

July 24 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

Statement on the Shootings at the Capitol

July 24, 1998

Hillary and I were deeply disturbed to hear of the shootings this afternoon at the United States Capitol. Like all Americans, we extend our thoughts and prayers to the families of the slain officers, Jacob Chestnut and John Gibson, as well as to the injured victim and her family. The Capitol is the people's house, a place where

visitors and workers should not have to fear violence. Every American appreciates the bravery of the Capitol Police who prevented further injury through their courageous actions.

NOTE: The statement referred to Angela Dickerson, who was injured during the incident.

Remarks at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, on the Shootings at the Capitol

July 25, 1998

Good morning. The shooting at the United States Capitol yesterday was a moment of savagery at the front door of American civilization. Federal law enforcement agencies and the United States Attorney's Office are working closely with the DC police and the Capitol Police to ensure that justice is pursued.

Meanwhile, I would ask all Americans to reflect for a moment on the human elements of yesterday's tragedy. The Scripture says, "Greater love hath no man than this: that he lay down his life for his friends." Officer Jacob "J.J." Chestnut and Detective John Gibson laid down their lives for their friends, their coworkers, and their fellow citizens, those whom they were sworn to protect. In so doing, they saved many others from exposure to lethal violence.

Every day, a special breed of men and women pin on their badges, put on their uniforms, kiss their families goodbye, knowing full well they may be called on to lay down their lives. This year alone, 79 other law enforcement officers have made the ultimate sacrifice. Every American should be grateful to them for the freedom and the security they guard with their lives, and every American should stand up for them and stand against violence.

Officer Chestnut was a Vietnam veteran, a member of the Capitol Police for 18 years, just months away from retirement. Detective Gibson was a deeply religious man, beloved by his coworkers and, being from Massachusetts, devoted to the Red Sox and the Bruins. Both leave behind loving wives and children, the affection

of neighbors, friends, and coworkers, and the deep gratitude of those who are alive today because of their bravery.

In this one heartless act, there were many acts of heroism: by strangers who shielded children with their bodies, by officers who fanned across the Capitol, by Dr. Bill Frist, a renowned heart surgeon before his election to the Senate from Tennessee, who had just put down his gavel when he rushed to tend the injured. To all these and others who stood for our common humanity, we extend the thanks of our Nation.

To the families of Officer Chestnut and Detective Gibson, nothing we say can bring them back. But all Americans pray that the power of a loving God and the comfort of family and friends will, with time, ease your sorrow and swell your pride for loved ones and the sacrifice they made for their fellow citizens.

To Angela Dickerson, the young woman who was injured in the shooting, we extend our prayers and hope for your speedy recovery.

To every American who has been shaken by this violent act, to the millions of parents who have taken your children through those very same doors, I ask you to think about what our Capitol means. All around the world, that majestic marble building is the symbol of our democracy and the embodiment of our Nation. We must keep it a place where people can freely and proudly walk the halls of their Government. And we must never, ever take for granted the values for which it stands or the price of preserving them.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. at Air Force One, prior to his departure for Norfolk, VA.

The President's Radio Address *July 25, 1998*

Good morning. This year we've seen a disturbing string of weather-related emergencies all around our country, from flash floods in Tennessee to wildfires in Florida to ice storms last winter in New England. This summer record heat and drought are taking a terrible human toll, destroying crops, causing power outages, worst of all, taking lives. Just since June, more than 130 people have died because of the heat.

Certainly, the latest El Nino is partly to blame for the severe weather conditions that have besieged so many communities. But growing evidence suggests that the extreme and erratic weather we're seeing in America and around the world is being intensified by global warming.

Consider this: 1997 was the warmest year on record, and 1998 is on track to break that record. Five of the hottest years in history—the 5 hottest years—have all occurred in the 1990's. Scientists predict that July may be the hottest month since mankind began recording temperatures. The world's leading climate experts predict even more extreme weather unless we reverse this dangerous warming trend.

We're doing everything we can in the short term to help communities cope with this devastating heat wave. This week I released \$100 million in emergency funds to the 11 hottest States. On Monday Agriculture Secretary Glickman and FEMA Director James Lee Witt will travel to Texas and Oklahoma to see what more we can do to help there. Today I'm pleased to announce that the Department of Energy will begin providing new crisis assistance to low-income families, repairing and replacing air-conditioners and fans, installing insulation, and giving advice on the best way to keep homes cool in this extreme heat.

But to meet the long-term challenge of global warming, we must do more. Vice President Gore and I have launched a comprehensive, cost-effective strategy to protect our environment while creating new opportunities for economic growth. I've proposed \$6.3 billion in research and tax

incentives over the next 5 years to encourage the private sector to work with us to improve our energy efficiency, generate clean power, and reduce the greenhouse gases that contribute so much to global warming.

We must all do our part to protect the environment, and as the Nation's largest energy consumer, the Federal Government must lead. At my direction, we're undertaking a multipart initiative to put our own house in order. Today I'm pleased to announce the first four parts of this plan, aimed at increasing the efficiency of Federal buildings.

First, I'm directing Federal agencies to work more closely with private contractors to retrofit Federal buildings and other facilities with the best energy-saving technology, at no cost to taxpayers. Second, we'll replace hundreds of thousands of conventional light bulbs and fixtures with more efficient fluorescents, which will pay back in energy savings nearly 5 times what they cost to install. Third, I'm directing all agencies to work toward bringing their existing buildings up to EPA's Energy Star standard of energy efficiency. And fourth, the Defense Department and six other Federal agencies will adopt "sustainable design" guidelines for all new Federal buildings to reduce their energy use.

Now, together these measures will save taxpayers as much as a billion dollars a year in energy costs. They'll help to jumpstart markets for new technologies, and they'll protect our environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We are facing squarely the problem of global warming, but there are still some in Congress who would rather pretend it doesn't exist. Despite mounting evidence, they would deny the science and ignore the warning signs. Rather than invest in a commonsense strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, they want to cut programs for energy efficiency and renewable energy, programs that long have enjoyed bipartisan support.