AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

who stay in school, off drugs, and out of trouble. It gives funds to keep schools open after hours. It adds support for boys and girls clubs, for community activities like midnight basketball. It builds better partnerships between our police and our young people.

An investment in a child is not only a contribution to America's future, it's a real stroke in the war against crime. Those on the frontlines of crime, our police officers, have witnessed firsthand the explosion in youth crime and violence, and they know this is true. A coalition representing more than half a million law enforcement officers nationwide has just written to me and said, ''We support the inclusion in the crime bill of substantial funds for prevention programs. They can help make a difference.''

Here at the Robert Taylor Homes on Friday I saw young people wearing T-shirts for peer groups, for adopt-a-grandparent's program, for antidrug programs, for midnight basketball programs. I met adults working in tenant patrols. All these prevention programs are unleashing the grassroots energy of responsible residents who understand that they, too, have a duty to try to do something about crime. They're young, they're old, they're middle-aged; they want to take their streets, their neighborhoods, their communities back. And we owe it to them to support them. We can only do it if we keep the prevention component of the crime bill.

Now is the most crucial time to make sure your Congressmen know you want action on the crime bill. There has been enough talk. We have broken years of gridlock to get the bill through both Houses of Congress. But unless it comes to my desk and I sign it, all this effort will have been for nothing. We can give the families of this country the chance to control their own neighborhoods, to raise their children in safety and security. That's what real freedom requires. We can't give up until we've got it.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:07 p.m. on June 17 at the Robert Taylor Homes community center in Chicago, IL, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 18.

Interview With Katie Couric and Bryant Gumbel on "Today"

June 20, 1994

Q. Forty years ago, Harry Truman, who was staying at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel here in New York City, decided to take a morning stroll down West 49th Street. There, the story goes, he noticed a group of onlookers watching the ''Today'' show through its street-level glass window. He decided to join the crowd, and thus this unusual picture.

Today, minus the stroll, we are pleased to welcome another President to our street-level digs. Mr. President, good morning. Welcome to Studio 1A.

The President. Good morning, Bryant. I wish I were with Harry Truman today, out there on the street, looking in.

North Korea

Q. Well, Katie and I are very grateful that you're allowing us the opportunity to interview you this morning. Thank you for taking the time.

Let's start with North Korea, if we might. Former President Jimmy Carter, just back from the Korean Peninsula and meetings with Kim Il-song, has said that he believes the crisis has been defused and at this point any sanctions would be counterproductive. Do his opinions reflect the views of your administration in any way? And if not, could you detail the extent to which his views and his trip may have changed your approach?

The President. Well, the North Koreans asked President Carter to come as a private citizen. He called me, and we agreed that the trip might be productive, that he would go, he would listen, he would faithfully state the views of our administration and reaffirm that our interest is in seeing that North Korea honor its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its commitment to a nonnuclear Korean Peninsula.

While there, when he notified us about what they were saying, we put out a statement, which he reaffirmed, which simply said that if North Korea wishes to talk and is willing to freeze their nuclear program, that is, not continue reprocessing or refueling while they talk, then that would be a step forward. He says that Kim Il-song made that commit-

ment to him. Now we have to verify that. So that's the question.

We have, surely, something to gain by talking with the North Koreans, by avoiding further steps toward a crisis. But we have to know there's been a change. So we'll be looking to verify that. And that's really the question. This is a question of fact now.

There are some hopeful signs, the willingness to meet between North and South. But the critical question is, are they willing to freeze this nuclear program while we try to work these differences out?

Q. You say there are hopeful signs. Are you prepared to respond with positive signs of your own, or have you reason to believe that Kim Il-song's history suggests there's a wide divergence between what he says and what he does?

The President. Well, I think what we have to do is to look to the present and the future and say we will evaluate words in terms of actions. We have the capacity, if the international inspectors and the equipment are going to be left there, to evaluate whether, in fact, the nuclear program has been frozen. If it's going to be frozen, then clearly that is grounds for talking. But we have to know what the facts are, and we'll be attempting to determine that.

Health Care Reform

Q. Mr. President, moving to matters closer at home now, yesterday on "Meet the Press" Senator Moynihan, chairman of the Finance Committee, said that there was no chance that Congress will pass a health care plan that will give all Americans immediate insurance coverage. If that, in fact, is the case, will you accept a plan that will provide universal coverage somewhere down the road?

The President. Well, Katie, our plan required a phase-in. It's going to take some time for the States and for others who would have to provide the insurance who don't now to phase it in. But I think the important thing is that we should not walk away from this Congress without a commitment to cover everyone. The so-called 91 percent solution, if it's a permanent solution, essentially would guarantee what we have now. The poor would get health care; the wealthy would get health care; the middle class would be at risk of losing it. One in ten Americans would not have any health care all the time, and others would be losing it.

Keep in mind, we now have 3 million more Americans without health insurance than we had 3 years ago. The situation in terms of coverage is getting worse, more and more middle class Americans at risk.

All I want to do is to give the American people what the President and the Congress and the Federal Government employees have. And my proposal would cost small businesses much, much less than the last minimum wage increase that President Bush signed.

Now, I admit that we needed to make some changes in our original proposal. I always said we would. We want it now to be less bureaucratic and less regulatory, and the proposals are. They reflect some changes that we have agreed to. But we have to cover all Americans. And that's the real issue.

Q. So you're saying some of the bills that are being discussed in Senate Finance which will provide insurance coverage for 91 percent, that if those bills, or a bill like that comes to your desk, you'll veto it?

The President. What I'm saying is I don't think it will come to my desk for the simple reason that if you look at what the bill does, the bill that covers 91 percent of Americans, the proposal would cost middle class taxpayers more tax money, essentially subsidize low-income people, and leave middle class workers either without health insurance or at risk of losing it because of all the problems we have in the system today. So I really don't believe it is a solution.

I know that there had been tens of millions of dollars in special interest money spent to convince the American people that our plan is wrong. I know that we needed to make some changes in our plan. But I also know that the right thing for America is to do what every other advanced country has done in guaranteeing middle class working people health care that can't be taken away.

When Harry Truman stopped by the "Today" show 40 years ago and looked in at Dave Garroway—who, by the way, was the first fellow I ever saw that wore a bow tie, so I remember this very well—he knew that. And they beat him to pieces over health care.

And they drove the popularity of his proposal down. And he was never able to pass it. But Harry Truman was right then, and we're right now.

The right thing for America's values, for work, for family, is to provide health care for all Americans. It doesn't have to be done tomorrow. It ought to be phased in over a period of just a few years. But we ought not to walk away without a bill that provides health care to all Americans.

Haiti

Q. Mr. President, let's turn to Haiti, if we could for a moment. It's being reported in this morning's paper that your administration is trying to induce Haiti's three top military leaders to leave Haiti for a comfortable life in exile, perhaps by managing somehow to pay them off. Is that something that's being pursued? And if you can get them to leave Haiti, are you at all interested in bringing them to justice after that?

The President. We have always said, if you go back to the beginning of this administration, that we had no interest in trying to persecute anybody. President Aristide himself agreed on an amnesty proclamation as part of the agreement we had last year. The military leaders broke that agreement. We are still looking at any number of options to try to restore democracy to Haiti so that that troubled country can begin to have some economic growth and the people who have been so oppressed by the military dictators can escape their oppression. So we have a number of options under consideration.

What happens to those who violate the law, I think, depends in part on what the democratic government decides to do. But President Aristide all along has said that he was interested in honoring the original conditions of the Governors Island Agreement. It was the other side which broke them.

Health Care Reform

[*Following a commercial break, it was announced that the President would take questions from persons outside the studio. Then a participant asked if an additional tax would be used to help small businesses pay for health care.*]

The President. Well, we propose to make up that difference in two ways: first of all, by raising the cigarette tax and, secondly, by achieving other savings in Government programs. Then we ask the very biggest businesses in the country, who are going to get a big reduction, many—most of them, from our health care plan because we're going to spread the cost more evenly throughout the country, to pay a small amount of money into a program that will support the subsidies for small business and continuing medical research.

This will work because of the competitive pressures to hold health care costs down if we get everybody in the system. That is, I think that it's hard for most Americans to realize this, but we're already spending about 40 percent more of our income, as a percentage of our income, than any other country on Earth. And yet we're the only country that doesn't require everybody to have some health coverage.

So it seems to me that the simplest way to do it is to just take the system we have, which is an employer-based system that over 80 percent of the Americans are covered by, and just extend it to everybody. But in order to do it, because we have so many small employers, you've got to give them a discount. And I wouldn't do this in this way if I weren't convinced that it would help the economy in the medium term and over the long term. We can't do anything that will run unemployment up. This will balance out the scales, in my judgment, and help more small businesses create jobs.

Keep in mind, most small businesses are giving health insurance now and paying 35 percent or 40 percent more than bigger business and Government. And as a consequence, that undermines their ability to compete. They can't get fair rates. And the proposal we have, I will say again, will cost small business considerably less than the minimum wage increase that President Bush signed a couple of years before I became President.

High School Reunion

[*A participant from Park Ridge, IL, was introduced.*]

The President. That's a great town.

[*The participant, who graduated from high school with Hillary Clinton, asked if their 30th reunion could be held at the White House.*]

The President. That's a decision for her to make. But I'll bet you she would like to welcome you here at the White House. I'm trying to work out an opportunity to welcome my 30th high school reunion class to the White House as well. I think both of us would like that very much. And I will tell her that you asked. I'm sure—I hope she's watching this morning, but I'll tell her. And I'll bet she would love that.

O.J. Simpson

Q. Mr. President, let me close, if I could, with one that isn't a national issue but one I'm sure you have some feelings on. The entire country, as you know, watched the O.J. Simpson drama unfold last week. What are your own personal thoughts about the fall from grace of such an American hero?

The President. Well, it's a genuine tragedy. In some ways it's a story as old as time; in some ways it's a modern story. It's of course the biggest tragedy because two people were killed. Children were robbed of a mother, a family's lost loved ones, and a man widely admired in this country is now caught in the web of a terrible tragedy. But I have to say that after we all watched it in excruciating detail last weekend, the time has now come for the legal process to take its course. I think the less the rest of us say from now on in until the legal process takes its course, the better.

Q. Mr. President, we thank you very much for taking the time to be with us——

The President. Thank you.

Q. ——helping to christen our new studio. We appreciate it and hope you'll come back.

Q. Next time President Clinton, come here to New York and see us.

The President. Oh, I'd like that. I'd like to be looking—I'd like to be on the outside looking in, asking you questions. [*Laughter*]

Q. For a change, I guess, right?

The President. That's right.

NOTE: The interview began at 7:09 a.m. The President spoke via satellite from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the first "Today" show host, Dave Garroway. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Nomination for a United States Court of Appeals Judge

June 20, 1994

The President today nominated David S. Tatel to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

"David Tatel has an extraordinary record of dedication and achievement in the legal profession," the President said today. "He has set an example for lawyers both in the private sector and in public service with his lifelong commitment to protecting and preserving the rights of all Americans."

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Arpad Goncz of Hungary and President Michal Kovac of Slovakia

June 21, 1994

The President. May I first just make an opening comment here. The United States is very honored to have the Hungarian President, Mr. Goncz, and the Slovak President, Mr. Kovac, here. They are on their way to New York to receive a well-deserved award for their common commitment to democracy and reform. They have supported both, steadfastly and with great courage and consistency. And I have personally enjoyed very much the relationship that we have had working together on the Partnership For Peace concept and in many other areas, and I look forward to their progress.

And I congratulate the people of Hungary and the Slovak Republic for their steadfastness, even in the face of great difficulty, and their leaders for their genuine leadership ability. So, it's a great honor for us to have them here in the White House. And we will be talking about the role the United States will be playing with them and the other coun-