

NOTE: The message was sent to Gen. George Joulwan, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. European Command. An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for Officers Hired Under Community Oriented Policing Grants

June 8, 1995

Thank you, Attorney General Reno, for your outstanding work. Thank you, Mayor Rendell, Senator Biden, Senator Kennedy, Senator Kerry, Congressman Foglietta, ladies and gentlemen from all across our country who are here today.

These 263 new police officers are living proof that our crime bill will help to make your communities safer and help to make America safer. I want to thank the Attorney General for the work she has done to cut through the redtape and the bureaucracy to turn the crime bill into a reality. The Congress passed it, and I did push hard for it. But in no small measure because of the Attorney General and the dedicated people at the Justice Department, we have already awarded almost 17,000 new police officers to over half the police departments in the United States. We are under budget and ahead of schedule.

And most important, I want to thank all of you who are with us today who are dedicating your lives to law enforcement. I know I speak for all Americans when I say thank you.

I want to take a moment, if I might, to speak about another person to whom we all want to say thank you today, an American hero who risked his life and service to our country. I know all of you and all of our fellow citizens join me in rejoicing at the rescue of Captain Scott O'Grady late last night. We share the relief of his family, his friends, and his loved ones that he is now safe and sound. I can tell you that he's now on a United States aircraft carrier, and we're looking forward to having him back home on American soil. His bravery in the face of great danger and uncertainty is an inspiration to all of us. I can tell you, having followed this almost hour by hour for the last 6 days, when he gets back here and tells the whole story, it will be an astonishing story, indeed. He was well-trained and well-prepared, but he also rose to an extraordinary challenge. I also want to say how very proud I am of the skill

of all of those who took part in the operation to rescue him and those who supported them.

Yesterday evening, when it became clear that Captain O'Grady had been located in general and that a rescue operation was possible and we began to get regular reports and then it became obvious that he could be rescued but that the group could not get in and out before daylight in Bosnia, there was no doubt in the minds of either the commanders or our people in uniform that even though that entailed some increased risk, they had to go and get him out, that he had survived for 6 days, and 6 days was long enough. And they did their job.

And last night, when I talked to Captain O'Grady's parents after 1 o'clock in the morning, they and all of his siblings were full of joy and pride and gratitude. Let me tell you that they proved once again, all these people, that our country has the finest Armed Forces in the world. And we are very, very proud of them and ecstatically happy today.

I want to say to all of you here in uniform, you, too, are our country's heroes. Each and every one of you will make our streets a little safer, at more risk to yourselves. There is nothing more effective in the fight against crime than more police officers on the beat. This is not a partisan issue. This is an issue on which all Americans can be on the solution side.

We know that we owe it to our children to give them back the freedom to walk to school in safety. I have said this before, and I want to say it one more time: I intend to keep my promise to the American people to put 100,000 more of you on the streets. And I will fight and veto, if necessary, any attempt to stop us until there are 100,000 of you out there protecting the American people.

We need more police on the street. We need to get our children and our assault weapons off the streets. Our neighborhoods are not a place for military assault weapons, violent crimi-

nals, or gangs. In recent months, we have seen all too clearly that keeping our country safe and secure requires new efforts by both our Government and our people.

The crime bill provides law enforcement the tools they ask for. After the tragedy in Oklahoma City and what we endured in the World Trade Center, law enforcement needs additional tools to crack down on terrorists wherever they may come from, from within or beyond our borders.

I am very pleased that last night the Senate passed my antiterrorism legislation. I thank Senator Dole and the Republicans who voted for it. I thank Senator Daschle and the Democrats who voted for it. I thank them for working together. That's what America expects us to do, after all.

Now I want to urge the House of Representatives to act as quickly as possible. Some there have said maybe they ought to slow this up. Well, I assure you that the people who work in terrorism operate on their own timetable, and they will not pause for an extended debate in the United States Congress. So let this bill be reviewed. Let it be examined. That is the job of the legislative body. But let us act quickly. The safety and security of our people is not now and must never become a partisan issue.

Now, let me say one other thing. The budget passed in the House of Representatives, as distinct from the one passed in the Senate, reduces the crime bill by about \$5 billion. We do need to cut spending further. We can move toward a balanced budget. But I don't think that is a good idea.

The crime bill was carefully balanced. It was worked on for 6 years. Senator Biden gave a major portion of his entire life's energy to it. And it was calibrated to fight crime in several ways: It had more police, more punishment, more prisons, and more prevention. And it had all those elements because the law enforcement community told us that we need to have those elements. I believe as strongly as I can say that we can continue to reduce the deficit, we can balance the budget without undermining the crime bill. And that is exactly what we ought to do.

In the next few months, as we get into this budget debate and we argue about what to cut and where to spend, how soon we need to balance the budget, and what other objectives we need to pursue, I want to tell you that underneath all this there will be a huge debate that

you will see played out in a lot of ways. And it's a debate that I strongly believe is a false one. Those who argue that we can cut anything except national defense, anything else at all to balance the budget as quickly as possible, basically believe that most of the problems of this country are cultural in nature, that if people would simply behave themselves and take responsibility for their own lives and tend to their families and show up for work everyday, we wouldn't have the problems we've got, and therefore it is not necessary to make these investments.

Others will argue that the first responsibility of Government is law and order, that another responsibility of our Government in this time, with this global economy just beating the living daylights out of working Americans so that they never get a pay raise even though they work harder—there is a responsibility to help people make more of their own lives, to get the education and training they need to compete and win in a global economy.

There are others who will argue that there are people who through no fault of their own, because they're very young children or elderly or disabled, cannot take care of themselves and deserve some support from our Government. And so you'll see this big argument, the cultural side and the economic and political side. I personally believe it's a phony argument.

Now, I know from my own family's experience—I had a brother who was addicted to drugs and who did time because of that—I know that there is no program in the world that can make people do the right thing if they're not prepared to take responsibility for themselves. I am well aware of that. I know that.

But I also know that unless we take responsibility collectively for doing what we can, we will have people killed on the streets that don't need to be killed. We will have young people who lose their futures who don't need to lose them. We will have people whose incomes never get better because we don't invest in them and give them a chance to succeed. We will hurt the elderly and the defenseless because we don't recognize our common responsibilities. We have cultural problems and economic and political challenges in this country, and we should not permit Washington to be divided over what is essentially a phony choice. Keep in mind, often when we talk about cultural problems up here,

we're looking for an excuse not to do our part and assume our responsibility.

So let's say there are both kinds of challenges in America. Let's get everybody on the solution side of dealing with them. And don't you let for a minute anybody try to push you into one camp or another. Life is all about personal responsibility and our actions together as families, communities, and as a nation.

Captain O'Grady triumphed because he was personally responsible, personally able, personally courageous. He also got the finest military training in the world from the United States of America. You will do well as police officers if you are personally dedicated, not to abusing your authority but to using it to the maximum extent to protect people and to stop crimes from occurring and to punishing people when they do commit crimes. But it matters if you're well-trained. It matters if you're well-supported. It matters if you're properly funded.

Do not let America be divided over this debate. We have our responsibilities here in Washington. You have your responsibilities on the streets and in your own homes. If we all do our job, we can move America forward. If we get caught up in a bogus debate about whether our problems are cultural or economic and political, we will never get to the end of the road. They are both, and we must act that way.

Let me just say one thing in closing. The crime rate is going down all over America. In most major cities the crime rate has dropped substantially in the last couple of years. A lot of that is because of able and visionary mayors like the mayors that we honor here today, because of the reforms that have been undertaken in cities, like those that I saw when Mayor Rendell and I walked in his neighborhood streets in 1992 and as I have done since then in the city of Philadelphia.

But let's don't forget one thing: The crime rate, especially random violence among very young people, is still going up, which means that the long-run battle to recover our children and to turn them away from mindless violence and to protect those who are not violent from that is still hanging in the balance.

So I honor you today for your contribution. I tell you that for the next 10 years, you may be involved in the most important national security battle in the United States. And I ask you when you go home to ask every single citizen in your communities to help you win this fight. It is truly the fight for America's future.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:07 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia, PA.

Statement on House Action on Foreign Affairs Legislation *June 8, 1995*

This bill (H.R. 1561) would take us in an isolationist direction at a time when America is ready to lead in the world. I am gratified that argument was persuasive to enough Members of the House to sustain a possible veto.

We are particularly concerned about the vote to lift unilaterally the arms embargo in Bosnia. As we have said, we believe this is counterproductive to our efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement.

Remarks to the Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies *June 8, 1995*

One of these days we're going to have an event where I have to be introduced by the First Lady when we've had one of those other

days. *[Laughter]* Lord only knows what will happen—*[laughter]*—but it will be another adventure.