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We don't need any more Washington, DC, games like the House of Representatives played last week. Up until that vote, this crime bill was bipartisan all the way, with Republicans and Democrats voting for everything that must be included. Now the Republicans say, well, there's too much money for prevention in this bill. They call it pork. Well, all I know is, all the police officers in this country know we need to give kids something to say yes to. I know that 65 Republicans voted for a bill that had even more prevention funds back in the spring, but only 11 would stand up to the withering pressure of their leadership when the bill came back and was ready to pass just this week.

The American people have to make it clear to Members of Congress from both parties that even if they disagree with a particular measure in this crime bill, the overall bill is the best, the smartest bill we have ever had in this country, and the American people need it. It's time to put politics aside and finish the job. Help our Nation's police officers make our streets safer.

This fight is not over. I am continuing it. I want you to fight with me. Our children, our families, our future deserve no less.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from Camp David, MD.

Statement on the Death of NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner

August 13, 1994

It was with deep sorrow and regret that I learned today of the death of NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner. On behalf of the American people, I convey the United States most heartfelt condolences to Mrs. Woerner and the Woerner family.

As Secretary General of NATO for the past 6 years and as a distinguished German statesman over the two preceding decades, Manfred Woerner's heroic leadership made an enduring contribution to democracy and security in Europe. He was a true and loyal friend of the United States and provided wise counsel to me and other Alliance heads of state and government. Even while he bravely fought his illness, Manfred Woerner worked tirelessly to transform our Alliance to meet the new challenges of the post-cold-war era and to direct its critical involvement in the search for peace in Bosnia. Manfred Woerner's central role in forging NATO's partnership with the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union was a major contribution to our common effort to build an integrated transatlantic community.

I will miss the candor, the friendship, and the good humor that Manfred Woerner displayed to the very end of his life. The transatlantic community has lost one of its finest citizens and leaders.

Remarks at the Full Gospel A.M.E. Zion Church in Temple Hills, Maryland

August 14, 1994

The President. Thank you so much. If you've been listening to the news the last few days, you know that the President has had his annual loss of voice. [*Laughter*] But when I heard the choir today I kind of got my voice back.

First, Pastor and Mrs. Cherry, on behalf of my wife, my daughter, and all of our company here, thank you so much for making us feel at home today. This was a beautiful, wonderful day for us. We've brought some old friends of ours that we've known for many years and several members of our White House staff. Our good friend Congressman Albert Wynn joined us; we're glad to see you. Thank you so much, sir.

I came here today of two minds. Usually, on summer Sundays like this, Hillary and Chelsea and I go up to Camp David, and we go to the beautiful little chapel in the woods there. And instead of being in a vast church, we worship at 9 o'clock on Sunday morning with about 50 people and about six or seven people singing in the choir including the President, who gets to sightread the music when he can talk. [*Laughter*]

I wanted to come here today for two reasons. First of all, because, as it turned out, I needed to hear the sermon. [*Laughter*] Next week, Pastor, I'll try to be a little more like Jehoshaphat. Maybe I won't have to ask

you to face all our enemies all at once. [*Laughter*] The second reason I wanted to be here is that this church to me symbolizes what America should be all about right now. And it also, I believe, came about because of all the things that America should not be about right now. I mean, let me ask you, how is it that a church in 1981 could start with 24 members and in 1994 could have 16,000 members? How could an African-American church, with all of the cliches people say about the black community in America, have 16,000 members and over 40 percent of them be males?

God has worked through this pastor and his wife and his family and all of you. But why did you have to come into being? Because of this great hole that's in our country now. Because of the breakdown of the families and the communities and the loss of the things which hold people together inside and out, not just the spiritual problems but the jobs, too, and the opportunities and the things which make people believe in the future on this Earth.

And in that great vacuum, look what has usually happened, when people lose hope and lose their families and lose their communities and lose their sense of right and wrong, what has so often happened: 70 percent increase in America in 10 years in the number of children being born out of wedlock. And let's get the whole record on, today the fastest growth is among young, white women giving birth out of wedlock. Soon, if we don't do something about it, we'll all be equal—too high. In 10 years, a doubling of the rate of murder among teenage young people—65 people in America get killed every day. While we've been in church, another teenager has been murdered. Every 2 hours a teenager gets murdered in America. And in this great vacuum, you have teen pregnancy and drugs and crime and, worst of all, violence.

I wanted to come here because you are filling that void from the ground up and from the inside out. And I believe that this church could never have come into existence and exploded the way it has if everybody had been in a church, in a family, in a community, in a job and had hope and direction, inside and outside, and structure.

You've filled a vacuum with something good and pure and wonderful. And I thank you for it. It's beyond the reach of any President to do. It is God's work through a religious ministry. But the Bible says that the rest of us have ministries, too.

Do you remember when Martin Luther King said if you're just a streetsweeper, just sweep the streets as if you were Michelangelo, painting the Sistine Chapel. Everybody has a job to do. And today, I don't think we have a bigger job than trying to keep our children alive and rebuild our families and rebuild our communities and to try to communicate some sense of right and wrong and to give our kids something to say yes to as well as something to say no to. It's two sides of the same coin.

And I'll tell you, before I got here, I've been pretty down the last 2 or 3 days because the Congress voted that crime bill down, not because it's the answer to all life's problems, here is the answer to all life's problems, but because this country is literally coming apart at the seams for millions of our young people and because there are too many streets where old folks are afraid to sit and talk and children are afraid to play, because we're not really free anymore and people aren't free to pursue the American dream anymore as long as we feel like we can just tear each other apart, because our police officers go out on the streets where the gangs are better armed than they are, and things are all mixed up now in our country. And so often it seems that petty political things or superficial divisions keep us from doing what in our heart we know is right.

And I have been so troubled at the thought that at least those of us who have been given this authority by you, the President, the Congress—the least we can do is to help you to save the lives of your children. There are children in this church who have been gunned down; I know it. The least we can do is to help you to be protected. The least we can do is to put people on the streets who cannot only catch criminals but prevent crime as good law enforcement officers. The least we can do if people are totally hopeless is to get them out of your hair so they won't be bothering you. And the least we can do is to, yes, give your children more things they

can say yes to, not just things they can say no to.

That's what all that debate was about in the crime bill. It really wasn't about whether if you had written the crime bill or I had or anybody else, it would have been just the way it turned out to be. What is a democracy, after all, but people getting together and putting their different ideas and then arguing it out and having a bunch of votes and a majority rules?

Alexis de Tocqueville said many years ago, this was a good country, and as long as it was a good country it could be a great country. We're around after 218 years because more than half the time more than half the people have been right, and God has permitted us to stay and go and flourish. I believe that. Do you?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Well, that's what this is all about. We don't have a bigger problem than the violence which is eating the heart out of this country and the breakdown of the basic fabric of values that says it is wrong to hurt other people, it is wrong to act in an instant from some momentary advantage in ways that will devastate other people's lives, it is wrong to take this kind of advantage. And we have to find a way out of this that punishes wrongdoers, yes, but that also offers the hand of hope, that rebuilds our people from the grassroots up.

And in a political moment, the Congress walked away from that last week. There are people in my part of the country, good people—they are in their churches today just like we're here—who say, ''We don't break the law, and we go hunting every time they open the season and we don't want any weapons being banned.'' These 19 assault weapons, folks—I had a .22 when I was 12; you don't need an assault weapon to shoot a deer or to kill a quail. If you're that bad a shot, you ought to be doing something else. [*Laughter*] You shouldn't be hunting. But their fears are all welled up in them, and they scare some of their Members of Congress.

Then there are people who represent places where all the children can go to the ballpark, where they've got a place to go swimming in the summertime, where they're in church two or three times a week, and they literally cannot imagine what it is like for some of our children. And so they say, ''Oh, these programs to let these kids play basketball at midnight instead of walk the streets are pork.''

I tell you, folks, I will have to, like the rest of you, answer to God for everything I have done, right or wrong. We all will. I have been a Governor. I have presided over the execution of criminals. I have built prison cells. I believe in punishing wrongdoing. I think when people go out and deliberately hurt each other, somebody ought to do something to them and stop it. I believe that. And that's what this bill does. But I also know that there are countless little children out there, and they could go one way or the other. You know what the best thing about this day to me was? When everybody was asked to come up here, there were all those beautiful young people standing here. They've got a chance now. And we have to give more of them a chance now.

I came here because I needed to hear the sermon. I came here because your church stands for what our country ought to be and where it ought to go. I came here because the Bible says that good Christians are also supposed to be good citizens. And I ask you this whole week to pray for me and pray for the Members of Congress, ask us not to turn away from our ministry.

Our ministry is to do the work of God here on Earth. And that starts with giving our children and our families a place in which at least they can be safe and secure. It starts with standing up against this mindless violence which has torn the hearts out of people who are at this church and nearly every church in the United States. It starts with trying to put families back together. And it is not the province of even any one race. It is increasingly not the province of any region or any economic group. But it savages the poor the worst because that is where the families are most broken.

And I ask you to pray and to speak to your friends and neighbors and to hope somehow we will all find the wisdom and the judgment to come back and do the will of God in our ministries, which is to make you as safe as we possibly can.

Thank you so much for giving us this wonderful day with you. God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. John A. Cherry, pastor of the church, and his wife, Rev. Diana P. Cherry.

Remarks on Signing the Social Security Independence and Program Improvements Act of 1994

August 15, 1994

Thank you very much. Thank you, Senator Moynihan, Chairman Gibbons, Secretary Shalala. To all the distinguished Members of Congress who are here, especially Senators Mitchell and Dole and the Speaker and to one who is not here, Andy Jacobs, who worked so hard on this endeavor, let me thank you all. Let me especially thank Senator Moynihan, who identified the need to reestablish the Social Security Administration as an independent agency 11 years ago. I was sitting here thinking, when I saw him up here so full of pride that this day had finally come to pass, of two things. First of all, about 8 months ago, Senator Moynihan said to me, ''We have a lot of important business to do this year. And we'll have to fight like crazy on all of it. But if you will just come out and say you're for an independent Social Security agency, I think we can do this unanimously. And that would be a very good thing for Congress to do.'' [*Laughter*] And then I was wondering whether, if we waited 11 years we could be unanimous about every issue that comes before us. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Senator Moynihan for his persistence and guidance and all the others who have worked so hard on this legislation.

When Franklin Roosevelt made a speech to the New York legislature in 1931, he said this: ''The success or failure of any government must be measured by the well-being of its citizens.'' That was the goal that moved him 59 years ago yesterday. On that day, in a ceremony in the Cabinet Room, just behind us, he signed the Social Security Act into law. And that is what guides us today.

With an independent Social Security Administration, we are reinventing our Government to streamline our operations so that we can serve the American people better. We are strengthening those things which Social Security ought to do and taking precautions to make sure it does not do things which it ought not to do. It is proving that Government can still work to improve people's lives. And now Social Security, we know, will work even better.

For millions of Americans, that signature 59 years ago transformed old age from a time of fear and want to a period of rest and reward. It empowered many American families as well, freeing them to put their children through college to enrich their own lives, knowing that their parents would not grow old in poverty. Nine years ago, thanks to that effort, for the first time in the history of the United States, the elderly had a lower poverty rate than the rest of the population.

In fighting for Social Security and for so much else, President Roosevelt knew that the American people always would have a personal stake in overcoming the status quo when the need was great enough. That is something we should all remember as we go into the next few weeks, as we delay the August recess, as we struggle to come to grips with the challenges of this age, the challenge of crime, the challenge of health care.

These kinds of changes are difficult, but they always have been. In 1935, even Social Security as we know it nearly died in a congressional committee, as Senators considered stripping away the old-age pension. Congress almost left town with this and other critical work unfinished. But they found the grit to work on through the summer of 1935, when they didn't have as much air-conditioning as we have today. And they accomplished so much in that period now known as the Second Hundred Days. President Roosevelt said then that that session of Congress would be regarded as historic for all time.

What we do here today maintains that historic commitment. If we keep focus on the work we are sent here to do, what we do here today can be but the precursor of things that we also can do to benefit the American people that will be historic for all time.

Now I'd like to ask the folks here to join me as I sign this bill. In the beginning, I will for a letter or two at least, use the pen