

in pursuing this goal. We can never rest until violence against our children is the exception, not the rule; until we are horrified—until we are genuinely surprised when we hear about something bad happening to a child. We can never rest until we have more of our children wearing the colors of school uniforms than the colors of gangs. We cannot rest until that is true.

And please, each and every one of you in your own way, be willing to reach out to your friends and neighbors, and anyone with whom you come in contact across this great State and across our beloved country, to tell people the story of how this works. People are desperately looking for ways to restore integrity and meaning and purpose and direction and success to our schools all across America. You have shown that it can be done. Share your knowledge, share your passion, share your conviction. And remember what I said. Whenever we are defeated, we defeat ourselves. If we are divided, we can't win. But when we're together, America never loses.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:03 a.m. in the courtyard at the Jackie Robinson Academy. In his remarks, he referred to Melissa Machit, student, Charles Evan Hughes Middle School; Mayor Beverly O'Neill of Long Beach; and Bob Ellis, Long Beach police chief.

**Remarks on the Downing of Brothers to the Rescue Airplanes by Cuba and an Exchange With Reporters in Shoreline, Washington**  
February 24, 1996

**The President.** Ladies and gentlemen, I have just been briefed by the National Security Adviser on the shooting down today in broad daylight of two American civilian airplanes by Cuban military aircraft. We are continuing to investigate the circumstances of the incident, including the airplanes' flight plan and the flight route and what, if any, warnings were given.

This afternoon I ordered the following actions: First, I directed the United States Coast Guard units in the area to conduct search and rescue operations. That is now

underway in the waters off Cuba. Second, I have ordered United States military forces in the area to provide support to the search and rescue operations and to ensure that it is fully protected. Third, I have instructed our interest section in Havana to seek an immediate explanation for this incident from the Cuban Government.

I condemn this action in the strongest possible terms. And as events unfold and we know more we will do our best to answer your questions.

I'd like now to ask Mr. McCurry to come up and either now or immediately, I think, when I leave here to do his best to answer whatever other questions you have. Obviously, we will be getting further information throughout the night, and we'll let you know when we have it.

Thank you.

**Q.** Mr. President, the United States does have confirmation on the shoot-down?

**Q.** Do you know where the planes were when they were shot down?

**The President.** We know—I can't say that for sure. I think Mike can answer all the questions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. in the automotive training center at Shoreline Community College.

**Remarks to the Community in Shoreline, Washington**  
February 24, 1996

**The President.** Thank you very much.

**Audience member.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** You know, we've listened to you, now it's my turn. [Applause] Thank you very much.

I want to thank Monica, not only for that introduction, which she did very well, but for her example, which millions of Americans will need to follow in the next few years. Let's give her another hand, she was great. [Applause]

I thank President Oertli and I thank Senator Murray, your former faculty member here and a remarkable public servant who is—yes, you can clap for that, it's all right—[applause]—she's here along with Congressman Dicks and Congressman McDermott.