

House. A lot of people said, "This is crazy, don't do it," whatever. I decided that it would be better to try to honestly tell the American people what the real differences are and then see if there is some honest way we can bridge those differences to move forward. That's what I decided we ought to do, because I believe that the American people will listen and think with their heads and their hearts, with their ears open instead of being all torn up and upset by their genuine confusion and uncertainty about the future. We will do fine, because most people run the rest of their lives the way we believe our country ought to be run.

And the only reason that things seem so out of whack today is that everything is changing and people are confused and uncertain, so they are vulnerable to easy answers to complex problems. And what we have to say is, when you hear all this stuff, will it raise incomes? Will it generate jobs? Will it bring people together? Will it make us a stronger country? Will it bring us into the future in better shape? So when we ask ourselves how should we balance the budget, I say if it takes a little longer and you have to have a little smaller tax cut, if you can take care of all these old folks on Medicare and you can increase education instead of cut it, let's do that, because that is the kind of America that we ought to have. That is the kind of America that we ought to have.

What I want to say to you is that I am now convinced that we have an enormous opportunity if we can be clear and unambiguous. We don't have to even attack. We just need to try to honestly explain. I have tried tonight to honestly explain to you where I believe many of them are on their issues and where we are. I have tried to be as honest as I could. But we have an opportunity here. Oklahoma City, as tragic and awful as it was, took a lot of the meanness out of this country. It made us all think again about what it is that we share as human beings across all the divides. And when Captain O'Grady survived those 6 days in Bosnia and came home, it gave a little lift back to our country, and it made us think about all the things we're proud of about America, that brings us together across all the divides.

And I leave you with this: The Democrats—the Democrats believe that we're here to help each other make the most of our own lives, that there will never be a time when Government can do anything for people they won't do for themselves, but that it is simply an evasion of our common responsibility to say our problems are only personal problems, only cultural problems. And it is self-defeating to believe we can move into the 21st century without finding a way to go there together—to go there together.

This is a very great country. And the American people are now listening and looking. And we have an opportunity to be what we are. We are not negative. We are not wreckers. We are builders. Do not run away from that because of the power of the negative forces of recent years. Instead, embrace it. Go out and tell people what you believe, why you believe it, and why we ought to be returned in 1996, not for our sake but for the future of our country.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 p.m. at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Donald L. Fowler, chairman, Democratic National Committee.

## Remarks Announcing Community Policing Grants

June 29, 1995

Thank you. Commissioner, I need this around here these days. *[Laughter]* I'm delighted to have it. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Attorney General. I thank all the law enforcement officials who are here, the representatives of the victims group, Mrs. Brady, and the others who have supported and led the fight for the passage of the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. We're glad to see the mayors here: Mayor Giuliani, Mayor Cleaver, Mayor Barry, and others. And I thank the Members of Congress for coming: Senators Biden and Boxer and Pell, and Congressman LaFalce, Congresswoman Maloney, Congressman Schumer, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and I think Congressman Kennedy is here, Congresswoman Harman. I miss anybody? I want to thank all of them, you know,

because if it hadn't been for them—and especially I thank you, Senator Biden, for making sure we actually got this crime bill passed last year through all the political fog and the 6 years of debate.

I want to say this is a day—I was thinking—on the way in we had a little television out here in the anteroom, and we were watching the American and the Russian spaceships who are hooking up in space. And they were going back and forth and kind of playing games with each other in space, and I said, “Well, I guess this really means the cold war is over.” It's a source of celebration. Today, as this is going on, the Vice President is in Moscow talking with Prime Minister Chernomyrdin about a whole range of issues between our country.

Yesterday we celebrated what I believe is a very, very strong trade agreement with Japan that will create jobs for American workers. And I feel good about that. And I think in so many ways the United States is taking full advantage of this global society of ours, of the end of the cold war. Of course, there are still problems; there will be problems until the end of time. But in so many ways, we're taking full advantage of it. And yet, I think one of the things that all of us has to recognize, all of us who love our country and want the best for it, is that we must find ways for the American people to feel more secure as they move into a world that is changing more and more.

Part of it is economic security. We have to find ways not only to create jobs but to raise people's incomes and to give them a better chance to either keep the job they've got or to know they can get another one if they have to lose it in this wave of downsizing that's sweeping the entire world. And a lot of it is what you do. It's what you have to do every day. The first responsibility any of us have in public life is to preserve order and law and security.

When I ran for President, I had the opportunity to travel all over this country and visit with police officers and walk the streets of our largest cities and some of our small towns and talk to people about crime and drugs and what was happening to young people and the rising tide of violence in our country. And I pledged at that time that if I were elected,

I would do everything I could to put another 100,000 police officers on the street and to pay for it by reducing the size of the Federal Government by 100,000.

The Congress has voted already to reduce the size of the Federal Government by 272,000. And I can report to you that today we're over halfway there. There are 150,000 fewer people working for this Government today than there were on the day I took the oath of office as President. We have done it in what I think is a very humane way. We had packages to give people incentives for early retirement. We've tried not to be guilty of cruel downsizing. And we've tried not to forget that those people served our country and served our country well.

But we need to reallocate the resources from the Federal Government to the streets of America to increase the sense of security people have. And I feel very, very strongly that this has worked because of all of you and because of people like you around the country. The crime bill and the COPS MORE Program, in particular, are running on time, as the Attorney General said, and ahead of schedule, and in fact, we're slightly even under budget. I hesitate to say that because someone will find a way to get us up over it before you know it. [*Laughter*]

This partnership really works. We give communities the resources that they need to put more police officers on the streets. Communities, in return, take responsibility to train and deploy those officers. In turn, the officers help ordinary citizens to find the commitment and the courage to do their part to fight against crime. That is the genius of community policing. It's a fight for the habits of our lives and the habits of our heart.

We can't make our streets truly safe until everybody really is committed to doing their part, until you have the help you need from parents and teachers and friends and neighbors and from the role models that young people look up to, from actors, athletes, and others. Our responsibilities, of course, have to begin with our children.

The evidence suggests today that you are making a lot of headway with the resources that your folks are giving you at the local level and with the crime bill. And I'm encouraged by that. In almost every major city in the

country, the crime rate is down. In many major areas, the crime rate is down dramatically. In many smaller and medium sized cities, the crime rate is down.

But we cannot be too optimistic because there are some troubling signs. First of all, in some major areas where the crime rate has gone down because you've been able to deploy more police resources, the crime rate has shifted into areas that aren't as well organized and aren't as well prepared for it. That's one of the reasons that, when the Congress passed the crime bill, they said we had to deploy these resources fairly and evenly across the country, not just in the bigger areas but in the smaller ones as well, because they knew this would happen. And sure enough, it has in some places.

The other thing I want to point out is that even though the overall crime rate has gone down, the rate of random violence among young teenagers is going up. And I might say—I'm concerned about it—that the rate of casual drug use among teenagers is going up, even as the Justice Department has had unparalleled success in breaking big drug gangs and interrupting big drug sales and doing things that are a cause for great celebration. There is this troubling undertow because so many of our kids are still getting in trouble out there. And it's something we need to face.

And I think it is a product, in part, of the chaos of modern times, from the breakdown of the family to the breakdown of order on the streets. And again I say, we have to find a way to take advantage of all these dramatic changes, which make us want to stay glued to the TV and watch the spaceships connect, which make us want to have free but fair trade with Japan and all other countries so all of us can benefit from that, but which have also brought so much disruption to the lives of Americans all over our country.

That's really what this is about. And it's going to require some level of contribution by every citizen. You know, I have listened to this debate, for example, over the Brady bill and over the assault weapons ban, from now to kingdom come. I could close my eyes and give you both sides of it in excruciating detail. But the truth is, it doesn't have anything to do with the right to keep and bear

arms. It really has more to do with the way you view what it means to be an American in 1995. That is, some of our people really believe that the only problems we have in this country are personal misconduct and bad cultural trends, and if everybody would just shape up and behave, we'd be fine.

Well, at one level that's true, isn't it? I mean, it's self-evidently true. And it's something we shouldn't minimize because nothing we can do, any of us, will really have any impact on the lives of our people unless more people do the right thing. But to pretend that there are no actions we can take as a people in common that will make a difference is pure folly.

And a lot of the people that object to the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban are people who say things like, "Well, I'm not a criminal. I ought to have a right to have any kind of weapon I want, and I ought not to have to wait 5 minutes for it, much less 5 days. Just punish wrongdoers. Put them in jail. Throw away the key." But that ignores the fact that we have common responsibilities. And you see this running through every single contentious debate. "Why should I wear a helmet when I get on my motorcycle? I'm not going to do anything dumb," or "If I want to, if I want to put myself in danger, I ought to have the right to do it. Never mind what it does to the health care system. Never mind how it might traumatize somebody who might hit me by accident and paralyze me for life."

You see, this is the debate that's going on in our country all the time. And it's a big deal now. There's a huge number of people who believe that since all problems are purely personal or cultural, we don't have any common obligations. This is not a Republican-Democratic deal. It's not a liberal or conservative deal. It is really a—we're back to debating first principles in our country.

And those of you who are in law enforcement, you can really help, because almost all Americans really respect you for what you do. They know you put lives on the line. They know you stick your necks out. They know you're doing something that you'll never get rich doing because you believe that it's the right thing to do.

And you need to take every opportunity you can to say, "Hey, you know, that's right. We need to punish wrongdoers. And we need to tell everybody to do the right thing, but there are things we can do in common that make a difference. And frankly, everybody who wants a handgun who's a law-abiding citizen ought to be willing to be put out the minor inconvenience it takes to wait a while so we can check and find the others who aren't."

You know, it is a small price to pay for being an American citizen living in the greatest country in the world and making a few more people safe. And people who are interested in sporting weapons ought to be willing to give up these assault weapons to get the Uzis out of the high schools. It is a small price to pay for living in the greatest country in the world and recognizing that we all have common responsibilities. We just don't all get to have our way simply because we're law-abiding.

Now, that is the debate that's going on in this country today. And that's why this community policing is so important. It is a small price to pay to prevent things from going wrong so we don't have to punish even more kids who might have been more law-abiding had community policing been there in the first place. Yes, it's true that you also catch criminals quicker, but the real genius of community policing is that over the long run it helps to prevent crime. But it only works if we have a common decision to do something in common as a people.

I cannot tell you how important I think this is. And of course, these problems have a very human face. Tomorrow I'm going to Chicago to honor one officer named Daniel Doffyn who was killed in the line of duty by a TEK-9, an assault weapon banned now by the assault weapons ban. I realize there may be some people out there who would like to have had these weapons. They're still better off being in America, and they can still have a whole arsenal in their homes, and it is a minor price to pay to be an American at this time facing our problems.

You know, if we had mass starvation in this country because we couldn't grow enough food, we could all say, "Well, everybody should be more responsible," but we'd find

some common response to that. When they have an earthquake in California, everybody wants to go help them because we know that requires a common response. We have to start thinking about our persistent problems in this same way. That is really the fundamental debate we're having here in Washington today, goes way beyond partisan politics to how we are going to live as a people.

And so I would say to you that—I'll give you another example, and this is controversial. A lot of people in my party and a lot of my friends don't agree with this. I think the Supreme Court did the right thing this week by upholding the right of schools to do drug testing on student athletes—I don't—because drug use is going up. Now, I believe that not because I think we should assume that kids are using drugs—most kids are good kids, and they've got enough problems as it is without us looking down on them—not because I don't think they're entitled to their constitutional rights but because we know as an objective fact that casual drug use is going up among young people again. And it's wrong. It's crazy. It's not just illegal, it is dangerous for them.

And you know, you don't have a right to be on the football team or the basketball team or in the band or do anything else. So I think it's like the Brady bill. It's like, "Look, this is a hassle for you. We're asking you to do this for your country. We're not assuming you're a drug user. We're asking you to do this for your country. Do this because we need our kids to be drug-free."

And so, I'm proud of all of you. I am proud to be a part of this. I am proud that we are doing this today, and I am proud we've got over 20,000 police officers. And we're on time; we're actually a little ahead of schedule.

But I want you to go home and realize that this community policing debate and this debate about the assault weapons and this debate about the Brady bill is part of a huge, huge question that is now the dominant question every time they go to the floor to vote in the Congress on a controversial bill; this issue is behind almost every one of them. Because our problems at one level are personal and cultural, but they are also common: they are political; they are economic; they

are social. And what we have to do is to find the right balance.

And we cannot, any of us, go off in some sanctimonious huff, saying that just because we don't do anything wrong, we shouldn't be asked to contribute to our country. And I'm not just talking about paying taxes. Whether it's obeying the speed limit or wearing a helmet or obeying these gun laws, we all ought to recognize that what—we have to define the challenges of America at this time.

And one of the biggest challenges is to make the American people feel more secure in a time of very rapid change. There is more opportunity out there for our people than ever before. But a lot of Americans are scared to death, for economic reasons and because of crime problems and other things. You, you are making a huge difference to them.

But when people see you with your uniforms, when they see you with these badges, then all these theoretical debates become very real. They know what you are. They know who you are. They know you're sticking up for them.

And the more you can make the community policing program work, the more you can make people understand that you're not trying to take their liberties away by asking them to wait to check on the handguns ownership or by dealing with the assault weapons ban, the more we can bring the American people back into a consensus again that we have more personal liberty in this country than any other democracy in the world but that all of us have to pay a price to maintain our liberties, to maintain our freedom, to meet the challenges of this day.

And frankly, when you look at it clear-headedly, it is a very small price indeed for the benefit of taking this country into the 21st century still the strongest country in the world. That's what the community policing is all about; that's what the Brady law is about; it's what the assault weapons ban is all about; it's what testing those kids in that school district is all about, for drugs; it's what a lot of these controversial issues we're trying to deal with are all about.

So I ask you to go home and tell your folks that we want to preserve our liberties, we

want to preserve our freedom, we want to enhance their security, but they have to make some modest contributions to this as well. That's what you're doing, and that's what we have to do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to R. Gil Kerlikowske, Buffalo, NY, police commissioner who presented the President with a Buffalo City Police Department shield; Mayor Rudolph Giuliani of New York City; Mayor Emanuel Cleaver II of Kansas City, MO; and Mayor Marion Barry of Washington, DC.

### **Statement on the Observance of Independence Day, 1995**

*June 29, 1995*

I am delighted to join my fellow Americans in celebrating Independence Day.

Commemorating the birth of the greatest democracy in the world, the Fourth of July is a testament to all that is unique about America. Born of the courage of our founders and sustained by the spirit and sacrifice of every generation since, our nation has built a proud legacy of liberty. On this day, millions of our citizens join friends and loved ones at picnics and parades to rejoice in the blessings of freedom. People of all backgrounds unite in celebrating the energy and optimism that have always defined us as a people.

We are blessed that our country is better able than any other to face the trials and embrace the opportunities of the next century. Holding fast to the noble principles on which America was founded, we must look toward tomorrow with the same love of freedom, faith in justice, and firm commitment to moving forward together. These ideals, which have seen us through more than two centuries of challenge and change, will bring us ever closer to a future of hope, prosperity, and peace.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

**Bill Clinton**

NOTE: An identical message was also made available by the White House.