

Notable Quotables

May 15, 2000 (Vol. Thirteen; No. 10)

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



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

Play Time or Re-education Time?

"And what about visits from his friends, his classmates? I know that his kindergarten teacher, pediatrician and cousin are flying from Havana today. But there have been discussions about, pardon me, having four of his playmates come up as well. It seems to me you're going to extraordinary lengths to make sure this little boy feels comfortable. Do you fear that you might be going overboard here?"

— **Today** co-host **Katie Couric** to **INS Commissioner Doris Meissner**, April 26.

"The only oasis of calm seemed to be at Wye River Conference Center, the leafy retreat on Maryland's Eastern Shore where Elian is living with his father, stepmother, baby half brother and playmates. (Four of his classmates from Cuba were flown in for a couple of weeks.) The father's PR-sensitive lawyer, Gregory Craig, brought in a photographer at the weekend. The photos showed Elian happily hugging his father."

— **Newsweek** Asst. Managing Editor **Evan Thomas**, May 8.

"Young Gonzalez got some new Cuban company today. Four schoolmates arrived from Havana to spend a couple of weeks with him and his father in Maryland."

— **ABC's Peter Jennings**, April 27 **World News Tonight**.

"The youngster seems to be adjusting to his new life very well with still more friends and relatives arriving from Cuba to keep him company."

— **Tom Brokaw**, April 27 **NBC Nightly News**.

Reality Check:

"The State Department allowed 10 Cuban government officials to visit Elian Gonzalez the day he was moved to a Maryland estate in what government critics say is an attempt to turn the compound into a Cuban re-education camp."

— **Opening of Washington Times** story the next morning.

"Customs officials at Dulles airport caught those doctors sent from Cuba to be with Elian Gonzalez with drugs, which they seized. The *Miami Herald* reports the drugs included phenobarbital, a sedative, and Miltown, a tranquilizer."

— **FNC's Brit Hume**, May 1 **Special Report with Brit Hume**.

Get Him Back Now

"A.G. clears Puerto Rican protestors without a shot. Now just get the kid back to Cuba."

— **From Time's "Winners and Losers" box**, May 15 issue.

World Yearns for Rule of Reno

"I think the American public really got a taste of the degree to which not only Elian had been, in my view, you know kidnapped by these people [Cuban-Americans], but American policy on Cuba has been kidnapped by a very active, vociferous minority...."

"I just came from a trip from Venezuela to Bogota, Colombia to Moscow. I got to tell you, what people in Bogota, Colombia would give for five minutes of Janet Reno. What people in Russia today in these lawless, no rule of law societies, would give for five minutes of Janet Reno."

— **New York Times** columnist and ex-reporter **Thomas Friedman** on **PBS's Washington Week in Review**, April 28.

Future and Current Journalists Embrace Ignorance and Apathy

Woman in audience: "I'm Anna Crowley. I'm studying broadcast journalism. The Clinton administration may have been one of the most investigated administrations in our history, costing the taxpayers millions of dollars. If Gore is elected will his alleged involvement in fundraising scandals play out in lengthy and costly investigations?"

David Shribman, Boston Globe Washington Bureau Chief:

"I think the answer will depend upon what kind of Congress is elected. If Gore is elected with a Democratic Congress, it's exceedingly unlikely there will be a lot of investigations. With a Republican Congress, far more likely. But I want to assure you, you may have no taste for that, if you think we do, we don't either. We're tired of it and I think the public's tired of it, so I think the momentum is against that sort of thing."

— **PBS's Washington Week in Review** from **Northeastern University**, May 5.

Another Gumbel Gorbasm

"As the former head of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev was widely hailed as the man who brought an end to the Cold War. He won a Nobel peace prize for those efforts, but he has since moved from politics. These days he is involved with Green Cross International, trying to find solutions to the world's environmental problems."

"Your late wife, Raisa, was the first glamorous First Lady we had seen in the Soviet Union. Americans have fond memories of her, she passed away. How difficult has it been for you, personally, to replace the void she left?"

— **CBS's Bryant Gumbel's intro and last question in May 1 The Early Show** interview of **Mikhail Gorbachev**.

Reno Should Have Acted Sooner

“Well, I think any raid where no shots are fired and no one is hurt is a success....I think where Reno is to blame is not that she should have talked longer or kept the negotiations going but that she should have cut them off much sooner and she was criticized all week long, I think, for the wrong thing — not that, you know, she should have kept it going as the family suggested but that she just should have stopped it earlier.”

— **Michael Duffy**, Washington Bureau Chief of *Time* magazine, on PBS's *Washington Week in Review*, April 28.

Clift: Better Off in Havana, Really

“I uttered the sentences several weeks ago on the *McLaughlin Group* in the midst of the controversy over whether Elian should be returned to Cuba. And I said that in the context of emphasizing that, first, the father deserved custody of his child. And second, the notion that sending Elian back to his childhood in Cuba was so horrific that we should violate the natural laws in this country of family bonds in order to save him from this horrendous experience and I pointed out that to be poor in Cuba was probably a better existence than to be poor in Miami.....

“I can understand why a rational, loving father can believe that his child will be protected in a state where he doesn't have to worry about going to school and being shot at, where drugs are not a big problem, where he has access to free medical care and where the literacy rate, I believe, is higher than this country's.”

— **Eleanor Clift** on her April 8 quip that “to be a poor child in Cuba may in many instances be better than being a poor child in Miami,” May 1 *FNC's The O'Reilly Factor*.

Lauer: Guns Should Be Legacy

“When Lauer has to report stories such as the recent first-grade shooting in Michigan, he says, a part of him wishes he weren't a journalist. Then he wouldn't have to appear objective. ‘I'd love to be more opinionated about guns.’ He fears historians will describe turn-of-the-21st-century America ‘in just two words: gun violence.’ He tells of attending a party where friends discussed their office layouts — which closets they'd hide in to save their lives. ‘People at cocktail parties now talk about their personal safety. There's something really wrong here.’....

“If he could ask President Clinton just two questions: ‘It wouldn't be about [Monica Lewinsky]. I'd ask, ‘What are you going to do about guns? Why not make this issue one of your legacies?’”

— **From a profile of Today co-host Matt Lauer by Jeffrey Zaslow** in the April 28-30 edition of *USA Weekend*.

Lashing Dr. Laura

“I'm going over a shopping list of things you are against: divorce, living together, working moms, premarital sex, lying, immoral behavior, homosexuality, family differences and day care. Now I'm going to go over the list of some of the rules that you've broken in your lifetime. You have been divorced. You lived with your current husband before you married him, Lou Bishop. You also posed nude for photographs and then lied about the photographs at first and then claimed the rights to those photographs. You fired your own mother when she worked for you and you have not spoken with her for fourteen years and you also put [son] Derek into day care when he was three years old. You're also a working mom. I guess I just have to ask you what leg do you have to stand on to talk about suggestions for people and the way they live?”

— **“Question” from MSNBC's Ashleigh Banfield to syndicated talk radio show host Dr. Laura Schlessinger**, May 4 *MSNBC afternoon female-oriented show Homepage*.

Jesse Helms = Fidel Castro

“On the Senate floor, Jesse Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who is just as much a dictator as Castro, from whom many Republicans want to save Elian, announced that there would be no hearings on this wicked nonsense from Putin.”

— **Syndicated columnist Mary McGrory**, April 27 *Washington Post*, on how Helms said his committee would not take up SALT II.

Socialist-Capitalist Ideal in Cuba

“I think it's conclusive that there have been areas where socialism has helped to keep people at least stabilized at a certain level. There's no middle class, there's no opportunity. There are no First Amendment rights, there certainly isn't the same as this Constitution. But when you just say capitalism versus socialism, it's too simple, I think....I think free markets are important, but you know, you can do both and I think Cuba might prove that.”

— **Actor Chevy Chase on Earth Day to Marc Morano of the syndicated TV show, American Investigator**.

Bob “Sherlock” Schieffer

“This is going to be an interesting election I think. It's going to be an election where Democrats will tend to vote for the Democrats, Republicans will tend to vote for the Republican and I think right now it's really too early to say what these independents are going to do.”

— **CBS's Bob Schieffer being interviewed by C-SPAN after the May 9 McCain-Bush press conference**.

Notable Quotables

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