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Memorandum on Peacekeeping Operations and Sanctions Against Serbia and Montenegro

August 18, 1994

Presidential Determination No. 94–43

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Transfer of Fiscal Year 1994 Foreign Military Financing Funds to the Peacekeeping Operations Account and Use of Funds for Enforcement of Sanctions Against Serbia and Montenegro

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 610(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (the ''Act''), I hereby determine that it is necessary for the purposes of the Act that $3.812 million of funds made available for section 23 of the Arms Export Control Act for fiscal year 1994 for the cost of direct loans be transferred to, and consolidated with, funds made available under chapter 6 of part II of the Act.

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 614(a)(1) of the Act, I hereby determine that it is important to the security interests of the United States to furnish up to $4.312 million in funds made available under chapter 6 of part II of the Act for assistance for sanctions enforcement against Serbia and Montenegro without regard to any provision of law within the scope of section 614(a)(1), including section 660 of the Act. I hereby authorize the furnishing of such assistance.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Partnership For Peace

August 18, 1994

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with section 514(a) of Public Law 103–236 (22 U.S.C. 1928 note), I am submitting to you this report on implementation of the Partnership for Peace initiative.

The adoption of the Partnership for Peace initiative at the NATO Summit last January marked an historic milestone in the relationship between NATO and the nations of Europe recently emerged from decades of communist domination. The reaction of the new democracies to NATO's opening to the East has been energetic. In the 6 months since the Summit, 22 countries, including Russia, have joined the Partnership. In their enthusiastic response to NATO's invitation, these countries have undertaken to respect existing borders and to settle disputes by peaceful means. Moreover, they will engage in practical cooperation with the armed forces of NATO countries and continue to absorb our culture of democracy, individual freedom, and the rule of law. As the attached report indicates, the Partnership established offices in Brussels and Mons, and a full program of military exercises this fall will serve to demonstrate NATO's commitment to immediate implementation of the Partnership initiative. The first Partnership exercises are scheduled for this September, with Poland the first former Warsaw Pact nation to host an exercise on its territory.

The end of the Cold War presented the United States and our allies with a tremendous opportunity to establish real security in Europe. Through the Partnership, the United States can work toward NATO's expansion to democracies in the East. The Partnership for Peace provides a dynamic instrument for transforming former adversaries into lasting partners and for consolidating, strengthening, and extending peace for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Claiborne Pell, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and Lee H. Hamilton, chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

The President's News Conference

August 19, 1994

Cuban Refugees

The President. Good afternoon. In recent weeks the Castro regime has encouraged Cubans to take to the sea in unsafe vessels to escape their nation's internal problems. In

so doing, it has risked the lives of thousands of Cubans, and several have already died in their efforts to leave.

This action is a cold-blooded attempt to maintain the Castro grip on Cuba and to divert attention from his failed Communist policies. He is trying to export to the United States the political and economic crises he has created in Cuba, in defiance of the democratic tide flowing throughout this region.

Let me be clear: The Cuban Government will not succeed in any attempt to dictate American immigration policy. The United States will do everything within its power to ensure that Cuban lives are saved and that the current outflow of refugees is stopped.

Today, I have ordered that illegal refugees from Cuba will not be allowed to enter the United States. Refugees rescued at sea will be taken to our naval base at Guantanamo, while we explore the possibility of other safe havens within the region. To enforce this policy, I have directed the Coast Guard to continue its expanded effort to stop any boat illegally attempting to bring Cubans to the United States. The United States will detain, investigate, and, if necessary, prosecute Americans who take to the sea to pick up Cubans. Vessels used in such activities will be seized.

I want to compliment the Coast Guard and the Immigration and Naturalization Service for their efforts. And I want to thank Florida's officials, including Governor Chiles and the Florida congressional delegation, for their help in protecting and saving the lives of Cubans who seek to escape the regime.

Crime Legislation

Now I'd like to speak just for a moment about the crime bill. In the last week I have fought hard to put this crime bill back on track. After extensive talks with members of both parties, I have indicated my support for strengthening the provisions that require sexual predators to report to the police and make sure their communities are notified of their presence. And I support cutting overall spending in the bill by 10 percent.

These cuts will ensure that every dollar authorized in the bill will actually be paid for, not with new taxes and not by diverting dollars from other needed programs but, as I have always insisted, with the savings we will gain from reducing the size of the Federal Government by over a quarter of a million people over the next 6 years, to its lowest size in over 30 years, since President Kennedy was here. And all of these historic savings will go back to the American people to make their streets and their homes, their schools safer.

I have insisted that we keep the most profoundly important elements of the crime bill, to keep it tough by putting 100,000 police officers on the street, building more prisons, putting violent criminals away for good, by making "three strikes, you're out" the law of the land, and by other stronger provisions on sentencing. And we're going to keep it smart, with the sensible crime prevention programs that steer our kids away from drugs and gangs and give them things to say yes to.

The crime bill must ban handguns for juveniles and take deadly assault weapons off our streets. Even though we've come under intense pressure from forces that will apparently say anything to take the assault weapons out of the bill, I have refused to do so.

Let's keep in mind what this crime bill is all about. It's about removing fear from our streets, our schools, and our home. Innocent Americans should not have to fear being preyed upon, as so many do today. Innocent children should not have to fear losing their childhoods, as so many do today. We owe it to the American people that do the work and pay the bills in this country to make sure that people who commit crimes get caught, that those who are guilty get convicted, and those who are convicted serve their time. We also owe it to them to do whatever we can to prevent crime in the first place. That's what the police and the prevention programs are all about.

That's why it is so important and why I have worked so hard to make sure that we do not turn this crime issue into yet another Washington partisan issue. This is a grassroots, mainstream, nonpartisan issue, and so it should remain. It must be an American crime bill. We have worked hard on it, and I call upon Congress to pass it without delay.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, on behalf of all the press corps, we want to wish you a happy birthday.

The President. Thank you.

Q. And now——

The President. Well, you could all do a lot to make it happy. [*Laughter*] That is not a guilt trip; feel no pressure. [*Laughter*] Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, in the last 35 years we've had an embargo against Cuba and increased the economic burden on them. I understand that's why the refugees are coming in. What is the problem with taking a few small, albeit brave steps to negotiate a possible movement toward democracy with Cuba? We've dealt with many Communist countries through the last 35 years, and we're dealing with them now.

The President. There aren't many left.

I support the embargo, and I support the Cuban Democracy Act, which was passed in 1992. And I do not believe we should change our policy there.

The fundamental problem is, democracy is sweeping the world; democracy and freedom are sweeping our hemisphere. In the Caribbean alone, and in Central and South America, in all of this region, there are only two countries now not democratically governed with open societies and open economies. The real problem is the stubborn refusal of the Castro regime to have an open democracy and an open economy. And I think the policies we are following will hasten the day when that occurs, and we follow those policies because we believe they are the ones most likely to promote democracy and ultimately prosperity for the people of Cuba.

Q. But that's not true of North Korea or China, and you're dealing with them every day.

The President. I think the circumstances are different, and I think our policy is correct.

Q. Mr. President, recognizing that you're slowing down the process, do people fleeing Cuba still get automatic entry to the United States as political refugees if they're not criminals or ill?

The President. No.

Q. You're ending——

The President. The people leaving Cuba will not be permitted to come to the United States. They will be sent to safe havens.

Q. The people who reach here?

The President. The people who reach here will be apprehended and will be treated like others. They will be—their cases will be reviewed. Those who qualify can stay, and those who don't will not be permitted to. They will be now treated like others who come here.

Brit [Brit Hume, ABC News].

Q. Mr. President, under the law it has always been clear that the Cuban refugees had a certain priority on staying here. The policy, of course, has been that anybody who got here got to stay. What restraints are you operating under in terms of the law in changing this policy? Or are you likely, sir, to be sued over this?

The President. No—let me—I'm glad you asked that question in contradistinction to the one you asked right afterward. The Cuban Adjustment Act will continue to be the law of the land. But we are doing our best within that—we will detain the Cubans who come here now. They will not simply be released into the population at large. And we will review all their cases in light of the applicable law, including the Cuban Adjustment Act.

Q. Do you know how long it will take, how long——

The President. It depends on how many there are, of course. And we don't know.

Andrea [Andrea Mitchell, NBC News].

Q. Can you give us some more details? Are these people going to be taken to Guantanamo? What kind of strain might this place on our naval forces, the Coast Guard? Already we're being told that drug interdiction is being cut back. And can you respond to criticism already from Bob Dole and Newt Gingrich? In particular, Mr. Gingrich said that your new policy is appalling, it's an example of mixed morality, and that he thinks it is illegal under the act.

The President. Well, first, let me answer the factual questions. The refugees, those who are fleeing, will be taken first to Guantanamo where we will seek safe havens for them. That is plainly not illegal under inter-

national law, nor do we believe it is illegal under the Cuban Adjustment Act.

Secondly, as to whether it is immoral, I just would say it is my belief that the American people and that the Cuban-American people and the people of Florida but the people of the entire United States do not want to see another Mariel boatlift. They do not want to see Cuba dictate our immigration policy. They do not want to see Mr. Castro able to export his political and economic problems to the United States.

Now, that is what is plainly being set up. We have gone through that once. We had 120,000 people sent to this country as a deliberate attempt—not because they themselves initially wanted to flee; they were encouraged to flee, they were pushed out; we had jails open; we had mental hospitals open—all in an attempt to export all the problems of Cuba to the United States. We tried it that way once. It was wrong then, and it's wrong now. And I'm not going to let it happen again.

Q. Can you respond to the rest of the question?

The President. Yes, that's my answer to them.

Q. What about the naval forces, the Coast Guard? Are they up to this? Will it affect drug——

The President. I think the Coast Guard is plainly up to it. We may have to have a little more Navy support. I met with the Secretary of Defense this morning; we discussed it at length. He is confident that we can do what we have to do without undermining our fundamental mission.

Crime Legislation

Q. President Clinton, previously you said that the crime bill was something that you supported, that you wanted to sign as it was. Now you're saying you can take 10 percent out of it. Why shouldn't the American people believe that there's still a lot of fat that can come out of it?

The President. First of all, anytime you start a—I've never seen a bill that started new programs that you couldn't cut some and maintain its fundamental integrity. I said that crime bill was a strong and good bill as it was, and it was a strong and good bill.

But one of the things that happened in conference that has, I think, been largely overlooked is that in an attempt to get as much money as possible for police officers and law enforcement and for prisons and for border patrol, funds were appropriated or were authorized in the crime bill that came out of conference in an amount greater than we could provide in the trust fund. Keep in mind, the great beauty of this crime bill is it's the first major program in American history that's being financed entirely by reducing the size of the Federal bureaucracy and taking all the savings from the Federal Government and putting it in a trust fund to help grassroots Americans get better control over their own lives.

The practical impact of what we are doing by cutting 10 percent of this will be to be able to put everything that's left into the trust fund. So, in terms of real dollars, I believe there will be more money actually appropriated and spent for tough law enforcement and for police officers. And I believe that all the fundamental, important things in the prevention strategy will be maintained at a very high level and dramatically higher than now.

The principles of the bill are intact: It's the biggest increase in police in the history of the country; it's the toughest increase in punishment in the history of the country; it's the biggest increase in prevention programs in the history of the country.

I am not a Member of the Congress. They have to work out all the details. If they produced this bill out of the conference, I would have happily supported this, as I did the other one.

Q. Wouldn't you just be getting into politics then, by accepting the original bill?

The President. Now, that's one of those questions designed to spoil your birthday. [*Laughter*] Because it's something else—it's designed to confuse the American people about what really goes on up here.

The President is not a Member of the Congress. The Congress made a decision that they had a bill that they all wanted. They accommodated the interest as best they could. It met all my fundamental criteria: assault weapons ban, ban on handgun ownership by kids, tougher penalties, longer im-

prisonment, more prevention. So does this bill. This bill has the added virtue of being able to be fully funded in the trust fund that we are creating by reducing the Federal Government to its lowest size in 30 years.

And if, in fact—let me just say, Rita [Rita Braver, CBS News], there has been no conference. If in fact, the conference proceeds along the lines that I generally believe it's going on, and it has the added virtue of some strengthening of the language which was put in involving this whole sexual predator issue—so, in that sense, I think it is a fine bill that meets all the criteria, and it doesn't just gut the prevention programs, which I was determined to see not happen.

Yes, Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, Cable News Network].

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, you say that you're not going to allow Fidel Castro to dictate U.S. immigration policy. But hasn't he just done that by forcing you to reverse three decades of a policy? And secondly, what do you say to Cuban-Americans, especially in Florida, who feel betrayed by this change in policy?

The President. Well, I believe that most Cuban-Americans want us to be very firm. The Cuban-Americans that I know, without regard to their party, supported the Cuba Democracy Act, and they remember how awful it was for the United States when the Mariel boatlift occurred. They remembered what it did in this country and the feelings it engendered in this country. And I do not believe they want another Mariel boatlift. And I do not believe we can afford to do that. And so my own view is that most Cuban-Americans will support what we're trying to do and wish us to be firm.

I would remind you that the Attorney General, who is in charge or oversees the INS, who has done a lot of work on this, and who will have a press conference, I think, when I finish to answer some of the details of this policy, was the prosecuting attorney in Dade County. I talked to the Governor last night at some length about this—of Florida.

I think my own feeling is—and I've talked to Cuban-Americans, of course, exhaustively for years now, and we've been in touch with them and with the Florida congressional delegation—I believe this policy will have broad support. I will be surprised if it does not have broad support.

Yes, Cragg [Cragg Hines, Houston Chronicle].

Q. By telling Cubans basically to stay home and at least temporarily to stomach conditions there, does that make it incumbent on you to be more active in seeking to oust Castro?

The President. Well, what we are telling Cubans is that we have a provision for their coming to the United States through in-country processing. And at least as of this date, we have no evidence that the Castro government has done anything to discourage Cubans from coming to the in-country processing, applying for the visas if they're eligible to come here, and getting them. That's what we're saying to them. That is, we do not have any evidence that would justify believing that that process won't work in Cuba as it has in other places. And indeed, the Castro government has encouraged Cubans to go down and apply to come here. But we don't object to that. That's the policy we have everywhere, and that's the policy we should have there.

Q. But doesn't that make it incumbent on you to unilaterally or multinationally press for the ouster of Castro in some way—military, economic, whatever?

The President. The United States had done more than any other country to try to bring an end to the Castro government. We have done it through the Cuban Democracy Act. We have done it through the embargo. We have worked hard, often laboring almost alone to that end. And we will continue to do that by whatever reasonable means are available to us.

Health Care Reform

Q. Mr. President, one of your fellow Democrats in the Senate, Sam Nunn of Georgia, said yesterday that it would be months if not years before a health care reform bill is produced. And the Congressional Budget Office said that a possible moderate compromise didn't cost out. There's a growing feeling in Washington that this health care crusade is hopelessly bogged down in

Congress at this point. What is your view of the situation?

The President. That they should keep working at it; that if we don't move now there's a chance that it won't happen at all. You know, the congressional timetable is often different from the American timetable. I mean it took 7 years to pass the Brady bill and 7 years to pass family leave.

But for 60 years people have acknowledged that not covering all Americans and having no system for dealing with the explosive costs and the inequalities in the health care system were a problem. They have reached a significant crisis stage here, with 5 million more Americans losing their health insurance in the last 5 years alone, with the costs exploding in the last 12 years. And I believe that the time has come to deal with this.

Now, Senator Nunn simply observed what I think is clearly a fact, which is that in the Senate there is unlimited debate and you can have unlimited amendments. But a lot of these issues do need to be worked through.

I think the comments Senator Kennedy and Senator Mitchell made today about the fact that this bipartisan group was at least attempting to work with them, and in the process of so attempting, finding out how hard it is. It's easy to stand on the sideline and lob brick bats at these efforts and quite another thing to produce your own effort. But their comment made me believe that there is still a chance that people will work together and resolve this. So I would say to them, keep working, keep working at it, because if you delay, you may lose it altogether.

Q. Well, at this point, would you take something less than what Mitchell or Gephardt has proposed just to keep the process moving, since as you say if we don't get it now, we probably won't get it.

The President. I think that, for one thing, that's not so easy to do, because as we've also seen from the studies of the Catholic Health Association and others, the so-called "something less" approach often does more harm than good; that when you just try to patchwork this, often you lead to more people without insurance and higher insurance rates.

What I would say to you is, give the process time to unfold. I know for you it's been going on a long time, since we first began to debate this a year and a half ago. I think for the American people, it's almost like the baseball season, the pennant's just begun. I hope we can have the pennant in the other one, too, and the series. But I think we need to let this thing unfold a little more. I wouldn't prejudge it yet.

Ron [Ron Brownstein, Los Angeles Times].

Crime Legislation

Q. Mr. President, back to the crime bill. If the approach you're offering now, the changes you're offering now, does not produce enough votes to pass the bill, will you under any circumstances agree to sever the assault weapon ban for a separate vote in the House and the Senate?

The President. I won't agree to that because I think it's a mistake. And let me say—I don't want to overly comment on it, but let me try to describe what the problem is. The bill has already passed the House. But in the Senate, as you know, we could have 55, 56, 57, 59 votes for that bill in the Senate and it could still be filibustered. And we should not permit that to happen.

I also believe that there is a chance that this whole process in the last few days—we may look back on this in a year or so and think that this was the beginning of an effort, again, in other areas to work in good faith across the party lines. I have shown my good faith. I have taken the risk that all people take when they talk to people who are opposed to them of, well, being asked the questions like Rita asked me. But in this town it won't work if we have American problems unless we try to reach out across party lines. A lot of these issues don't work like that.

So if we can work through this in good faith, my view is that we'll maybe be setting the stage to have more things like NAFTA and the Brady bill and the education bills and then this one where we can work together. So I don't believe we will have to do that, and I am against doing it. I think it would be a real error.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, Fidel Castro has been very high on the list of American demonology because he was a national security threat. I think of the Cuban missile crisis; he would provide a base for the Soviet Union. That's all ended now. Do you foresee a form of government, democratic government, in Havana with free elections that includes Fidel Castro? Or is it a case that Castro must go before there's any normalization?

The President. Well, in any democracy it's up to the people to make their own decisions. The United States does not pick leaders or delete leaders for other countries. We let people make their own decisions.

I don't want to get into that. I think what we need is a movement toward democracy and a free economy.

Legal Defense Fund

Q. Mr. President, when the legal defense fund was set up for you to handle the costs of defending against the litigation, Lloyd Cutler said he was intervening in that as Presidential Counsel because it threatened the Presidency, these tremendous costs. Since then, the fund has decided it cannot legally solicit, leaving no explanation since then of, a, how will the money be raised to pay these bills and, two, in lieu of enough funding to do it, what other options do you have to protect the Presidency from the threat that he was talking about?

The President. I don't know. I don't know the answer to that. I'll just have to let you ask Mr. Cutler that. I'm just trying to stay way from that whole issue of the fund, and I can't answer those questions.

Yes, go ahead, Mike [Mike McKee, CONUS].

Bipartisanship

Q. Mr. President, I hate to ask you one of those questions that might spoil your birthday again, but in light of problems that you have been having up on Capitol Hill, many people are wondering if changing your communication strategy, shuffling your staff might not be really addressing the problem; that perhaps I was wondering if you've thought about this, that as a President elected with 43 percent, you may be trying to do too much too fast. And Democrats on Capitol Hill may be trying to take too much of a partisan advantage of having control of the entire Government and perhaps exceeding your mandate.

The President. Well, first, I don't want the Democrats to take partisan advantage; I just want us to get what's necessary for the country done. I do not believe the country believes that we should sit still up here.

And for all your talk about trouble, let me remind you that every objective survey says that in 1993 this administration got more support from Congress than any administration since World War II except President Eisenhower in 1953, when he had a less ambitious agenda, and President Johnson in 1965, when he had a bigger mandate and more support from the Congress. So I think we're doing quite well with the Congress if you look at it in any kind of historic pattern.

Now, I realize the fights and the conflicts and the delays endure more than the achievements. But we reversed Reaganomics. We passed an economic program that was part of a strategy that has given us 3 years of deficit reduction for the first time since Truman, over 4 million jobs. We have the most advances in trade than we've had in a generation, in the last year and a half. This economic program is working. We broke 7 years of gridlock with the Brady bill. We passed NAFTA, which was deader than a doornail when I became President; we revived it and passed it.

So I believe this Congress is capable of working together, often on a bipartisan basis. And they still have some great opportunities here. They have the crime bill, the campaign finance reform bill, the lobby reform bill, the bill that passed the House last week that has not yet passed the Senate to require the Congress to live under the laws it imposes on the American people, which I think is a very good bill, and of course, the health care challenge.

But I believe what I have to do is to keep trying to change things. Anytime you try to provoke as much change as I have, you're going to have resistance. And you will be criticized. Is it more difficult that I had 43 percent of the vote? Perhaps it is. But I think you can make another argument, which was that 62 percent of the American people voted

for fundamental change in the things that we were doing and in the way Government works.

If anything, I would say that I've been most disappointed, looking back, not so much in my inability to get things done, because once people look at the list it's a very long and impressive list, but I haven't been as successful in changing the way it works, that is, in trying to get the Democrats and Republicans to reach across to each other in good faith and work through these things. That's why I think this crime bill could be an important thing. It could be a way of people in both parties saying, ''We're putting you first for a change, not ourselves.''

Interest Rates

Q. Mr. President, the Federal Reserve raised interest rates again this week. Some Democrats are saying that it could cause an economic slowdown. How many more rate increases will you take before you also criticize the Fed?

The President. Well, when the Federal Reserve raised rates this week, the Chairman, Mr. Greenspan, said that he thought that this would be sufficient for a time. The truth is that our economic strategy has produced more rapid growth than they thought it would and that we thought it would. We are even doing better than we thought we would. We have got over 4 million jobs already in the last year and a half, and we've got rapid growth in the economy, dramatic new investments in the private sector. So they're worried about inflation. When it is apparent to me that the drag on the economy will be more about slowing the economy down than stopping inflation, I will do what I can to influence that policy. But I think my policy of letting them do their job and having me do mine has worked out rather well.

And I would remind you that from the time we announced—let me just go back through a little history here—from the time we announced that we would have a serious assault on the deficit after the election in November, from that day for a very long time thereafter, we had dramatic drops in interest rates which fueled last year's expansion. So I think that we have to recognize that the Fed did respond to the efforts we made and what they're responding to now is a robust and growing economy. Of course, it could be slowed down too much, but we don't have any evidence at this time that that has, in fact, occurred.

Mexico

Q. Mr. President, happy birthday. Next Sunday, Mexico is going to have Presidential elections. Can you give us your assessment? What do you think? What do you expect, and what is going to be the impact in the relations of Mexico and the United States? Do you expect continuity?

The President. I expect the elections to be free, open, and fair. And I expect them to produce a result which will be accepted by the people of Mexico. And I expect the United States to continue its deepening friendship with Mexico. I think that our relationships are growing. I think, in spite of the political changes and the economic difficulties of Mexico in the last 2 years, we have had great success. I think NAFTA clearly was a great success if you look at the economic benefits to the United States and what has happened. So I'm looking forward very optimistically to the future with Mexico.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, on the Middle East, sir, progress continues between Israel and the Palestinians, but there is still violence. But I wondered, sir, if you have an assessment on that. Is there any update on the Syrian front? Have you heard recently from President Asad? And also, has any progress been made in countering worldwide terrorism?

The President. You've asked me a lot of questions there. Let me try to answer them all. I believe we are still on a path of steady progress in the hope of achieving an agreement that resolves the differences between Israel and Syria. Serious problems remain, but I would say significant advances are being made.

With regard to the Palestinian agreement, I think everyone always knew there would be some operational difficulties because the PLO had, to be fair to them, never had been in charge of a country. That is, they had never had to operate a government and to deal with

all the mundane and maybe sometimes even boring day to day problems that, unless they are properly managed, you can't keep a society together. I think we're making some headway there. I don't want to minimize the difficulties, but I do not expect them to be so great as to derail what we're doing.

On the terrorism front, I can tell you that every week, several times a week, I get an update on our efforts. And while, as you could appreciate, I cannot discuss many of them in great detail, I believe that we are making progress. But I believe this is a problem we'll all have to be very vigilant about for years to come.

Trudy [Trudy Feldman, Trans Features].

President's Birthday Wishes

Q. Mr. President, can we turn the subject to your birthday today? What stirs within you as you celebrate another birthday? And if you could have three wishes fulfilled today, what would those three wishes be?

The President. Well, I woke up this morning just grateful to be here. That's what I'm feeling—I mean, grateful to be alive, grateful to have my health, grateful to have my family, grateful to have the chance to serve. And you know, I like the tough fights, so this is an exhilarating period for me. I like the big challenges. I think we're all put on this Earth to try to make a difference.

If I had three wishes, I would wish for the crime bill to pass—[*laughter*]—one; I would wish that I would make more progress on the way we do things around here as well as on the substance, because if we can open our minds and hearts to each other and play a little less politics, we can solve the health care problem, too, and other things. And I would wish that I won't have to give up my whole vacation because I still have dreams of breaking 80 on the golf course before I'm 50. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, I feel that I—you know, this is not an easy job for you either. So since it's my birthday, if we adjourn here, let's go into the dining room, and we can have some cake and whatever else is in there.

Thank you very much. Come on, let's have some cake.

NOTE: The President's 69th news conference began at 1:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Florida Governor Lawton Chiles and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

August 11 [1]

In an afternoon ceremony at the White House, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Erstein Mallet Edwards, St. Kitts and Nevis; Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, Ghana; Roberto Flores Bermudez, Honduras; Sonia Picado, Costa Rica; Snezhana Botusharova, Bulgaria; Pedro Luis Echeverria, Venezuela; Tuleutay Skakovich Suleymenov, Kazakhstan; John Biehl, Chile; and Yuliy Vorontsov, Russian Federation.

August 14

In the morning, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled from Camp David, MD, to Temple Hills, MD, where they attended services at the Full Gospel A.M.E. Zion Church. The President and Hillary Clinton returned to Camp David, MD, in the afternoon.

August 15

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to the White House from Camp David, MD.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals to be members of the National Commission for Employment Policy:

—Clayola Brown;
—Warren Frelund;
—Frank Garrison;
—Edward Shumaker;
—Arthur White.

[1] *This announcement was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.*