

briefs," which is a true statement that speaks to the current facts. [Laughter] Now, at the moment I uttered this answer I could tell there was immediate skepticism among the media and a real desire that I prove the truth right then and there of my brief assertion by making immediate, full disclosure. [Laughter] I did not show my briefs at that time out of an exaggerated and wholly inappropriate sense of my zone of personal privacy—[laughter]—which I drug up here with me from Arkansas. I want you to know tonight that I regret that deeply, and like my wonderful wife, I have been rezoned.

Therefore, I must also acknowledge that for a short time during my youth, I did in fact also wear boxer shorts. It was actually a brief period of time, and this semantic coincidence may have been the source of my confused response on MTV. [Laughter] The number of boxer shorts totaled six pair in all: three white, two striped, one baby blue with a Razorback hog and little red hogs. [Laughter]

Now, I was reminded of this fact, which I had clearly forgotten, while reading a passage about doing the laundry in my mother's book. And I am taking this opportunity to make a full and complete disclosure. I have turned all my underwear over to Mr. Fiske's office—[laughter]—including the receipts from their donation to charity and the tax deductions I took for them in 1962: \$3.38. I'm also making copies of my underwear available to the news media. [Laughter] Now, naturally, since the special prosecutor has all my current underwear, I will need to buy some more. When I do that, I will keep you fully apprised as to the type, size, brand name, national origin, and fiber content. I have no further statement at this time. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:16 p.m. at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to George Condon, president, and Kenneth Walsh, vice president, White House Correspondents' Association; humorist Garrison Keillor; comedians Al Franken and Roseanne Arnold; Steven (Scoop) Cohen, Staff Assistant to Director of Communications; journalist Jack Germond; correspondents Andrea Mitchell, NBC News, Rita Braver, CBS News, and Brit Hume, ABC News; and special counsel Robert Fiske.

Remarks on Bosnia and an Exchange With Reporters

April 25, 1994

The President. Good morning. I'm on my way, as you know, to Fort Myer, to the service, so I can't stay and answer a lot of questions. But I did want to make a brief statement about the situation in Bosnia.

It appears that the pressure brought to bear by NATO and the U.N. has worked and that the cease-fire is holding, that the withdrawal is continuing. We will continue to monitor the situation very closely as the next day unfolds.

I do want to say it's now clearly time to get the diplomatic initiative going again while we maintain our vigilance. But I am pleased by the progress of the last 48 hours.

Q. Have things been worked out with the U.N., Mr. President?

The President. I think so. I think so.

Q. Does that mean no air strikes?

The President. No. Oh, no. I think he was just referring to the situation on Saturday. Yes, I think so.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Memorial Service Honoring Victims of the Iraq Helicopter Tragedy at Fort Myer, Virginia

April 25, 1994

Today in this chapel built for heroes, we come to mourn the lives and to celebrate the lives of those who died on April 14th. To all the families who are here present and the families who are not here, I think it should be clear that in addition to the distinguished leaders of our military, the clergy, and the friends, the spirit of all Americans is in this chapel today. The hearts of all Americans have gone out to these families.

When we joined 3 years ago with Britain and France and Turkey to protect the Kurds of northern Iraq, to shelter them from air attacks, to sustain them with shoes and coats and food and fuel and medicine, the world

took note of something continually special about our great Nation and what drives us.

The lives of the Americans and their 11 compatriots who were lost reflected that spirit, those values, that heart, that hope that brought us to protect the Kurds in the first place. They were literally part of a mission to provide comfort. They have honored us all with their compassion and courage and, ultimately, with their sacrifice.

We know, as has already been said, that those who enter the military understand clearly that they assume great risks, that even though the world has changed, that the specter of the cold war is fading, the way of life we cherish as Americans and our hopes for the rest of the world still depends upon their skills, their sacrifice, their courage, and their clear willingness to undertake those risks.

And yet, I have to say that as President and as an American, when it becomes the job of those of us in positions of responsibility to explain loss to these wonderful families that came about through a terrible accident, the burden of reminding all of us that all who served undertook those risks is still very great.

We must remember not only those who died for their service to their country but for how they were loved. We must, all the rest of us in America, pray for these families: for the husband and the father whose young child will now have to learn about him through photographs and stories, for the family of an ambitious young man who wished to go to college and become an artist, for a distinguished American veteran of more than two decades whose soldiers loved him for his steel and his heart, for the wonderful daughter and sister who lifted those around her with her vigor and promise, or the young pilot who grew up with his heart set on the skies, and for all the others.

Their lives were suddenly taken from their beloved families and from our Nation and our service and their important mission. No one's words can wipe away the grief, the pain, the questions. It is our duty, first, to continue the mission for which they gave their lives; second, to find the answers which they rightfully seek; and third, to pray that together they will find the strength as the days go for-

ward to ease their grief and lean on their faiths.

The Americans we honor today represented the best in our country. In a tragic irony, all who were involved in this accident, including the pilots of the two jets, were there on a common mission, to save the lives of innocent people. We know that just as we are all proud of their ability and their bravery, their readiness for any challenge, their devotion to their families, we all understand that they, like we—none of us are immune from error, from tragic circumstance.

One of the fathers, himself an Air Force colonel, said that he thought his daughter was a hero. Well, they're all heroes. And we owe it to them to honor their lives and their service, to answer the questions of their families but more than anything else, to remember when words fail that we are taught over and over again in the Scriptures, things will always happen that we can never fully understand. And as President Lincoln said, "The Almighty has his own purposes," that the faith which sustains us, according to the Scripture, is the assurance of things hoped for, the convictions of things unseen.

As I look out into the faces of mothers and fathers and wives and sons and daughters and brothers and sisters, I say on behalf of a grateful Nation we honor your sacrifice. And we will do our best to live every day with the memory of your sacrifice. And we pray for you that time will give you the strength and the faith to remember the very best and finest of the lives of your loved ones, to be always grateful for what they did and never cynical, even in the face of this tragedy, for there are things which happen to us all which can never be fully understood. What is clear and beyond any doubt is that they loved their country and they swore an oath including a willingness to give their lives for their country. They did it in a very noble cause.

We share your grief. We honor their lives. We pray for you and for their souls.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:56 a.m. in the Memorial Chapel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Honoring the 1994 Victim Service Award Recipients and an Exchange With Reporters

April 25, 1994

Thank you very much, Attorney General Reno, Secretary Bentsen, ladies and gentlemen. Before I go any further, because they had to introduce other people, I don't know that we appropriately thanked Lieutenant Bean and Steve Sposato for their—just their sheer courage for coming here and telling their stories. And I think we ought to recognize that.

As has already been said, just before we came out to the Rose Garden I was in the Oval Office, proclaiming this week National Crime Victims' Rights Week and, again, recognizing the 11 people who have already stood up and been recognized for what they've done in the cause of victims' rights. I want to wish all of them well and encourage them to continue their important work. I want to assure them that the Justice Department and the Office of Victims' Rights and Aileen Adams, the new Director, we're all going to do everything we can in this regard.

The visit of the victims' rights advocates is especially important here today because, as everyone has already said, we are at a pivotal point in the fight for the crime bill. One of the reasons that I ran for President—I was glad to hear Mr. Sposato say he was a registered Republican—because one of the reasons I ran for President is I couldn't imagine how it seemed to me from a distance every problem in Washington became a subject of partisan dispute, no matter how much it seemed to all of us who lived out there in the hinterland to be a human problem that ought to bring people together, not divide them.

It took 7 years to pass the Brady bill after Jim Brady was nearly killed with President Reagan. It's already beginning to save lives, because the background checks do make a difference. For 5 years the crime bill has been paralyzed and defeated time after time in the 11th hour because of some partisan dispute. Now it appears clearly that gridlock has been broken. The crime bill passed with an overwhelming bipartisan majority in the Senate in its first forum and then another

bill in the House also with a bipartisan majority.

We think we're closing in on a bill that will make our streets, our homes, our schools, our lives safer. Victims' concerns are a centerpiece of the crime bill. They include the development of State registries for convicted child abusers, the expansion of programs to combat violence against women, the imposition of life sentences for three-time repeat violent offenders.

But I also say to you today that we should take this opportunity to end the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction on our streets. People say the President should stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction around the world. Why don't we start with the streets of the United States of America?

I have asked Attorney General Reno, a former prosecutor, and Secretary Bentsen, an ardent hunter who's also in charge of registering the gun dealers of this country—the licensed gun dealers—to spearhead this effort. I have asked our Drug Policy Director, Lee Brown, who just came in and is a former Chief of Police in Atlanta, in Houston, in New York City, to reach out and mobilize the law enforcement support that we need. It's not just Lieutenant Bean, every major law enforcement organization in this country has said we should ban semi-automatic assault weapons. And most importantly, I want to ask the law-abiding citizens of this country to tell Congress that it's okay to vote for this and take these kinds of weapons off our streets.

I know there are those who oppose any effort to ban assault weapons. I've heard all the arguments. There's the camel's-nose-in-the-tent argument: "today the assault weapons, tomorrow my .22." There's the argument that, "Yes, there are a million of these weapons in circulation and 80-some percent of them belong to criminals, but what about the other 10 or 12 percent?" There's the argument that, "Well, maybe it'll save some lives, but all those people will go out and get a revolver and kill somebody."

I hate to be crass about it, ladies and gentlemen, but I'll bet you if Steve could get up here and say again, he would gladly trade his wife's chances for that maniac with a six-