

I'm asking Congress to move quickly on this. And if it does, I'll cut through the red-tape and put the first 20,000 extra police officers on the street within a year. Americans are weary of picking up the paper and reading about attacks like the one that occurred just this week in Norristown, Pennsylvania, a working-class community outside Philadelphia: A 12-year-old girl shot in the face with a semiautomatic handgun in broad daylight as she was getting off the school bus, surrounded by classmates. The person arrested for the crime was 13 years old.

Americans have the right to know that when their child goes to school, the other children are packing books, not guns. Our legislation bans juvenile ownership of handguns.

We are a country with the greatest freedoms on the face of the Earth. But we must accept that with those freedoms come greater personal responsibilities. And our common responsibility now is to reclaim a part of America where freedoms do not trample on our greater liberties. We can never be free if we live in fear.

This is not a time for partisanship, for politics, or for posturing. It's a time to do what's right by America by passing this crime bill.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:08 p.m. on April 22 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 23.

Remarks at the White House Correspondents Dinner

April 23, 1994

Thank you very much, George. And to you and Ken Walsh, I've had a wonderful evening sitting with you both and looking out at your wonderful families and cheerleaders. I want to congratulate tonight's award recipients and thank you all for another chance to be with you.

I'd like to begin with a couple of serious remarks. It's easy for us, when we fight in Washington, to forget how much we have in common. And sometimes, I think we have to have these dinners where we can laugh at ourselves and at one another to fulfill the admonition of Proverbs that a happy heart

doeth good like medicine, and a broken spirit dryeth the bones. Sometimes I think we forget that. And we can too easily get carried away with our honest differences, doing our honest jobs, so that we lose the fundamental humanity of people who are at odds with us. I have been thinking about this a lot in the last 24 hours as I have reflected on the death of President Nixon and the life that he lived after he left the White House and in particular the rather unusual but, for me, a prized relationship that I enjoyed over these last 15 or 16 months.

The thing that impressed me about him was that he had a tenacious refusal to give up on his own involvement in this country and the world and his hopes for this country and the world. And he continued it right down to the very end, writing me a letter a month to the day before he died about his recent trip to Russia and his analysis of other places in that part of the world.

I say that because I think we should all try to remember, when we are tempted to write off anybody because of our differences with them, that we share a common humanity and we all have the capacity of doing better and doing more.

Tonight in this audience there is a wonderful poet, Maya Angelou, who wrote a wonderful poem for my Inauguration. She wrote profoundly about this subject when she said, "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived and, if faced with courage, need not be lived again."

Tonight I know that our thoughts and prayers are with President Nixon's family. And many of us, each in our own way, have relived as many of his 50 years in public life as we also experienced, some of us in opposition, some of us in support. But it is worth remembering what binds us together as Americans and as people.

Now, having said that, I liked Garrison Keillor a lot better than Al Franken. [*Laughter*] There for a while, I thought he was going to bring Wobegon to me tonight. [*Laughter*]

A couple of weeks ago, the Vice President got a huge response at the Gridiron Club when he was wheeled out in a handtruck. You know, I've learned a lot from Al Gore, and so I had a very different plan for my entrance tonight, but we couldn't find just

the right canoe. [Laughter] I also couldn't figure out whether I wanted to go up this particular creek with or without a paddle. And so, here I am just standing alone.

But I haven't been alone. Over the last few months I've gotten a lot of telegrams from people offering me their advice and best wishes in this very difficult time. I brought a few of them here with me tonight. I thought I would share them with you. Here's one from my pollster, Stan Greenberg: "I don't have a clue what people want from you." [Laughter] "Trust your instincts, but send the check anyway." [Laughter] "Take notes; save them. You can even get even with the press when you're 85," signed Barry Goldwater. Here's one that really touched me: "I support you 100 percent in this so-called Whitewater scandal. Furthermore, I do not believe it has even been conclusively proven that there is, in fact, a White River in Arkansas," signed James Johnston, president, R.J. Reynolds. [Laughter] "Dear Bill, can I list you as a reference?" David Gergen. [Laughter] And here's one I especially prize: "Bill, remember, it's never too late to pull out of the '92 election." Ross Perot. [Laughter]

Now, I've learned something in these last several weeks. One thing I've learned is that I should no longer assign the worst motives to reporters and to news organizations that cover me. I've been wrong about that. I am now convinced there is no deliberate conspiracy among the press corps; you just can't help yourselves. Hunting in packs is a matter of pure instinct to you. [Laughter]

On the other hand, I do want to defend you. You know, some people in the national press corps have been pretty rough, but there is this general feeling that the press has really been tough on me. And I used to think that, but everything is relative. And I started doing some research, and I discovered that, in fact, the opposite may be true. In fact, I've discovered that you've been holding back. I got my hands on some magazine covers that were actually rejected for being too tough. You'll be happy to know you don't have to cover the White House to get leaks; you can actually work here. So I want to show you some of what might have happened to me if the

press had been as mean as I once thought they were.

Scoop, can we show those rejected magazine covers?

Look at this one. This is a cover photo of the First Couple in U.S. News. It says, "1994 Tax Tips." [Laughter] Look, here's a Consumer Reports that almost made it to the newsstand; it's a picture of me and Bobby Ray Inman. It says, "Rating the Clinton Nominations"—in Consumer Reports. [Laughter] That's the Whitewater edition of Field and Stream with Hillary and me. [Laughter] Motor Trend has also applied for a White House press pass. Look at there. That's me and my Mustang. It says, "Recall?" on it. Then, Gourmet Magazine did this cover of the White House chef. You can't see it, but it's Ronald McDonald there. One magazine almost ran this profile of my most senior advisers; that's Modern Maturity with Lloyd Cutler, Lloyd Bentsen, and Warren Christopher sitting on a bench together. [Laughter] Sports Illustrated came within an inch of making this the swimsuit cover. [Laughter] And as soon as I put my clothes back on, Runner's World smelled a scandal. [Laughter]

Now, this is not a new phenomenon. We found this old magazine lying around from the Reagan administration. This is the National Review, 1984, with David Gergen, Man of the Year. And this year, Mother Jones named David Gergen the Man of the Year. I'm bitter because some people have gotten good magazine covers. I got this Land's End catalog in the mail with Jim Leach as the new sweater boy. [Laughter]

Now, I want to try to illustrate to you—I know that you think these are all made up. I'm going to show you some actual covers to show you how much better the press has been to me. Here's an interesting comparison. Let me show you a Time magazine cover that actually ran during the campaign. God, I hated that. [Laughter] But look what their first choice for a cover was. The headline says, "We just don't like this guy." [Laughter] And you remember this Time magazine cover from last year? I abhorred that until I saw the one they thought of running. [Laughter] That's me as a sumo wrestler there, "The Incredible Growing President."

And I know all of you remember this cover, which will go down in history for journalistic integrity, the “deepwater cover” of Time that managed to capture George Stephanopoulos’ joy about being on the cover of Time magazine. Everybody now knows that cover was not about Whitewater, it was an old and cropped photo. But you cannot be mad at Time; they actually cut me a lot of slack on this. I don’t imagine anybody here’s actually seen the original photo. I’m grateful for Time that they never showed it, but I think we’ll show it to you. That’s Roseanne Arnold still in the picture. [Laughter] Now, it’s not quite what you think, George and I were not proposing to her, but Time didn’t believe it.

The point is, all these rejected covers show not meanness but courageous restraint and collective good judgment on the part of the Washington press corps. And I just thought the American people deserved to know that about you.

And as somebody who’s been working to overcome my own image problems, I thought I ought to help you do a little of that; so tonight I extend the hand of peace and offer you my advice on how the press might work to improve its image. Now, you might ask, why do I want to help you? Why do I want to help you? [Laughter] Message: I care. [Laughter] Anyway, here’s my advice: Get booked on Larry King; go around the President and speak directly to the American people; pray that Columbia Journalism School will get a basketball team that will go to the Final Four. [Laughter] Learn to play a reed instrument; do not borrow money; do not lend money; do not make money—[laughter]—and for goodness sakes, do not lose money. [Laughter] As a matter of fact, the only safe thing is the barter system. Next advice is, never get too busy for a good haircut. [Laughter] And finally, in consultation with the Vice President, since all of you are going through the White House trash anyway, please separate glass, paper, and plastic. [Laughter]

Be consistent, for goodness sakes; you’re always telling me that. I mean, the Wall Street Journal criticizing my wife for making money trading commodities is like Field and Stream criticizing somebody for catching fish. [Laughter]

And you should be more positive. I mean, instead of characterizing me as “beleaguered,” characterize me as “somber” and “courageous” and “Lincolnesque.” And remember, if you really want a friend in this town, get yourself a dog. I wish somebody had told me that before I showed up with a neutered cat. [Laughter]

I’m giving you this good advice because, as you’ve heard me so many times say, we are all in this together. I mean, the hits the American people have taken are nothing compared to the hits you’ve taken. And you’ve got a tough job ahead trying to restore your good image now.

So besides my advice, I’ve come up with a couple of things I could do to help you. I’m going to stop jogging with Congressmen and spend more time with the people who really matter in this town: you. [Laughter] Beginning tomorrow morning at 6 a.m., Jack Germond and I are going on a 3-mile run. [Laughter] I am going to start delivering my speeches exactly as written. That way you’ll never have to sit and listen to another one. [Laughter] I promise never again to get mad when Andrea Mitchell or Rita Braver or Brit Hume refer to me as the “current” President. [Laughter] And even if I do lose my patience once in a while, you don’t have anything to worry about with this White House. Ask Jay Stephens; we don’t get even, we just get mad. [Laughter]

I also know that I need to help you get through the slow news days; I know how tough they are. So we’re going to give you, just on background, details of potential scandals that you can use at your leisure: overdue library books from law school, the seeds of grapes I’ve eaten in supermarkets, the discrepancy between my actual weight and the weight on my driver’s license, up until now the absolutely secret lab tests done on the Astroturf in my pickup. [Laughter] And there will be a blanket statement to go along with each one saying that I am sorry I didn’t tell you that before.

Now, this is serious—I do want to take an opportunity to come clean on a statement I made earlier this week. In an appearance on MTV, I was asked a question about my undergarments, more specifically, whether I wore boxers or briefs. I answered, “I wear

briefs," which is a true statement that speaks to the current facts. [Laughter] Now, at the moment I uttered this answer I could tell there was immediate skepticism among the media and a real desire that I prove the truth right then and there of my brief assertion by making immediate, full disclosure. [Laughter] I did not show my briefs at that time out of an exaggerated and wholly inappropriate sense of my zone of personal privacy—[laughter]—which I drug up here with me from Arkansas. I want you to know tonight that I regret that deeply, and like my wonderful wife, I have been rezoned.

Therefore, I must also acknowledge that for a short time during my youth, I did in fact also wear boxer shorts. It was actually a brief period of time, and this semantic coincidence may have been the source of my confused response on MTV. [Laughter] The number of boxer shorts totaled six pair in all: three white, two striped, one baby blue with a Razorback hog and little red hogs. [Laughter]

Now, I was reminded of this fact, which I had clearly forgotten, while reading a passage about doing the laundry in my mother's book. And I am taking this opportunity to make a full and complete disclosure. I have turned all my underwear over to Mr. Fiske's office—[laughter]—including the receipts from their donation to charity and the tax deductions I took for them in 1962: \$3.38. I'm also making copies of my underwear available to the news media. [Laughter] Now, naturally, since the special prosecutor has all my current underwear, I will need to buy some more. When I do that, I will keep you fully apprised as to the type, size, brand name, national origin, and fiber content. I have no further statement at this time. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:16 p.m. at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to George Condon, president, and Kenneth Walsh, vice president, White House Correspondents' Association; humorist Garrison Keillor; comedians Al Franken and Roseanne Arnold; Steven (Scoop) Cohen, Staff Assistant to Director of Communications; journalist Jack Germond; correspondents Andrea Mitchell, NBC News, Rita Braver, CBS News, and Brit Hume, ABC News; and special counsel Robert Fiske.

Remarks on Bosnia and an Exchange With Reporters

April 25, 1994

The President. Good morning. I'm on my way, as you know, to Fort Myer, to the service, so I can't stay and answer a lot of questions. But I did want to make a brief statement about the situation in Bosnia.

It appears that the pressure brought to bear by NATO and the U.N. has worked and that the cease-fire is holding, that the withdrawal is continuing. We will continue to monitor the situation very closely as the next day unfolds.

I do want to say it's now clearly time to get the diplomatic initiative going again while we maintain our vigilance. But I am pleased by the progress of the last 48 hours.

Q. Have things been worked out with the U.N., Mr. President?

The President. I think so. I think so.

Q. Does that mean no air strikes?

The President. No. Oh, no. I think he was just referring to the situation on Saturday. Yes, I think so.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Memorial Service Honoring Victims of the Iraq Helicopter Tragedy at Fort Myer, Virginia

April 25, 1994

Today in this chapel built for heroes, we come to mourn the lives and to celebrate the lives of those who died on April 14th. To all the families who are here present and the families who are not here, I think it should be clear that in addition to the distinguished leaders of our military, the clergy, and the friends, the spirit of all Americans is in this chapel today. The hearts of all Americans have gone out to these families.

When we joined 3 years ago with Britain and France and Turkey to protect the Kurds of northern Iraq, to shelter them from air attacks, to sustain them with shoes and coats and food and fuel and medicine, the world