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DM -

F91/ I still need a 312  
revision.

~~ADD~~

Chuck -

Revision attached - the  
pencil-in change would provide  
general application (& answer the two  
attached letters). - Dan

CAD |

Please  
attach  
letter  
the letter

RE: McClure/Volkmer Gun Legislation

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 9, 1984 (XXX312)

*Respol-32*

Dear Mr. Ortega:

On behalf of President Reagan, thank you for your message about firearms legislation pending in the Congress. The President is well aware of the concerns that many Americans have raised about this issue, and he understands your convictions regarding the policy you believe the Administration should follow.

Due to the heavy volume of mail received by the President each day, we are not always able to reply as quickly as we would like. Although this reply has been delayed, you can be sure that your comments are appreciated and that they have been passed along to the Administration officials who are dealing with this legislation as debate goes forward.

With President Reagan's best wishes,

Sincerely,

*Anne Higgins*

Anne Higgins  
Special Assistant to the President  
and Director of Correspondence

(3/8/84)

Mr. Michael Ortega  
Night Supervisor  
Correspondence Analysis Section  
Room 60  
Old Executive Office Building  
Washington, DC 20500

AVH-312 (1st Revision)

(new title suggested):

● E: Firearms

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

December 7, 1984

AVH312

On behalf of President Reagan, thank you for your message about firearms ~~legislation.~~

The President is well aware of the concerns that many Americans have raised about this issue. He believes that we must seek to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens to legitimate ownership and use of firearms without diminishing the effectiveness of laws against criminal misuse of firearms.

You can be sure that your comments are appreciated and that they have been passed along to the Administration officials who are dealing with this <sup>issue</sup> ~~legislation~~ as debate goes forward.

With President Reagan's best wishes,

AVH/DE/  
(Background attached)

29  
September 28, 1984

263832

4900

ME002

It is indeed a pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to the Coalition of New Jersey Sportsmen.

By seeking to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens without diminishing the effectiveness of laws against criminal misuse of firearms, organizations like yours uphold the fundamental principles of American democracy. You trust the people and insist that individuals be held responsible for their actions. Your positive approach to the legitimate ownership and use of firearms has given the sportsmen of New Jersey a much-needed voice in the legislative process.

COPY  
from ORM

You have my congratulations and best wishes for a fine evening and for every future success.

A  
RONALD REAGAN

SENT TO:

Mr. Richard J. Feldman  
National Rifle Association  
of America  
1600 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

✓ RB:WDB:RDC:CAD:plr PM3  
cc: K.Osborne/A.Higgins/M:Meloy/C.Korte/CF

To be picked up in Room 45 9/28 at 4pm

# TELEGRAM

The White House  
Washington

FULL RATE  
STRAIGHT TELEGRAM)   
NIGHT LETTER   
MAILGRAM

STRAIGHTWIRE - SEPTEMBER 25, 1984

Mr. David S. Marshal  
National Rifle Association  
of America  
1600 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

It is indeed a pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to the  
Coalition of New Jersey Sportsmen.

*Letter  
CO*

By seeking to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens without  
diminishing the effectiveness of laws against criminal misuse of  
firearms, organizations like yours uphold the fundamental principles  
of American democracy. You trust the people and insist that  
individuals be held responsible for their actions. Your positive  
approach to the legitimate ownership and use of firearms has given  
the sportsmen of New Jersey a much-needed voice in the legislative  
process.

You have my congratulations and best wishes for a fine evening and  
for every future success.

RONALD REAGAN

RR.WDB:RDC:CAD:plr 9pmsgb

cc: K.Osborne/M.Meloy/C.Korte/CF

EVENT: September 29

09/25 New Jersey Sportsmen

APPROVED FOR DISPATCH *and S. ash*

DRAFT/Date September 6, 1984 SPECIAL DEADLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
(printing, e.g.)  
RR/ wdb / RDC / 1 copy for arch DATE OF EVENT September 29, 1984  
(drafter) (Rev.)  
(Straight Wire/Telegram)  
(Special Delivery/Express Mail)

TELEGRAM (clear in 300 after typing)

It is indeed a pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to the Coalition of New Jersey Sportsmen.

By seeking to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens without diminishing the effectiveness of laws against criminal misuse of firearms, organizations like yours uphold the fundamental principles of American democracy. You trust the people and insist that individuals be held responsible for their actions.

Your positive approach to the legitimate ownership and use of firearms has ~~been~~ given the sportsmen of New Jersey a much-needed voice in the <sup>legislative</sup> ~~lawmaking~~ process.

~~For that~~ you have my congratulations and best wishes for a fine <sup>evening and for</sup> every future success.

STRAIGHTWIRE - SEPTEMBER 25, 1984

Mr. David S. Marshal  
National Rifle Association  
of America  
1600 Rhode Island Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

RR:WDB:RDC:CAD:  
cc: K.Osborne/M.Meloy/C.Korte/CF  
EVENT: SEPTEMBER 29

Chuck -

Mary Anne Kelly  
told him he could  
pick this up  
today (9-28) in  
Room 45.

I said I'd call  
him back to confirm.  
Mr. Marshall is gone;  
The new one is Mr.  
Richard J.  
Feldman. 828-6378

Suzanne

Re: this as  
letter. Will be picked  
up by Mr. Feldman in  
Room 45 when ready.  
June Welch will call  
NRA.

CSO



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

DATE: 9-25-84

TO: Judy Johnston

FROM: CHARLES A. DONOVAN  
Office of Correspondence  
94 OEOB, x7610

ACTION:

Review/Comment

Information Copy Only

As We Discussed

COMMENT:

*Message promised last May  
by Office of Presidential Messages.*

*OK  
JCS*

DATE ACTION/REPLY  
NEEDED: ASAP

cc: *Ranking File*

Sept 29

Asap

Dodie,

I've been holding this for too long,  
but the event isn't till September.

Note Mary Ann Meloy wants to discuss  
this with you (6270) because it comes  
from someone with National Rifle Assn.

Nothing in CF on the New Jersey orgn.

Since will come up when you're gone,  
might want to give to Jack to call  
her.

ck 6/6

Jack

do as  
telegram close to  
event, stressing  
conservation &  
sporting aspects  
only.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
May 17, 1984

Sept. 29  
Assign To  
Alan Engler

MEMORANDUM FOR DODIE LIVINGSTON

FROM:

MARY ANN MELOY *MA*

SUBJECT:

Presidential Greeting for First Annual Coalition  
of New Jersey Sportsmen

Although this request for a message to the subject group would require an exception from the standard guidelines of limiting such a greeting to national organizations, I strongly urge that this group receive a message.

I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss this with you personally. Please call me at x6270. Thanks.

NOTE: Jack Wells promised  
message closer to end.



NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION  
1600 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

May 14, 1984

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The New Jersey Coalition of Sportsmen is an association of concerned state sportsmen's organizations founded in 1979 to promote pro-sportsmen's legislation in the state of New Jersey.

Combined membership of the member organizations exceeds 175,000 citizens.

On Saturday, September 29, 1984, in conjunction with and in recognition of National Hunting and Fishing Day, the Coalition of New Jersey Sportsmen will hold their First Annual Coalition of New Jersey Sportsmen's Dinner at the Ramada Inn, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Knowing that the demand on your time and the number of requests that you receive is voluminous, we nonetheless extend a warm and hearty invitation to you or your appointed representative to attend our social dinner as honored guest.

We wish also to take this opportunity to commend you on your stand for firearm ownership in this country.

Sincerely,

David S. Marshall  
National Rifle Association - I.L.A.  
Coalition Secretary

sms

laws. I happen to know this from personal experience.

You know, I've always felt a special bond with the members of your group. You live by Lincoln's words, "Important principles may and must be inflexible." Your philosophy put its trust in people. So, you insist on individuals being held responsible for their actions. The NRA believes that America's laws were made to be obeyed and that our constitutional liberties are just as important today as 200 years ago.

And by the way, the Constitution does not say that government shall decree the right to keep and bear arms. The Constitution says ". . . the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." [Applause] Thank you very much. I wish I'd saved that and said it last. [Laughter]

But I believe we share the same goal, a strong America, carrying the banner of freedom and secure from threats to our domestic tranquility, economic well-being, and national security.

No group does more to promote gun safety and respect for the laws of this land than the NRA, and I thank you. Still, we've both heard the charge that supporting gun-owners rights encourages a violent, shoot-em-up society. But just a minute. Don't they understand that most violent crimes are not committed by decent, law-abiding citizens? They're committed by career criminals. Guns don't make criminals. Hardcore criminals use guns. And locking them up, the hard-core criminals up, and throwing away the key is the best gun-control law we could ever have.

When I was Governor of California, we dealt with gun control—we added 5 to 15 years to the sentence of any criminal who, while committing a crime, had a gun in his possession, whether he used that gun or not. Now, I'm even more convinced than ever that this is the right approach if they're going to talk about something to do with guns and crime.

I've said many times that our administration didn't come to Washington to continue business as usual. Either we make fundamental reforms that change things for the better, or we aren't doing our job. We think it's time for our loved ones to walk the streets of America without being afraid.

So, we have declared war on organized crime and the career criminal element in America. More than a hundred prosecutors' offices are working with special teams around the country to throw the book at career criminals in court. And we're determined to cripple the drug-pushers who are poisoning the minds and bodies of our children. We want mandatory sentences. We want firm and speedy application of penalties. And we want to abolish parole for Federal offenses. But there's one thing we do not want: We will never disarm any American who seeks to protect his or her family from fear and harm.

You know, I have to interject something I hadn't planned to say here—but having mentioned being the Governor of California, during a time when they were talking gun control there in our State, I received a letter, a most unusual letter, from a convicted burglar serving time in San Quentin Prison. And he wrote and told me that he just thought from his vantage point, where he was, he'd like to tell me how happy it would make all of them if we would adopt gun control. And then he explained the inside of his profession. He said, "We can case a place, a home. We can watch and learn the habits of the people that live there when they're in and out and all of that. But," he said, "the one thing that always sticks in our mind that we can never answer is, is that one of those homes where the fellow has a gun in a drawer by the bed?" And he said that, "That's the one that scares us most of all. So," he said, "there'd be a lot of smiles in this place if you would adopt gun control."

We are making headway in our crackdown on crime. A recent U.S. News and World Report story said that "It may be no accident that the first dip in U.S. crime totals in 5 years coincides with a nationwide crackdown on career criminals." Well, serious reported crime dropped by 4 percent in 1982, after rising more than 21 percent since 1977 and 254 percent since 1962.

Longer prison sentences and tougher treatment are beginning to pay dividends. And make no mistake: This is happening because you, the people, are fed up with crime. You're the ones who are organizing neighborhood patrols, supporting your local

police, insisting that justice be carried out—and every time you do that, you keep the spirit of democracy strong in America.

This morning I had the pleasure of meeting Arizona's Sun City Posse, a group which has had great success roping in the bad guys. They're not a posse in the old-time sense, just individuals who patrol their neighborhoods in their cars, wearing hard hats and carrying whistles and flashlights.

May 15th marks the beginning of National Police Week. I urge you and every citizen to let our men and women in blue across America know we stand with them this week and every week of the year. Another way NRA can help police is to support our efforts for a minimum mandatory term of 5 years imprisonment—and perhaps there'll be some disagreement in this, but I have to say it: for the use of armor-piercing bullets during a Federal crime of violence. These are designed to truly be a threat to law enforcement officers who, so many times, have to depend on bulletproof vests.

We can't solve the problems overnight. But since we established our Florida task force against drugs, drug-related arrests have risen sharply. Just last week, our agents trailed, and then landed behind a suspicious plane near LaBelle, Florida. Two drug smugglers jumped out of the plane and ran away. One of them swam across a canal and hid in the bushes. The alligators didn't get him, but our enforcement people did. They seized 625 pounds of cocaine valued at \$187½ million.

And let me interject something here. I'm not one who often feels or too often vents anger, but I want the American people to know that they're faced with the most sinister, despicable actions. We have strong evidence that high-level Cuban Government officials have been involved in smuggling drugs into the United States. Attorney General Smith and FBI Director Webster have assured me that they will use every resource they have to combat this menace. And as we crack down on criminals, we're trying to move forward on another front: to reform the firearms laws which needlessly interfere with the rights of legitimate gun owners like yourselves.

We're working closely with your leadership and congressional sponsors of firearms

legislation, such as Senators McClure and Hatch and Congressman Volkmer. I look forward to signing a bill that truly protect the rights of law-abiding citizens, without diminishing the effectiveness of criminal law enforcement against the misuse of fire arms.

Your leadership's support has been important to us. Just last year, I signed two amendments into law. One eliminated unnecessary recordkeeping requirements on 22-caliber rimfire ammunition. The other saved many custom gunsmiths from financial ruin.

And I want you to know that I'm in favor of the Civilian Marksmanship program. I support this idea because clear back to the Revolutionary War, one of the great talents of American soldiers has been their marksmanship. And it turned out they developed this shooting at targets and plinking as young boys. So, I'm asking Secretary Weinberger to study ways in which the marksmanship program can be improved.

I'm also happy to report that since I took office the sale of M-1 rifles to participants and instructors in high-power rifle marksmanship training programs has been increased significantly. And I have asked the Department of Defense to look at ways in which sales might be increased even further.

May I say a few words about conservation and the group I consider the foremost conservationists of our wildlife resources—America's sportsmen, hunters, and fishermen. As Teddy Roosevelt recognized, "The free, self-reliant, adventurous life, with its rugged . . . democracy; the wild surroundings, the grand beauty of the scenery, the chance to study the ways and habits of the woodland creatures—all these unite to give to the career of the . . . hunter its peculiar charm."

Well, unfortunately, there's been a kind of elitist attitude in Washington that vast natural resource areas must be locked up to save the planet from mankind. Well, we have a different philosophy, one based on respect for both man and nature. Our administration believes in the concept of stewardship, caring for the resources we have for the benefit of mankind.

Now, "stewardship" We favor within wilderness proposals last administration million sports think to correct We're too. A report in our administration budget had about bled it We've neglected lems,

Our urges a forest aged ago. attent

And derstood effort For

payin and a ertson State funds wildl white turke were areas cases

Th have these fund habi ect hun our ship and dee

Now, let me be clear about those words—"stewardship for the benefit of mankind." We favor economic development, but not within our national parks or within our wilderness areas. We have not and never will propose that. What we do say is when the last administration arbitrarily closed tens of millions of acres of Alaskan land, telling sports hunters to stay out, then, yes, we think that was wrong, and we're trying to correct it.

We're trying to correct something else, too. A 1980 General Accounting Office report warned of health and safety hazards in our national parks. During the previous administration, the National Park Service budget for restoration and improvement had been cut. Now, I don't usually brag about spending money; but we have doubled it. We have the active support of NRA. We've also addressed one of America's most neglected and serious environmental problems, the destruction of our wetlands.

Our national parks, national wildlife refuges and coastal barriers, wetlands, national forests, and public lands are better managed today than they were just a few years ago. And I think that story merits more attention than it's received.

Another point which should be better understood: The backbone of our conservation efforts begins with American sportsmen. For over 40 years, hunters have been paying a special excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition through the Pittman-Robertson Act, nearly \$1.2 billion since 1939. State wildlife managers have used these funds to preserve and enhance valuable wildlife habitats. Such wild creatures as the whitetail deer, the ruffed grouse, wild turkey and pronghorn antelope, which were threatened with extinction in many areas have been brought back, in some cases, to great abundance.

This past year alone, American hunters have paid more than \$107 million toward these conservation efforts. The money will fund important studies of game and their habitat. It'll provide food and habitat projects for wildlife. And portions will go for hunter safety and education courses where our youngsters will be taught marksmanship, firearms safety, and some of the values and ethics of hunting and the outdoors. I deeply appreciate your contributions to pre-

serving our national treasures for the benefit of our people and future generations.

This idea of stewardship, of preserving and caring for what we have, bringing our economy back to health so you, the people, can make us great again, that's a crucial part of keeping America free and making her secure. Now, I know that the road to recovery has been long and hard. Too many people are still out of work. But I believe with all my heart that we have turned the corner. We are on our way back. And like that fighter, Rocky Balboa, America is getting stronger now.

You know, when I see inflation down, interest rates down, tax rates being cut, industrial production and productivity up, housing starts and auto sales up, and workers being called back, 250,000 more people put to work last month—now that our program is doing what we said it would, I have to ask of our critics, how come they're not calling it Reaganomics anymore? *[Laughter]*

Yes, some critics say nothing is right. They oppose budget savings, and they oppose tax cuts. Despite the calamity they created, they continue to resist reform. Their attitude reminds me of a comment a great American made about a similar situation. "Those who are frightened," he said, "by boldness and cowed by the necessity for making decisions complain that all we have done is unnecessary and subject to great risks. Now that these people are coming out of their storm cellars, they forget that there ever was a storm." Well, now those words were spoken by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1934.

Well, I haven't forgotten the storm that was raging around every family in 1980. With all due respect, may I remind our critics: Those who saddled this nation with double-digit inflation, 21½ percent interest rates—the highest in more than a hundred years—the worst tax burden in our peacetime history, are the last people who should be giving sermons on fairness and compassion.

If inflation had continued as it was when they were in office, a family of four on a fixed income of \$20,000 would be more than \$1,500 poorer in purchasing power today. If their tax increases had stayed on the books, and our tax cuts hadn't been

passed, a median-income family of four would be paying \$700 more in Federal income taxes this year. If this is the liberal idea of fairness and compassion, may the good Lord be with you if they ever have their way.

President John F. Kennedy said in 1963, ". . . the largest single barrier to full employment . . . and to a higher rate of economic growth is the . . . heavy drag of Federal income taxes on private purchasing power, initiative, and incentive." Those wise words are just as true today. I will veto any attempt to tamper with the third year of our tax cut, or the indexing provision.

And the other day I had a very exciting experience when a Member of the Senate and a Member of the House walked into my office, each presented me a letter; each letter signed by enough men in the House—men and women in the House and enough Senators to guarantee the upholding of any vetoes that I might take with regard to the taxing matters.

Indexing is the best security middle-income families have against bracket creep—inflation pushing you into higher and higher tax brackets when you get cost-of-living pay raises and so forth. Those who would strip you of this protection are tax-grabbers, pure and simple.

The United States didn't run up a trillion-dollar debt because you aren't taxed enough. We've got that debt because government spends too much. We need spending restraint, not tax increases. I want to work with the Congress, but not at your expense and not at the risk of sabotaging this recovery that we worked so hard to achieve.

Nor must we gamble, ever again, with the security of this country by neglecting our defense readiness. The day I took office, our Armed Forces were in a shocking state of neglect. I was surprised even though I thought I'd known something about it. We had shortages of skilled manpower, faulty equipment, lack of spare parts, and insufficient fuel and ammunition for proper training. We had planes that couldn't fly for lack of spare parts, ships that couldn't leave port, and helicopters that couldn't stay aloft.

I believe it's immoral to ask the sons and daughters of America to protect this land

with second-rate equipment and bargain-basement weapons. If they can put their lives on the line to protect our way of life, then, by golly, we can give them the weapons, the training, and the money they need to do the job right. And when it comes to keeping America safe and strong, when it comes to keeping America free, there should be no Republicans or Democrats, only patriotic Americans working together.

We've begun to pay our military personnel a decent wage. We've increased pilot flying time, extended basic training inventories. The level and quality of recruits are up sharply with the highest levels they've ever been. By providing adequate compensation for our soldiers, by giving them the tools they need to do their jobs, we're restoring dignity, honor, and pride to the uniform of the United States military, and we must not—we dare not—sacrifice that.

The people who disagree with our side rebuilding its military security don't seem to understand: Our side is the only side where people are permitted to disagree—and that should make them nervous. It isn't America that attacks and occupies other countries; we conduct no worldwide campaign of subversion and terrorism; we don't have to build walls to keep our people in, or use armies of secret police and gulag prison camps to keep them quiet. We're a free people, a democratic people; we believe in God and we love peace. But let us remember what George Washington warned in 1790—that to be prepared for war is one of the best means of preserving the peace.

There's nothing I want more than a verifiable agreement with the Soviet Union to reduce the levels of strategic weapons. In the long run, that's the best way to lower the growth in defense spending. But the Soviets will only bargain in good faith if they understand we're determined to defend freedom. And I'm determined that they will understand that.

Now, 9 days ago, I addressed the Congress on the subject of Central America, where the United States has fundamental and far-reaching interests. We must never forget that two-thirds of all our foreign trade and petroleum pass through the seaplanes of that region. Nor can we forget that



a country like El Salvador is approximately 10 miles closer to Phoenix, Arizona, than Phoenix is to Washington, D.C.

The people of El Salvador are not perfect. They're made mistakes as we have made mistakes. But they're trying, with great bravery and against tremendous odds, to build the dream of a society like ours. They understand that government must depend and rest on the consent of the governed; that only when people are free to worship, create, and build, only when they are given a personal stake in deciding their destiny, and benefiting from their own risks—only then will their society become dynamic, prosperous, progressive, and free.

But El Salvador is under attack. Guerrillas with contempt for democracy and armed to the teeth by Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Soviets are determined to shoot their way into power. We have asked the Congress for a modest package of assistance for the region, with three times as much economic aid as military aid.

But military aid is essential, because the guerrillas are deliberately destroying El Salvador's economy—blowing up bridges, railroads, water facilities, telephone, and electrical systems. These are not the actions of a people who love the common man and who seek to reform their system. They're the actions of thugs who trample the common man in their quest for total power.

America faces a choice: Will we give El Salvador her chance to walk beside us in the sunlight of democracy, or will we turn our backs on a friend, letting her slide into a dark night of tyranny, rationalizing our inaction with detached lectures on morality.

Running away from this clear-cut responsibility would reward aggression and bring dishonor on the good name of the United States. It would swell the tide of political and economic instability in Central America, creating a new army of refugees, and bringing danger closer and closer to home.

I appeal to you today: Tell your representatives they cannot remain indifferent to another Communist takeover on our doorstep.

Standing up for America also means standing up for the God who has so blessed this land. If we could just keep remembering that Moses brought down from the mountain 10 Commandments, not 10 sug-

gestions—[laughter]—and if those of us who live for the Lord could remember that He wants us to love our Lord and our neighbor, then there's no limit to the problems we could solve or the mountains we could climb together as a mighty force for good.

The United States remains the last, best hope for a mankind plagued by tyranny and deprivation. America is no stronger than its people—and that means you and me. Well, I believe in you, and I believe that if we work together, then one day we will say, "We fought the good fight. We finished the race. We kept the faith." And to our children and our children's children we can say, "We did all that could be done in the brief time that was given us here on Earth."

Thank you all and God bless you.

*Note: The President spoke at 1:02 p.m. at the Phoenix Civic Plaza.*

*Following his appearance at the luncheon, the President traveled to California and Rancho del Cielo, his ranch near Santa Barbara.*

## Mother's Day, 1983

*Radio Address to the Nation. May 7, 1983*

### *My fellow Americans:*

This is a very special weekend in American life, a time specially set aside to honor our mothers and the mothers of our children. As we do, we acknowledge their role as the heart of our families and reinforce our families as the cornerstone of our society.

In our families, and often from our mothers, we first learn about values and caring and the difference between right and wrong. Those of us blessed with loving families draw our confidence from them and the strength we need to face the world. We also first learn at home, and, again, often from our mothers, about the God who will guide us through life.

The mothers we honor this weekend, young or not so young, partners or alone, well-to-do or sometimes agonizingly poor,

officer for the day. So, you're dismissed. [Laughter] Let's be careful out there.

Thank you.

*Note: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. at the posse's headquarters. Maurine E. Barkdoll is commander of the posse.*

### Older Americans Month, 1983

*Proclamation 5058. May 6, 1983*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### *A Proclamation*

Throughout our history, the American people have held a special place in their hearts for our older citizens.

From this Nation's earliest days, when the wisdom and eloquence of our elder statesmen played such an important role in the creation of our Republic, to this era of renewed private sector initiative, where so many of our senior citizens toil in volunteer armies of community service across the land, older Americans remain a vital force in our national life.

We recognize that no single group in our society has done more to build America and to shape our national character than our nearly thirty-three million older citizens. We treasure their continuing involvement and the unique understanding they bring to us. Their wisdom, experience, insights, and accomplishments merit an invaluable place in our culture and economy.

Through hard work and creativity, our older Americans have made enormous contributions throughout their lives to preserve our way of life and our standard of living.

Now we must keep faith with them.

It is our responsibility to protect them by reducing inflation—that monster which eats at savings and pensions and destroys the independence and well-being of our older Americans.

Of particular importance to our older citizens is the integrity of their pension funds. The recent rise in business confidence and the resulting surge in the net worth of investments have significantly increased the

value of America's pension funds. These developments remind us that the most important step we can take for all Americans, but especially our senior citizens, is to follow economic policies that will create noninflationary growth.

It is also our responsibility to keep faith with our older citizens by guaranteeing a secure and stable social security system so they might live in dignity. The recent amendments to the Social Security Act assure the elderly that America will always uphold the promises made in troubled times a half-century ago.

The future of our older Americans should be as sweet as the memories of their youth. I believe the future for our older citizens holds as much promise as the achievements of their past. In this twenty-first annual observance of Older Americans Month, we celebrate that potential.

**Now, Therefore, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of May 1983 as Older Americans Month.** I ask public officials at all levels, community agencies, educators, the clergy, the communications media, and the American people to take this opportunity to honor older Americans and to consider how we may make it possible for them to enjoy their later years.

**In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.**

**Ronald Reagan**

*[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 2:29 p.m., May 10, 1983]*

### National Rifle Association

*Remarks at the Association's Annual Members Banquet. May 6, 1983*

*President Gaffney, officers, Members of the Congress, honored guests—may I add with pride and pleasure—my fellow members of the National Rifle Association:*

I'm delighted to be here in Phoenix in this great, good neighbor State of Arizona, and I'm delighted to be with all of you. It does my spirit good to be with people who never lose faith in America, who never stop believing in her future, and who never back down one inch from defending the constitutional freedoms that are every American's birthright.

And while I was thanking all of you for a warm welcome, I understand that in another room, unable to fit into this one, are about a thousand more people that are watching through closed-circuit television. And I welcome them and thank them for being present. And it's wonderful also to know that I'm on daytime TV and not the late, late show. [Laughter]

Before I get into my remarks, I would like to pause a moment and report to you on some very good news from another part of world that I've just received.

For the past 2 months, I and others in our administration have been closely involved in negotiations in the Middle East. And this morning I had the pleasure of speaking with Secretary Shultz, who is there in the Middle East, Defense Minister Moshe Arens of Israel, and then I talked to Prime Minister Begin. And they reported to me on the decision of the Israeli Cabinet to accept in principle the agreement worked out by Secretary Shultz for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon.

This agreement is a step forward. It can lead to the restoration of Lebanon's sovereignty throughout its territory while also ensuring that southern Lebanon will not again become a base for hostile actions against Israel. Through diligent and patient diplomacy, we're proving once again that direct negotiations are the best path to peace between Israel and her neighbors. I'm sure that all those who seek peace and stability in Lebanon will welcome this decision by the Israeli Cabinet and will join us in seeking wider support.

At times the challenge of resolving the problems of the Middle East and the world may seem long and difficult, but the alternative is chaos, conflict, and more humane suffering—human suffering, I should say. The United States is committed to peaceful progress. Ours is the way of reason and ne-

gotiation, and we will never swerve from that path.

I want to salute Prime Minister Begin and the Israeli Cabinet today, just as I salute President Gemayel and the leadership of Lebanon. And may I add a word or two on behalf of Secretary George Shultz and our Ambassador Phil Habib, whose tireless efforts and dedication to reason have done so much to make this possible. Today we have crossed an important threshold on the path to peace.

And, now, back to business. And what an honor to be together on the 112th annual meeting of this great organization. As a matter of fact, I'm honored to belong to any organization that's been around longer than I have. [Laughter]

Not too long ago, I had a very memorable visit from your officials. They walked into the Oval Office with some members of the "F" troop of the Texas army. Now, when I saw how those fellows were dressed, and what they were packing, I didn't know whether to stretch out my hand, or make a run for it through the Rose Garden. [Laughter] Well, it turned out they wanted to induct me into the Texas army and to give me a beautiful, hand-crafted flintlock rifle. And I thank you for taking such good care of it, because it's in your museum now.

Being a part of this group, you know that good organizations don't just happen. They take root in a body of shared beliefs. They grow strong from leadership with vision, initiative, and determination to reach great goals. And what you've accomplished speaks for itself—more than 2½ million members, and NRA's getting stronger every day.

May I just say that we have great respect for your fine, effective leaders in Washington—Harlan Carter, Warren Cassidy, and your Institute for Legislative Action. We saw proof of NRA's strength a few months ago. Some of you share a special blessing with me—you're Californians. And you shocked California last November when you mobilized to send help and to down Proposition 15 and defeat it. You pointed out that police would be so busy arresting handgun owners that they would be unable to protect the people against criminals.

It's a nasty truth, but those who seek to inflict harm are not fazed by gun control

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RE: McClure/Volkmer Gun Legislation

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 9, 1984 (XXX312)

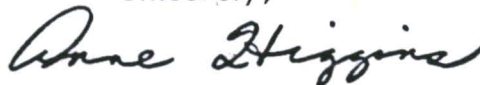
Dear Mr. Ortega:

On behalf of President Reagan, thank you for your message about firearms legislation pending in the Congress. The President is well aware of the concerns that many Americans have raised about this issue, and he understands your convictions regarding the policy you believe the Administration should follow.

Due to the heavy volume of mail received by the President each day, we are not always able to reply as quickly as we would like. Although this reply has been delayed, you can be sure that your comments are appreciated and that they have been passed along to the Administration officials who are dealing with this legislation as debate goes forward.

With President Reagan's best wishes,

Sincerely,



Anne Higgins  
Special Assistant to the President  
and Director of Correspondence

(3/8/84)

Mr. Michael Ortega  
Night Supervisor  
Correspondence Analysis Section  
Room 60  
Old Executive Office Building  
Washington, DC 20500

AVH/DE/CAD/RDC/AVH

AVH/DE/CAD/RDC/rd

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 8, 1984


AVH312 Title: McClure/Volkmer Gun legislation

On behalf of President Reagan, thank you for your message about firearms legislation pending in the Congress. The President is well aware of the concerns that many Americans have raised about this issue, and he understands your convictions regarding the policy you believe the Administration should follow.

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With President Reagan's best wishes,

Duncan/Asure:

This is proposed as an interim reply. Oldet incoming is already 6-8 weeks. We can do a follow-up in a few weeks as M.U. suggests, but further delay may leave us sending replies 3 months late -- plus a "substantive" reply down the road may be disliked by the mostly pro-gun people writing now. If we acknowledge now, we'll have the choice to follow-up if a further, more detailed reply does us good. 

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*Cad*

Judy, Mike said that nothing should be written for another couple of weeks -- the issue remains unsettled and volatile. He will be delighted to draft something at the end of that period.

SGP

Chuck,

I revised the AVH-312 that is in Robnew -- for your review.

— Dan

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 29, 1984

FOR: MIKE UHLMANN

FROM: JUDY JOHNSTON

SUBJECT: Attached Draft

Anne Higgins would like OPD approval of the attached draft re gun control.

Would you please look the draft over and return it to me as soon as possible.

Thanks.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 24, 1984

AVH312

On behalf of President Reagan, I want to thank you for your letter concerning legislation to protect the rights of firearms owners (S. 914, also known as the McClure/Volkmer Bill).

As you know, this Administration supports the rights of law-abiding citizens who wish to own and possess firearms. At the same time, the Administration must ensure that any new firearms legislation provides for adequate law enforcement provisions to deter and prosecute the criminal misuse of firearms. Accordingly, the Administration has endorsed S. 914 with some amendments designed to protect and enhance its criminal law enforcement provisions. We will follow the progress of this bill in the Congress very closely, and we will continue to guard against the adoption of any legislation which infringes on the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

(Language provided by Rose Cicala of TREAS (566-5334) correspondence div. -- this is their current language, slightly revised.)

ANN/Treas./DE/CAD/ROC/ah  
Check with OPD