

juvenile crime. Last May, I submitted to Congress the Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Control Act of 1996. Enacting that bill's tough, new measures is my top anticrime priority.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 11, and it was embargoed for release until October 13.

## Remarks on Departure From Denver *October 13, 1996*

Good morning. I'd like to thank Mayor Webb; Chief Michaud; Sheriff Pat Sullivan from Arapahoe County; the Denver DA, Bill Ritter; Pat Alstrom; Aries Zavaras; the members of the Denver Police Department; and the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office for being here with me today.

Today I sign legislation to crack down on criminals who employ illegal drugs in a sick attempt to facilitate their violent crimes. This law will strengthen penalties against anyone who uses the date rape drug, Rohypnol, in connection with violent crime.

Even though Rohypnol is already illegal to produce or prescribe in the United States, sometimes it is illegally obtained by criminals who use it to incapacitate their intended victims. We must do everything we can to stop it. In March, I ordered the Secretary of the Treasury and the customs department to seize all Rohypnol coming across our borders, and we are succeeding in cutting off the supply. Now we'll have the power to come down hard on those who use the date rape drug in pursuit of their own illegal goals.

This legislation is another example of what we can do in Washington to help law-abiding citizens and local law enforcement officials fight crime in their own communities. Today we have more evidence that this strategy is working. The FBI reports that America's crime rate is at a 10-year low. Here in Denver, overall crime is down 13 percent since 1993. The murder rate and the overall crime rate—violent crime rate—are at their lowest levels in the United States since 1989.

This is good news for Americans. It shows that law-abiding citizens working with our police can take back our streets. It also shows that we can help. After years of Washington finger-pointing and rhetoric over who was to blame for rising crime, we came to Washington and

started out with a different question: What can we all do together to help people in their local communities fight crime and lower the crime and violence rates, put more police on the beat, put tougher penalties on the books, get guns off the street, and steer our young people away from crime and drugs and gangs in the first place?

Our plan is putting 100,000 police officers on our streets. We've already funded nearly half of those since 1994. I understand that all these who are here with Sheriff Sullivan are among those who have come into law enforcement since the crime bill passed with those funds.

We banned deadly assault weapons, but not one hunter in Colorado, Arkansas, or any other State lost his hunting or sporting weapon. Sixty thousand felons, fugitives, and stalkers were stopped from buying a gun because of the Brady bill. We made "three strikes and you're out" the law of the land. We passed the death penalty for drug kingpins and cop killers. In the last month we extended the Brady bill to prevent anyone convicted of beating up a spouse or a child from buying a handgun, and we required drug testing for all parolees and prisoners as a condition of getting Federal prison construction funds.

Today's news shows that we are on the right track, but we have so much more to do. Crime and violence in our country are still too high. Even juvenile crime is starting to go down, but it's still too high. We've taken a special aggressive effort to deal with the problems of domestic violence and violence against women, but there is still too much of it. There is too much killing, too much violence, too much gang-related criminal activity.

We must tackle the violent street gangs that rob too many children of their futures. We must break the vicious cycle of crime and drugs. We have to finish putting those 100,000 police offi-

cers on the street. We should ban cop-killer bullets that are designed for one reason only, to pierce the bulletproof vests that police officers wear and kill them. And we have to work to create an environment for our children to grow up in free of crime, drugs, violence and free from the influences that make them more likely to get involved in those things or less sensitive to violence and crime when they occur.

One of the most remarkable things about the crime statistics—I'd just like to say in passing that I commend all of you—is the percentage of people who are now killed by people who don't know them. Just 20 years ago, about two-thirds of all killings in our country were people who knew their victims, family members, friends, others who had deep, personal feuds. Then in 1990, it had dropped to just a little over half. In these latest crime statistics, 55 percent of all the people who were killed in this country were killed by people who did not know them, who were the victims of crimes, drive-by shootings, random acts of violence. We have got to do what we can to continue to change the environment in which our children grow up as well.

I know we will never eliminate crime completely, but we proved we can turn it around. Four years in a row, the crime rate has dropped. It's now at a 10-year low. If we can bring it down for 4 more years, maybe we will create an America which at least when people come

home from work and turn on the television news, if the leading story is a report of a violent crime, they will be shocked, instead of numb to it as too many are today. That's the kind of America we can build if we work together.

And again, let me close with my heartfelt thanks to the law enforcement officials and the other officials from the city and the State and the county who are here with me today for the work they do to make our streets safe, our homes safe, our schools safe, our businesses safe, and the people they represent all across the United States. We have demonstrated, all of us working together, along with all the citizens who work in these citizens groups around America, that we can lower the crime rate. We need to keep going until we can bear it and feel that we're living in a safe country again.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. on the tarmac at Denver International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Wellington Webb of Denver; David Michaud, Denver chief of police; Pat Alstrom, executive director, Colorado Department of Public Safety; and Aries Zavaras, executive director, Colorado Department of Corrections. H.R. 4137, the Drug-Induced Rape Prevention and Punishment Act of 1996, approved October 13, was assigned Public Law No. 104-305.

## Remarks to the Community in Albuquerque, New Mexico

October 13, 1996

*The President.* Thank you. Hello, New Mexico! Thank you for making me feel so welcome. Well, you know, they asked me back in Washington why I was going to Albuquerque to prepare for my debate, and I said, "Well, we've done an exhaustive amount of research all over America, and Mayor Chavez was holding this balloon event, and there were going to be 800 balloons in the air at the same time. And it seemed to me that that meant that there was more hot air here already than any other place in the country, and a little more wouldn't do any harm." [Laughter] So I thought I should be here.

I want to thank all of you for coming out today in this magnificent crowd, stretching out in all of these directions. I want to thank those who are here who entertained us, the Danita Native American Dancers, the God's Way Community Church African-American Choir, Perla Padilla, the Rio Grande High School Marching Band, the New Mexican Marimba Band, and Francisco LeFebvre who painted the murals in front of the armory. Let's give them all a hand. They were great, and I thank them. [Applause]

I am honored to be here with our candidates today, with John Wertheim, Shirley Baca, Art Trujillo, my good friend Eric Serna. I hope you