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Week Ending Friday, October 10, 1997

Statement on Crime Statistics

October 3, 1997

Today the Federal Bureau of Investigation released its final crime statistics for 1996, and the results are good news for all Americans. We are finally—and decisively—tipping the scales of justice in favor of law-abiding Americans. Overall crime is down for the fifth year in a row, with the biggest reductions coming in violent crime (6 percent)—and especially murders (9 percent). Reported rapes, robberies, assaults, and all types of property crimes are down from the previous year. Even the arrest rate for violent juveniles, which had skyrocketed for 7 years, has now gone down for 2 years in a row.

For 5 years, my administration has worked with police, prosecutors, school principals, and community leaders on a tough, smart crime strategy to attack violent crime. Together, we have fought for more police in our communities, fewer guns on our streets, tougher punishment for violent offenders, and better opportunities for our kids. Today's crime statistics show that, armed with these tools, we are moving in the right direction.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 3 but was embargoed for release until 9 a.m., October 4.

The President's Radio Address

October 4, 1997

Good morning. Today I want to talk about our responsibility for raising our children and strengthening our families. Six years ago yesterday, when I announced that I would seek the Presidency, I said that our greatness depends upon our ability to create opportunity for all, get responsibility from all, and build a community of all Americans; and that the role of Government was to give our people the tools and establish the environment that would enable them to build that kind of America. I also said that nothing would ever replace the fundamental role of citizens' responsibility.

That is nowhere more important than when it comes to the family. The family is the cornerstone of our society. It unites us across all our faiths. This week, for example, Jewish parents at Rosh Hashana say a blessing for the family and over their children. The United States Catholic Conference has noted, ''The most important work to help our children is done quietly—in our homes and neighborhoods, in our parishes and community organizations. No government can love a child and no policy can substitute for a family's care, but clearly,'' the Catholic Conference has noted, ''families can be helped or hurt'' by the actions of government.

Here we have tried to help families. From improving our schools to helping parents reconcile the demands of work and childrearing, to expanding access to college and health care, to punishing domestic violence, families have always been at the heart of our concerns. We have worked hard to help parents take responsibility for their children and even to require that as much as we can.

We passed the family leave law to allow parents to take some time off to care for sick children or welcome new babies. We've raised the minimum wage and increased the earned-income tax credit so that Americans who work full time will be able to raise their children out of poverty. We cracked down on deadbeat dads, increasing child support collection by 50 percent. We're building a new system of welfare that promotes work and responsible parenting. And we're doing everything we can to punish domestic violence and to reduce it. And of course, the strong economy we have helped to build has created millions of high-paying jobs, bringing dignity, stability, and opportunity for millions of families.