

Let today mark the beginning of a determined effort on the part of all of us to work in good faith across party lines. I have shown my good faith, and in so doing I have taken the risk that all people take when they talk to people who have opposed them.

Soon the Congress will have a chance to show the risk was worth it. And once they pass the

crime bill, the way will be clear for us to attack other problems together, across party lines, as the American people want us to do and as we should.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on Cuba

August 20, 1994

Over the past 2 weeks, the Government of Cuba has taken actions to provoke a mass exodus to the United States. These actions have placed thousands of Cuban citizens at risk in small boats and rafts and have had a direct impact on our national interest.

I want to thank the Cuban-American community for their courageous restraint in not taking their own boats to Cuba to fuel the exodus and thank the officials of Florida, Governor Chiles, the congressional delegation, the people from Dade County, and others, who have worked so closely with us.

Yesterday I announced steps to counter Castro's efforts to export his problems by provoking an exodus. Today I'm announcing additional actions consistent with the Cuban Democracy Act to limit the ability of the Cuban Government to accumulate foreign exchange and to enable us to expand the flow of information to the Cuban people.

Specifically, cash remittances to Cuba will no longer be permitted. Family gift packages will be limited to medicine, food, and strictly humanitarian items and transfer of funds for humanitarian purposes will require specific authorization of the Treasury Department. Second, the only charter flights permitted between Miami and Havana will be those clearly designed to accommodate legal immigrants and travel consistent with the purposes of the Cuban Democracy Act. Third, the United States will use all appropriate means to increase and amplify its international broadcasts to Cuba.

The solution to Cuba's many problems is not an uncontrolled exodus; it is freedom and democracy for Cuba.

The United States will continue to bring before the United Nations and other international organizations evidence of human rights abuses, such as the sinking of the tugboat *13th of March*. Meanwhile we will pursue this course with vigor and determination.

Remarks on Anticrime Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

August 21, 1994

The President. The vote in the House of Representatives tonight is a great victory for all law-abiding Americans. It's also a victory for all Americans who have longed to change the way Government works here in our Nation's Capital, who have wanted us for a long time to go beyond labels and partisan divisions and false choices to commonsense solutions to our most profound national challenges.

For 6 long years, under two previous Presidents, our families were under siege; violence on our streets increased. Washington talked a lot about crime during these years but did not act.

Well, tonight Democrats and Republicans joined together, and they acted. They reached across party lines to pass the toughest and smartest crime bill in the history of the United

States. The House moved beyond politics as usual to assume responsibility for protecting our citizens and for punishing those who prey on them and for giving our children a better future.

I am very grateful for the cooperation in this effort of several Members of the House in the Republican Party who worked hard with the Democrats in the House and with our administration to make improvements in this bill over the last few days. This is the way Washington ought to work, and I hope it will work this way in the future.

Let me remind you: This crime bill will put 100,000 police officers on our streets. It will keep repeat violent criminals off our streets with longer sentences and with the "three strikes and you're out" law and with funds to build prisons to hold those criminals. It will prohibit juveniles from owning handguns and ban deadly assault weapons and provide prevention funds to our local communities to give our children something to say yes to and to give people the opportunity to teach our children who need it right from wrong.

And the entire crime bill was fully paid for—and I want to emphasize this again—this major attack on crime is fully paid for not with new taxes, not by taking money away from current expenditures but by reducing the Federal Government to its lowest level in 30 years, by over 270,000, a major focus of our reinventing Government efforts. And all that money will be taken from the Federal budget and given to local communities to empower them to keep the American people safer.

Still, in spite of the great strengths of this bill, many of the same forces that prevented a crime bill from passing for 6 years were also present here, especially over the assault weapons issue. We received great pressure after the crime bill stalled in the House to simply remove the assault weapons ban. But we held firm, though the opposition was intense and the outcome was uncertain. We held firm because we owed it to the brave men and women in police uniforms who go out and risk their lives for the rest of us every day, and we owed it to the law-abiding citizens of this country. We must never walk away from our fundamental responsibilities in this area.

Let me remind you now that this fight is far from over. We now move to the Senate, which must pass the bill this week. But I hope that the Senators watched this debate, and I

hope they watched the events of the last few days. And I hope they watched the Republicans and the Democrats working together for the safety of the people of the United States. After all, as I said the other day, this must not be a Democratic crime bill or a Republican crime bill; this crime bill must belong to the American people. And I urge the Senate to pass it without delay.

Q. Mr. President, as you know, there are many opponents in the Senate who are already threatening a filibuster. Do you believe there are 60 Senators who will vote in favor of this package?

The President. Well, I would remind you that there were over 90 Senators who voted for a crime bill that was about this expensive, cost about this amount of money. I have given them a way to pay for it without new taxes and without taking away from other Government expenditures. The crime bill the Senate passed the first time had the assault weapons ban in it. It had prevention funds in it. It had tougher punishment in it. So, since this bill is essentially what they passed before—because the Senate also passed 100,000 police officers—those who change their vote will have to explain it and will bear the burden of doing so.

We've seen enough politics on this crime bill. The time has come to pass it. And yes, I believe that when the time comes there will be 60 votes to pass a crime bill.

Q. Mr. President, you said you hope this vote changes the way Washington works. Will you change the way you work and tone down your partisan rhetoric and reach more quickly out to the Republicans?

The President. Well, Mr. Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press], I disagree with you. I have always sought first on every major bill to reach out to the Republicans. And the minute it became obvious that we had a chance to do so here, I did it.

I do want to say that that group which worked so closely with the administration and with some of the Democrats who were working on this bill proceeded in good faith. I appreciate what they did. I know they, too, were under partisan pressure on their side not to do it.

But as long as we can have a working bipartisan majority to get something good done for America, I'm going to be there leading the charge. And I'm hopeful that this represents a change in attitudes across the board. It's what

I had hoped to bring to Washington when I came here. And I think it's what the American people want us to do.

Health Care Reform

Q. What lessons have you learned from this exchange on the crime bill that you think might be useful in going forward with health care reform?

The President. That's hard to say—

Q. Specifically on the matter of the mainstream version now in the Senate, is that something you would support?

The President. The issue—but the issue in every case is, are the people involved willing to look at what actually will work?

What happened to us here in this crime bill in the last couple of days is that we even had people meeting with us who voted against the assault weapons ban. We had people meeting with us who thought that the bill was too costly but that there did need to be some money put into prevention to give these kids a better future. And the discussion was unfailingly about what was reasonable, what was practical, and what would work. What gets Washington all jammed up is when ideology and labels overtake what is the clear reality of a circumstance.

And I think that that would be possible in the health care debate. But everybody would have to be willing to sort of leave their preconceived positions at the door, at least be pre-

pared to moderate them some in order to achieve the goal that we all say we want. Everybody says we want two things, to keep the health care system we have but (a) achieve coverage for all Americans and (b) do it in ways that control costs in the years to come. The issue is, will we really look at that? And I hope we will. I am very hopeful.

All I can tell you is, I'm going to bend over backwards, even though I am not a Member of the Congress; I do not control the procedures in the Congress. I think the fact that this procedure worked well should auger well for the future. And I hope people in both parties will at least seek this opportunity on major pieces of legislation.

Thank you.

Q. Sounds like you support the mainstream proposal in the Senate.

The President. That's not what I said. I don't know what it is. I haven't had a chance to study it.

President's Vacation

Q. Will you get your birthday wish and go on vacation?

The President. I hope so. I don't know yet. I missed my other one by one stroke yesterday. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:16 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bosnia-Herzegovina

August 22, 1994

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I last reported to the Congress on April 12 on our support for the United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) efforts to achieve peace and security in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I am informing you today of recent developments in these efforts, including the use of United States combat aircraft on August 5 to attack Bosnian Serb heavy weapons in the Sarajevo heavy weapons exclusion zone.

Since the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 713 on September 25, 1991, the United Nations has actively sought solutions to the humanitarian and ethnic crisis in the

former Yugoslavia. Under United Nations Security Council Resolution 824 (May 6, 1993), certain parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina have been established as safe areas. Sarajevo is specifically designated a safe area that should be "free from armed attacks and from any other hostile act."

A mortar attack on Sarajevo on February 4, 1994, caused numerous civilian casualties, including some 68 deaths. The United Nations Secretary General thereafter requested NATO to authorize, at his request, air operations against artillery or mortar positions determined by the United Nations Protection Forces