

Q. So, Mr. President, you're saying that the actual offensive is justified?

The President. I explained that the original Croatian action, which we were told by the Croatian Government they would feel compelled to take, was animated by the Serbian attack on Bihac. But we have asked them to exercise real

restraint because we are very concerned about a wider war.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the 30th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act *August 4, 1995*

This Sunday, August 6, 1995, marks the 30th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, guaranteeing the right to vote to all Americans, regardless of race. Passed by a bipartisan majority in Congress and signed by President Lyndon Johnson after years of struggle, the Voting Rights Act has correctly been recognized as the single most important civil rights law our Nation has ever adopted. It was accomplished through the sacrifice of thousands of Americans of all colors who courageously faced down a terrible injustice.

At the time the Voting Rights Act was enacted, people of color in many parts of the country were denied the right to exercise the most fundamental right of American democracy—the right to vote. African-American voter registration was practically non-existent in many areas due to an organized system of disenfranchisement, often backed by brutal intimidation, designed to fence people out of the political process.

In the 30 years since the enactment of the Voting Rights Act, minority registration rates have soared and thousands of people who once could not get elected simply because of the color of their skin are serving in Congress, State houses, and city halls throughout the country.

More important than those results, however, has been the effect of opening our democracy to all Americans. The Voting Rights Act guarantees that no American need ever again be afraid to register to vote, no American need ever again fear the walk to the polling place, no American need ever again fear that their vote is not wanted or will not count.

In signing the law, President Johnson said, "This act flows from a clear and simple wrong. Its only purpose is to right that wrong . . . The wrong is one which no American, in his heart, can justify. The right is one which no American, true to our principles, can deny."

On this 30th anniversary, my administration reaffirms its commitment to the full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. We must continue to protect the right of every American to fully participate in the electoral process. I challenge Americans of all races and colors to rededicate ourselves to exercising our precious right to vote. Voting is the oxygen of democracy, and millions of Americans have given their last breath to keep that right alive. So, even as we celebrate 30 years of righting a terrible wrong, we must keep working to make sure that 30 years from now, every American over the age of 18 is a voting American.

Statement on Signing the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Legislation

August 4, 1995

On July 27, 1995, I approved H.R. 1944, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Additional Disaster Assistance, for Anti-terrorism

Initiatives, for Assistance in the Recovery from the Tragedy that Occurred at Oklahoma City, and Rescissions Act, 1995. This legislation shows