

WHITE HOUSE COUNSEL

NOMINEE: Gregory Bestor Craig

Born: Norfolk, Va., March 4, 1945

Family: Wife, Derry Noyes, and five children.

Occupation: Partner in the Washington, D.C., law firm Williams & Connelly

Education: A.B. Harvard College, J.D. Yale Law School

Senate Work: Senior Advisor on Defense, Foreign Policy and National Security to Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) for 1984-1988

Clinton White House: Director of Policy Planning, State Department, 1997-1998; special coordinator to monitor China's suppression of Tibetan culture and religion, 1998; Assistant to the President and Special Counsel 1998-1999 (impeachment team "quarterback")

Famous Clients: John J. Kearney (FBI agent accused of illegal wiretapping during the investigation of the Weathermen terrorists), 1977; Richard Helms (CIA Director accused of perjury before the Senate concerning General Pinochet's 1973 coup in Chile), 1977 (with Edward Bennett Williams); John Hinckley, Jr. (attempted murder of President Reagan), 1981; Sen. Edward Kennedy (testimony relating to the rape trial of his nephew, William Kennedy Smith), 1991; Juan Miguel Gonzalez (custody battle over his asylum-seeking son, Elian), 1998; Kofi Annan (Volcker Committee investigations over Oil-for-Food), 2004; Gonzálo Sánchez de Lozada (former leftist President of Bolivia, accused of involvement in the killing of 67 further left-wing protestors in 2003), 2008.

Testimony: "He has the ability to look at issues from a different perspective and he's very pragmatic and very smart." – Madeleine Albright

"There's no one I'd rather be with in a crisis. He's just wonderful and very comforting, no matter how tough the problems you're dealing with. He never kind of loses it. He's so rational, says what he has to say very clearly, and he's always on your side." - Ethel Kennedy

Nicaraguan Communism

While serving as Senator Ted Kennedy's Senior Advisor, Craig orchestrated hearings about alleged human rights abuses by the American-backed Nicaraguan rebels, the Contras. During these hearings he brought a number of communist Sandinista sympathizers to testify before Congress. Their politically motivated accounts of the situation in Nicaragua brought significant bad press to the freedom fighters, thus complicating stated administration policy on Nicaragua. Following the hearing, however, after having been criticized in *The New Republic* for aiding communists, Craig expressed regret, insisting that he did not realize how biased his witnesses were. He subsequently traveled to Nicaragua himself and criticized the manifest human rights abuses of the Sandinista government.

(Source :

<http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=NzFkNWQxODIyNmNjNjI5ZmZhZDU1NTdhNjg5Y2QwZmM=>)

Elían González

While technically not a government employee at the time—having returned to his partnership at Williams & Connelly—Craig played a decidedly active role in the entire Elían González affair, ostensibly representing his father, Juan, who was under the control of Fidel Castro and his aides. From an [article in *National Review*](#):

Accounts of pre-raid negotiations between Elían's Miami relatives and the Justice Department suggest that Reno wasn't trying to bring peace to the warring González family so much as taking orders straight from Craig. It appears that the Miami Gonzálezes had agreed to transfer custody of Elían to his father, as long as they could live with the boy and his father in an environment free of U.S. and Cuban officials. These negotiations dragged on through Good Friday and into the next morning, with Craig reviewing documents in his office past 2:00 A.M. - and ultimately vetoing the proposed settlement.

Craig had been pushing the government to take Elían from his relatives “immediately” for some time prior to the raid. For his efforts Craig was [paid](#) \$100,000 through a “voluntary fund” set up by the United Methodist Board of Church and Society and administered by the National Council of Churches.

(Sources:

<http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=NzFkNWQxODIyNmNjNjI5ZmZhZDU1NTdhNjg5Y2QwZmM=>
http://www.newsmax.com/headlines/craig_cuban_americans/2008/11/20/153605.html)

Clinton Impeachment

Part of why Craig’s time at State was unremarkable was his short tenure, since he had to leave that position to head Bill Clinton’s impeachment defense team. It is worth noting that Craig was originally cool to the idea. [The Washington Post](#) reported at the time:

"I hope you won't think it amiss if I tell you I'm not enthusiastic," [Craig] recalls telling John Podesta, then deputy White House chief of staff, when Podesta asked him in early September to consider leading Clinton's defense team in the impeachment inquiry. "John said, 'Well, just think about it.' So I kept thinking about it -- and my enthusiasm didn't grow."

Even after meeting with Clinton, Craig was not sold on the idea:

"[Clinton] was in great pain," Craig recalls. "He was, I think, profoundly troubled at his own failures, at his own shortcomings, and really at a loss about what to do, how to handle it. And I told him he really needed to talk about it. And he asked for my help. And I said I've got to talk to my wife."

Nevertheless, Craig did take the job, and by all accounts performed competently.

(Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/clinton/stories/craig111998.htm>)