

## Statement on the Third Anniversary of the Brady Act February 28, 1997

Today marks the third anniversary of the implementation of the Brady act—one of the most effective public safety measures ever.

The facts speak for themselves. Earlier this week, I announced that during its first 28 months, the Brady act prevented more than 186,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying a handgun. Every month the Brady act blocks an average of 6,600 illegal over-the-counter gun sales, with indicted or convicted felons constituting more than 70 percent of the rejections.

These statistics should end any remaining doubt that might exist. The Brady act is working.

This important public safety measure is the result of the tireless efforts of two courageous Americans, Jim and Sarah Brady. The Bradys have waged a moral and political battle to save lives and to keep handguns out of the hands

of criminals. Their dedication to ending gun violence and making our streets safer is an inspiration to law enforcement and all Americans. Last year, I was deeply honored to bestow upon Jim the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor our Nation can bestow on a citizen.

I look forward to working with the Bradys to pass my anti-gang and youth violence legislation, which will require child safety locks for all handguns and apply the Brady act to anyone who has committed a violent juvenile offense.

NOTE: Public Law 103-159, "To provide for a waiting period before the purchase of a handgun, and for the establishment of a national instant criminal background check system to be contacted by firearms dealers before the transfer of any firearm," approved November 30, 1993, took effect on February 28, 1994.

## Statement on Signing International Population Assistance Program Legislation February 28, 1997

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.J. Res. 36, which approves a Presidential finding related to international population programs. Approval of this joint resolution permits the release on March 1 of funds previously appropriated for international population assistance programs administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In making these funds available without further delay we are assuring that these programs will continue to serve the many millions of women and men whose health and well-being—and ability to plan their own futures—depend on family planning services supported by USAID. Moreover, we are underscoring the indisputable fact that family planning reduces abortion—as best evidenced by significant declines in abortion rates as family planning services are becoming available in Russia and Central and Eastern Europe.

The passage of this joint resolution at the opening of the 105th Congress is particularly

gratifying as it signifies what we can accomplish by working together—Democrats and Republicans. By agreeing to secure the timely release of these funds, we are assuring that the United States will continue to lead the world in providing voluntary family planning assistance. More importantly, we are helping the women of the world to prevent millions of unintended pregnancies, permit the healthy spacing of births, prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, reduce recourse to abortion, and avert deaths from childbirth that often leave infants and their siblings motherless.

It is clear to me—and I am delighted that a strong bipartisan group of legislators in the House and Senate has joined in affirming the view—that family planning is a key element of our comprehensive strategy to improve women's

health and station in life, and to increase child survival rates. By their votes, Members of Congress have shown their concern for the well-being of the poorest families around the globe.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,  
February 28, 1997.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 36, approved February 28, was assigned Public Law No. 105-3.

## Memorandum on Delegation of Responsibility for Defense Acquisition Management

February 28, 1997

*Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget*

*Subject:* Delegation of Responsibility for Submitting a Legislative Proposal Pursuant to Section 809(e) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997

(Public Law 104-201) ("Act") and section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code, I hereby delegate to you the responsibility for submitting a legislative proposal to the Congress as required under section 809(e) of the Act.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

## The President's Radio Address

March 1, 1997

Good morning. Today I want to talk about what we must do to strengthen our effort to keep drugs away from our neighborhoods and out of our children's lives.

First, we must fight drugs before they reach our borders and keep them out of America. This is a battle we must fight together with other nations. Every year the President is legally required to certify whether other nations are doing their part. Yesterday I accepted Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's recommendation to certify Mexico, to certify that Mexico is cooperating with us in this fight.

Mexican President Zedillo is fighting a tough, uphill battle against the drug cartels which corrupt Mexico's law enforcement agencies. But President Zedillo has taken brave action, firing more than 1,200 tainted officials, extraditing criminals for the first time, passing tough laws, arresting his own drug czar for corruption. In the past year, their seizures of marijuana, co-

caine, and heroin are up, drug-related arrests have increased, and eradication efforts have reached record levels.

Make no mistake about it; Mexico has a serious drug problem. But Mexico's leaders recognize that problem, and they have the will to fight it. We must do whatever we can to give them the means to succeed. Stamping out the drug trade is a long-term battle. It won't be won overnight. We will continue to press our Mexican partners to take tough action that will protect all our people from drugs.

Stopping drugs at their source is a critical part of the antidrug strategy I announced earlier this week. My balanced budget pays for the largest antidrug effort ever. Under the leadership of our national drug czar, General Barry McCaffrey, who's here with me at the radio address this morning, this plan will crack down on drug dealers and help parents teach their children just how dangerous drugs are. We must