, sometimes humorous, quotes in the liberal media.



Bringing Political Balance  
to the Media

## Great! Fewer Deaths Each Time

"Janet Reno: Better late than never. Waco. Ruby Ridge. The third time's the charm."

— *Newsweek's "Conventional Wisdom Watch," May 1.*

## Principled Reno, Paranoid Family

"We all know now that you can be, rest assured that will be the bookend on Janet Reno's tenure as Attorney General, that and Waco on the other end. It is appalling from her perspective because of the true compassion she has for children. If you've ever seen her around children, you know how much she truly cares for them, and this has got to be tearing at her."

— *CBS reporter Jim Stewart during live coverage of the INS raid to seize Elian, Saturday morning, April 22.*

"I think that Reno really comes through this as somebody who may have made mistakes, but was principled about it, and unlike most people in Washington, who are trying to figure out the political aspect of it, seemed quite apolitical about it."

— *Newsweek Assistant Managing Editor Evan Thomas, April 22 Inside Washington.*

"The Miami family is just obsessed with the idea that it had to be in Miami. They were afraid that if they went to Washington — this is literally what they were afraid of — that Elian would be put in the trunk of the car and shipped out to Cuba by diplomatic immunity....Their argument was the Justice Department couldn't stop it because the Cuban Interest Section would claim diplomatic immunity. This was a bogus, paranoid fear. But it is one of the reasons why these negotiations derailed."

— *Newsweek's Evan Thomas, same show.*

## Heartwarming Gun Photo

"Yup, I gotta confess, that now-famous picture of a U.S. marshal in Miami pointing an automatic weapon toward Donato Dalrymple and ordering him in the name of the U.S. government to turn over Elian Gonzalez warmed my heart. They should put that picture up in every visa line in every U.S. consulate around the world, with a caption that reads: 'America is a country where the rule of law rules. This picture illustrates what happens to those who defy the rule of law and how far our government and people will go to preserve it. Come all ye who understand that.'"

— *Thomas Friedman, former New York Times reporter and PBS Washington Week in Review panelist, April 25 column.*

## Rather's Raid Rants

"Janet Reno, the Attorney General who's been criticized in a lot of quarters, and depending on one's point of view perhaps justifiably so, did demonstrate patience all the way through. One wants to remember she went to Miami herself to try to negotiate something. It's hard to see how she gets criticized for the way the operation was carried out. Yes, you can say, well, the marshals should not have been...armed that heavily. Put all that in quotation marks. But in the end it worked. The child was gotten out safely."

— *Dan Rather, live CBS Saturday morning coverage.*

"While Fidel Castro, and certainly justified on his record, is widely criticized for a lot of things, there is no question that Castro feels a very deep and abiding connection to those Cubans who are still in Cuba. And, I recognize this might be controversial, but there's little doubt in my mind that Fidel Castro was sincere when he said, 'listen, we really want this child back here.'"

— *Rather, same morning.*

"We want to pick up some more of this, I think, as it goes along, but it's important for accuracy, for fairness, and for balance to point out that so far the relatives in Miami have dominated the imagery and the sounds of this morning."

— *Rather talking over Marisleysis's live recitation of what happened and tour of her house, same morning.*

"And this editor's note. In reporting [Walter] Polovchak's story tonight, it is not our intention to take sides or advocate any particular solution to the Elian Gonzalez case."

— *Dan Rather after story on kid who successfully resisted returning to the Soviet republic of Ukraine in 1980, April 12 CBS Evening News.*

## "Crazy" Family and Friends

"Given the potency of television, that [gun photo] could be the lingering image, and it's a powerful one....It will ignite all the crazies....The focus on the Miami relatives and the Reno-bashers really grotesquely distorts the public response to this whole matter."

— *Chicago Tribune Washington Bureau Chief James Warren in the April 24 Washington Post.*

"I'm not going to pitch [for a Page 1 story] the crazy family running around here all day and bitching on television, but it's going to be all over CNN and MSNBC and Fox."

— *Warren, in same story, on relatives in DC on Sunday.*

## Bryant vs. Cuban-Americans

"The Cuban-American community has been supporting clear disobedience of the law. How do you justify that?"

— **Bryant Gumbel to Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, April 14 *The Early Show* on CBS.**

"Cuban-Americans, Ms. Falk, have been quick to point fingers at Castro for exploiting the little boy. Are their actions any less reprehensible?"

— **Gumbel to CBS News consultant Pam Falk, April 14 *The Early Show*.**

## Only the Brainwashed Prefer U.S.

"It really raises a lot of questions, and I know the question a lot of people are asking is do you think this young boy was brainwashed?"

— **MSNBC's Mika Brzezinski on the Elian video, to psychologist Robin Goodman, April 13 *Home Page*.**

## Elian's Awaiting Cuban Mansion

"This is the home Cuba says is almost ready for the return of the six-year-old in Havana's fashionable Miramar district, home to many international embassies. Even by American standards it's luxurious. By Cuban standards, almost unimaginable. The report on Cuban TV showed freshly painted rooms it says will house not just Elian, but his close family and 12 schoolmates, a stark contrast to the boy's Little Havana house, and that may be the point."

— **CNN's Martin Savidge from Havana, April 18 *The World Today*.**

"This is the state-owned guesthouse where Elian will stay when and if he returns to Cuba. It's a mansion by Cuban standards, but psychiatrists consulting the Castro government tell NBC News the boy's home town, Cardenas, is not the best place for his immediate transition into island life...."

"Two stories, eight bedrooms, four-car garage in the upscale Miramar neighborhood — a section of Havana busy with new foreign companies and renovations. A far cry from most Cuban homes, it has a swimming pool in the backyard, satellite TV, air conditioning, a playroom. Specially built: a classroom and dormitory to accommodate twelve of Elian's Cardenas classmates, who will live with the Gonzalez family, and a medical team including psychiatrists. Cristobal Martinez heads the Cuban mental health team in charge of Elian's transition. He says Cardenas was ruled out because Elian is too big a hero to simply return to his family home."

— **Reporter Jim Avila from Havana on the *NBC Nightly News*, April 18.**

## Can Bush Care Like a Democrat?

"If it sounds as if George Bush is protesting too much, that's because he's got a credibility problem. It's hard enough being the leader of a party that has made headlines by shutting down the government and refusing to add a few quarters to the minimum wage. The Texas Governor also has his own recent past to overcome, including a bruising primary fight that featured him cozying up to the religious right and running a singularly uncompassionate campaign against his opponent, John McCain."

— ***Time's* James Carney and John F. Dickerson, April 24.**

"Smart Politics...Mr. Compassion: Shows he cares about real people, just like the Democrats."

— **Accompanying box on Bush's stances.**

## Cuba: Not a Simple Tyranny

"The one thing that most, that I've learned about Cubans in the many times that I have visited here in the last few years, is that it is mostly a nationalistic country, not primarily a communist country."

— **NBC News reporter Jim Avila on MSNBC's simulcast of *Imus in the Morning*, April 26.**

"Beyond the questions of custody, the Cuban-American community in Miami has always argued, almost every day in fact, that Elian Gonzalez would have a better life here in the United States than in Cuba. It's been argued before, and there's not a simple answer."

— **ABC's Peter Jennings, April 12 *World News Tonight*.**

## Dictatorship is Safer for Kids

"Tipper, one of the things that Elian Gonzalez's father said that I guess would be hard to argue with, that his boy's safer in a school in Havana than in a school in Miami. He would not be shot in a school in Havana. Good point?"

— **CNN's Larry King to Tipper Gore, April 20.**

## Journalists Laughed at Fear

"We have laughed in the big cities, I should say among journalists, about the black helicopter image of a federal police force, or even UN force coming to grab their guns or take them away. We've always laughed at that. Well, after this picture today, no one can laugh at that picture because it's real. When the federal government moves under this administration under this Attorney General, perhaps in these times, it moves swiftly, dramatically, and it uses military force to the highest degree visible. I mean I've never seen a kid facing an automatic weapon in my life like that."

— ***Hardball* host Chris Matthews in live Saturday afternoon coverage on MSNBC, April 22.**

## Notable Quotables

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