AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

their partisanship aside. The American people don't want politics or gimmicks, they want us to do something that will work. Well, this crime bill will work. Next week, it's time for Congress to be tough and smart by passing the crime bill when it comes back into session. I hope you'll do your part by asking your Congressmen and Senators to see that the crime bill becomes law.

Finally, let me say just a brief word about a very tragic situation in the African nation of Rwanda. I'm deeply concerned about the continuing violence following the assassination of the President, the Prime Minister, and other officials as well as some of our United Nations peacekeepers. There are about 250 Americans there. I'm very concerned about their safety, and I want you to know that we're doing all we can to ensure their safety. I ask you to join together this morning in praying for their safety and for a return to peace in Rwanda.

Thanks for your help, and thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters

April 10, 1993

Bosnia

The President. Today, while negotiations were being held on a cease-fire in Bosnia, the Serbs launched a new attack on Gorazde. These attacks have resulted in heavy casualties and have put United Nations personnel there at risk.

UNPROFOR Commander General Rose requested and received authorization from U.N. civilian authorities to receive NATO close air support. Under existing authority and policy, NATO forces promptly responded. U.S. F–16 aircraft under NATO command attacked at least one target identified by UNPROFOR. French aircraft under NATO are now conducting a damage assessment.

We have said we would act if we were requested to do so. We have now done so and we will do so again if we are requested. The Serbs should cease their attacks on Gorazde and should pull back. The talks on cessation of hostilities in Bosnia should resume. We were at quite an important point in these discussions when these attacks interrupted the progress of the discussions. And I very much hope that now the attacks will cease, that the Serbs will pull back, that the talks will resume on cessation of hostilities. I have a great deal of confidence in General Rose's determination. We strongly supported his decision, and I applaud the rapid response of the U.N. civilian authorities.

Q. What about Serb retaliation, sir?

The President. Well, I have no reason to believe there will be any. We were retaliating. We—the United Nations made it absolutely clear that there were U.N. personnel in Gorazde, that an attack on the town would be interpreted as a clear violation of the rules. And it happened anyway. General Rose asked for the air support, and civilian authorities approved it in a prompt fashion, and then we supported it.

Q. After the bombing raid, we had reports that there were antiaircraft missiles fired into the suburbs. Do you know——

The President. I can't—excuse me?

Q. ——at the houses.

The President. I can't confirm that at this time.

Q. Mr. President, did you know about the bombing raid before it took place?

The President. We knew that General Rose had asked for it before it took place, yes. With only—it all happened in fairly rapid succession. There was not a long time delay now between when he asked for the support from the civilian authorities and when they gave it. But we've been keeping on top of this, you know. I—on 2 successive days, Thursday and Friday, I talked with the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and National Security Adviser about this. I was kept informed yesterday, and then we talked again this morning. It became clear to me that General Rose would probably ask. And when he asked I was told, and we were told as soon as Mr. Akashi approved it.

Bosnia and Rwanda

Q. So what do you think is going to happen next, sir? Do you think this is the end of

it, or are you fearful that NATO will have to strike again?

The President. I don't know. I think we have to be firm. We have seen in the past that when we have been firm in support of the United Nations mission, that it has tended to further negotiations. That's all we're trying to do, is to further negotiations.

Let me make one other comment, if I might. As you all know, we've been very concerned about the safety of Americans in Rwanda. As far as we know now, the last of the convoys containing all Americans who wish to leave has either passed into Burundi or is about to pass into Burundi.

And I just want to say a special word of thanks and gratitude on behalf of our entire Nation to our Ambassador, Ambassador Rawson, for the remarkable way in which he has handled himself and in which he went about guaranteeing the security and safety of American citizens during this very difficult situation. There may be more to say about that tomorrow. But for now, I just think we all ought to be grateful to him for the role he played in getting our people out to safety.

Q. Do you think this is a one time only attack in Bosnia? Do you think we'll have to use our air power again there?

The President. I think we have to be prepared to do it. But I don't have any reason to believe one way or the other. I'm not hopeful; I'm not skeptical. I just think that—you know, sometimes the command and control is not very tight there, the communications aren't all that tight. This may have been something that happened that was not authorized by any central authority on the part of the Bosnian Serbs. So I just think this is a clear expression of the will of NATO and the will of the United Nations and the UNPROFOR operation there. And it's a clear call to the Serbs to pull back from Gorazde and resume the negotiations.

Thank you very much.

Legalization of Drugs

Q. Do you have a response to the minister who wants to legalize drugs, Mr. President?

The President. I disagree.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:55 p.m. in the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to U.N. Special Envoy Yasushi Akashi.

Exchange With Reporters on Bosnia

April 11, 1994

Q. What can you tell us about the latest air strikes in Bosnia?

The President. That the latest strikes were a direct response to General Rose's request for close air support, that the continued Serb shelling of Gorazde put the U.N. personnel there in danger, and that the air strikes were conducted in strict accordance of existing U.N. policy.

Q. Can you tell us how many aircraft, what type, and what kinds of targets they hit?

The President. They did hit some targets, and you'll be briefed about the details.

Q. Is the U.N. going to defend the people of Gorazde—however you pronounce?

The President. The United Nations is carrying out its mission there, and when they—they're attempting to reassert Gorazde as a safe area, which it has agreed to do. They're encouraging the Serbs to withdraw from the safe area and to resume negotiations and to stop the shelling. And if they are put at risk in the course of doing that mission, they can ask for NATO close air support. That's what they have done, and we have done our best to provide it.

Q. Only the U.N. personnel is our concern?

The President. The U.N. resolution gives NATO the authority to act. We are acting solely under the existing U.N. resolution which has been approved by the Security Council.

Q. Would it be—setting up an exclusion zone around Gorazde like—in Sarajevo?

The President. Well, what the United Nations wants is for the Serbs to stop the shelling and to withdraw and to resume the negotiations. I don't want to compare it exactly to Sarajevo; there are some tactical and factual differences. But that's what they want, and NATO simply responded to the request for air support in carrying out the U.N. mission.

Q. Did you talk to Mr. Yeltsin about this latest——

The President. No, I talked to him last evening, and he was going to be out of pocket today. So we had quite a long talk last night. And I told him that—I explained that this