

## Boy's Grandmothers Return to Cuba

Associated Press

HAVANA — Elian Gonzalez's grandmothers arrived back in Cuba on Sunday without the child they had hoped to bring home, but they were greeted as heroes nonetheless with an enormous government-organized parade through the streets of the Cuban capital.

"We are leaving, but Elian is still here," said the 6-year-old boy's paternal grandmother, Mariela Quintana, as she wrapped up her campaign for the shipwrecked child's return to Cuba. Quintana spoke before departing with

maternal grandmother Raquel Rodriguez on a private plane from Dulles International Airport in Washington, D.C.

"He will never be happy (in the United States) because he grew up in Cuba," she said. "He is a Cuban boy. He has a father. He has four grandparents and an entire family back there."

As the women arrived, crowds clutching Cuban flags lined the 16-mile route of their motorcade through Havana. Government television and radio stations repeatedly broadcast the route and newspapers published schedules for special buses to take people to it.

Even the national soccer championship game, which had been scheduled for Sunday in Havana, was postponed for a week so players and spectators could attend the event.

The grandmothers were returning after "brave and extraordinary work in the United States, overcoming great obstacles and transmitting a persuasive message to the U.S. people," said a government statement published in all newspapers here Sunday.

Gonzalez was found floating in an inner tube off the Florida coast Nov. 25 after a boat wreck that killed his mother and 10 other people.

### PROTEST

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illegally to the United States. Gonzalez has been staying with relatives in Miami since he was rescued.

For the past two months, Gonzalez's U.S. relatives have fought for the child to be granted citizenship. But both of Gonzalez's grandmothers have ardently demanded the boy be returned to Cuba and reunited with his father.

"The U.S. Justice Department made it clear that the law says he should be returned from Cuba," Bartel said. "The general rule is any refugee found to cross illegally at sea must be returned."

Nelson said he protested because he wanted the law to be upheld. The INS has allowed Gonzalez to remain in the

country for humanitarian reasons.

"It's important to put pressure on the system for what the law says," he said. "The U.S. Justice Department and the INS made the right decision."

The task force, which is located at 1105 Sapling Place in Raleigh, has been putting pressure on the system for more than two decades. Representative Joe Straley said the organization was founded in the 1980s to protest U.S. involvement in Nicaragua.

"This organization is sponsored by the mainstream," he said. "We have been in the trenches of U.S. foreign policy since the early '80s."

Straley said he failed to understand how Gonzalez had remained in the United States for so long.

"The reasons are not clear at all to me why the United States has allowed this

delay," he said. "He lost a lot of family, and the law said he should go back to his father. This is like a kidnapping."

Bartel said returning Gonzalez to Cuba was in the boy's best interest as well. "The family life (in Cuba) is very strong," she said.

"I am impressed with the virtues of their community life. If a child has a right to that life, why take that away from him? The cruelty of this is just awesome."

Nelson said he was confident the protest could help change relations between the United States and Cuba.

He said, "I felt like it was one step in what may be a long battle to change this country's attitudes toward Cuba."

The City Editor can be reached at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

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### COCHRAN

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Lee is planning student commentary and a poetry performance to accompany Cochran's speech, scheduled to be held in Memorial Hall.

Officials expect the BSM's request to be approved without much debate.

"We fund speakers because they usually ask for more money than any group

can even think of," Whitfield said.

"(The BSM) already had a written commitment with (Cochran) and one or two dates."

The committee also takes into account how much of the student body the speaker will reach, Whitfield said.

"This is student money, so we don't want to just give it out."

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### REGISTRATION

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register on the first Saturday of registration for each semester, and juniors would register on the first Sunday.

Sophomores would register on the second Saturday, and freshmen would register on the second Sunday of registration.

Even though classes would be registering on the same day, half of the class would register at noon, and the other half would be able to register at 2 p.m.

Student Body Vice President Monika Moore said she was concerned the new registration system would make the University less navigable for freshmen

and those seeking advising. "I have a few concerns since advising's been going really well this year," Moore said. "Advising has seen improvements, and I think we should stick with it for a while."

Student Body Treasurer Ryan Schlitt said he felt aspects of the proposal would not benefit students as a whole.

"I'd hate to see the hard work people put into making the (advising) system more people/student-oriented be replaced by an impersonal system taking place through the mail."

Assistant University Editor Alexandra Molire contributed to this story. The University Editor can be reached at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

### WEATHER

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Weather Policy, which states that the University is open under a normal schedule.

In Wake County, N.C. Highway Patrolman Darby Guy said conditions were icy, but officials did not expect to have to close Interstate 40 because of ice Sunday night.

I-40 was closed for part of the day Tuesday, when 2 feet of snow fell in the area.

Guy said the highway patrol had called in extra officers to cope with the icy conditions.

"We have all available personnel out now, so that if stuff gets bad, we will be able to handle it," Guy said.

Roads in the western two-thirds of the state were considered hazardous because of the slick wintry mix. With some stores closed and church services canceled due to the precipitation — and last week's record snowstorm still icing

secondary roads — it was hard to find many good reasons to drive.

"I think people are realizing that they shouldn't be on the roads if they don't know how to drive in it," said Penny Roark, a dispatcher in Watauga County, where snow fell at midday. The sheriff's office had responded to only two wrecks by noon Sunday. "It's not been too bad. It's Sunday, people are staying at home."

There was widespread ice accumulation across central North Carolina from Anson and Richmond counties north through the Triad and along the Virginia border.

Further south and east in the Triangle, a light glaze that had covered the region Sunday morning had melted and washed off after hours of steady rain.

Officials warned that the melted ice was likely to freeze again Sunday night as temperatures dropped into the '20s.

Slick conditions were expected to plague rush-hour drivers Monday morning.



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