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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Phoenix, Arizona)

For Immediate Release

May 6, 1983

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE 112TH ANNUAL MEMBERS BANQUET
OF THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

Phoenix Civic Plaza
Phoenix, Arizona

1:02 P.M. MST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you very much. President Gaffney, officers, Members of the Congress, honored guests, may I add with pride and pleasure, my fellow members of the National Rifle Association, -- (applause) -- 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. (Applause.)

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 1,000 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. Applause.)

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 the world that I've just received. For the past two 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. (Applause.)

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 negotiation and we will never swerve from that path. I want to salute Prime Minister

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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. (Applause.)

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 2.5 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. (Applause.) 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 laws. I happen to know this from personal experience. (Applause.)

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 be 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

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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. Hard-core 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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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 or federal offenses. (Applause.) 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. (Applause.)

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

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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 would be a lot of smiles in this place if you would adopt gun control." (Applause.)

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 five years coincides with a nationwide crackdown on career criminals." Serious reported crime dropped by four 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. (Applause.) Another way NRA can help police is to support our efforts for a minimum mandatory term of five years imprisonment, and perhaps there will be some disagreement in this but I have to say it, for the use of armour-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 bullet-proof 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 \$187.5 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,

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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 and Congressman Volkmer. I look forward to signing a bill that truly protects the rights of law-abiding citizens, without diminishing the effectiveness of criminal law enforcement against the misuse of firearms.

Your leadership's -- (applause) -- support has been important to us. Just last year, I signed two amendments into law. One eliminated unnecessary record-keeping 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 -- (applause) -- 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. (Applause.)

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 -- (applause) -- Teddy -- 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 -- (applause) -- 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. (Applause.)

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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 wet lands.

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 will 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 preserving 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

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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, 21.5 percent interest rates -- the highest in more than 100 years -- the worst tax burden in our peacetime history, are the last people who should be giving sermons on fairness and compassion. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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.. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.) 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 had known something about it. We had shortages of skilled manpower, faulty equipment, lack of spare parts, and insufficient fuel and ammunition for proper training.

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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. (Applause.) 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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

Now, nine 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 sea lanes 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've 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 benefitting from their own risks -- only then will their society become dynamic,

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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, telephones 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. (Applause.)

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 suggestions -- (laughter) (applause) -- 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 have 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.

END

1:32 P.M. MST

commercial scheduling, American Broadcasting Co., in 1963-66.

Mrs. McLaughlin was graduated from Marymount College (B.A., 1963) and attended the University of London, Queen Mary College, in 1961-62.

Mrs. McLaughlin is married and resides in Washington, D.C. She was born in Chatham, N.J., on November 16, 1941.

Department of the Treasury

Nomination of Donna Pope To Be Director of the Mint. April 21, 1981

The President today announced his intention to nominate Donna Pope to be Director of the Mint for a term of 5 years.

Since 1972 Mrs. Pope has been a member of the Ohio House of Representatives. She represents the 12th district and was elected minority whip in 1978. Current legislative assignments include the judiciary, rules, ethics and legislative service commission committees. In 1979-80 Mrs. Pope served as cochairman of the Ohio Reagan campaign and was cochairman of the Ohio delegation to the 1980 Republican National Convention. In 1968-72 she was supervisor, Cuyahoga County Board of Elections.

Mrs. Pope was named one of the outstanding women legislators in the Nation by Rutgers University Institute of Politics. She was honored by the Women's Institute of Politics, Mt. Vernon College, Washington, D.C., (1978), as one of five of the Nation's most influential women legislators.

Mrs. Pope is married, has two children, and resides in Parma, Ohio. She was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on October 15, 1931.

The President's Recovery Period

Question-and-Answer Session With Helen Thomas of United Press International and Jim Gerstenzang of Associated Press. April 22, 1981

Ms. THOMAS. All the reports seem to be true, rosy-cheeked and—

THE PRESIDENT [*laughing*]. No, I'm feeling fine.

Ms. THOMAS. Can you tell us a little bit about how you felt at the time of the shooting? Did you ever feel you were in mortal danger? I know you didn't even know you were hit, but—

THE PRESIDENT. No, that's right, and as a matter of fact, it still seems unreal. I knew there had to be shots, and my first instinct was to take a look and see what was going on from where they were. But the Secret Service man behind me had a different idea, and the next thing I knew I found myself pushed into the car. But it still seems kind of unreal.

Ms. THOMAS. It's unreal to us too, because we've come out of that hotel so many times and—

THE PRESIDENT. Yeah.

Ms. THOMAS. —nothing—

MR. GERSTENZANG. What were your first thoughts when you realized that you had been hit?

THE PRESIDENT. Actually, I can't recall too clearly. I knew I'd been hurt, but I thought that I'd been hurt by the Secret Service man landing on me in the car. And it was, I must say, it was the most paralyzing pain. I've described it as if someone had hit you with a hammer.

But that sensation, it seemed to me, came after I was in the car, and so I thought that maybe his gun or something, underneath, when he had come down on me, had broken a rib. But when I sat up on the seat and the pain wouldn't go away,

I was busy saying hello to someone. And I didn't see this.

Ms. THOMAS. Do you have any feelings about your assailant? Of course there's nothing you can really feel, I guess. It's something that's senseless.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, yes, the feeling is I hope, indeed I pray that he can find an answer to his problem. He seems to be a very disturbed young man. He comes from a fine family. They must be devastated by this. And I hope he'll get well too.

Ms. THOMAS. That's very kind of you. You don't have any feelings of real anger, then, or—

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I don't know how I could ask for help for myself and feel that way about someone else.

MR. GERSTENZANG. If you were to speak to his parents, what would you tell them?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I think I'd tell them that I understand and—[pause]—hope for a good outcome there, to end their problem.

Ms. THOMAS. Do you think that you will get your budget and taxes through now?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I still continue to be optimistic. After all, the argument from whether we should have a plan or not has become an argument of—

Ms. THOMAS. How much.

THE PRESIDENT. —how much and where. So, I think we've gained some ground.

MR. GERSTENZANG. Has this in any way changed your thinking on gun control at all?

THE PRESIDENT. No, and let me explain why. I'm not just being closed-minded or stubborn.

We have the laws now. Granted that all States aren't uniform. But I don't know of anyplace—there may be some—but I

don't know of any place in the country where it is now not against the law to carry a concealed weapon. Now, we've found that that can't prevent someone. Your District of Columbia here has such a law. But a man was carrying a concealed weapon. So, I don't see where we believe that adding another law that probably will be just as unenforceable as this one is going to make a difference.

In fact, if anything, I'm a little disturbed that focusing on gun control as an answer to the crime problem today could very well be diverting us from really paying attention to what needs to be done if we're to solve the crime problem.

Ms. THOMAS. Which is?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I do think we're showing the results of several decades of growing permissiveness, unwillingness to hold individuals responsible for their misdeeds, blaming society instead. In other words, quicker, more effective justice.

MR. DEEVER. One more.

Ms. THOMAS. One more. We've got to make this one good. [Laughter]

In terms of [Press Secretary] Brady, will he continue on? Are you going to keep the slot open for him?

THE PRESIDENT. Oh, you bet. And I think all of us—as I say, when I finally did learn that three others had been hit, including the agent who deliberately placed himself between me and the gunman—but Jim, of course, was the most serious, and I am so gratified by the optimism about his recovery that that's a daily prayer.

Ms. THOMAS. A miracle.

THE PRESIDENT. Yes. For him.

Ms. THOMAS AND MR. GERSTENZANG. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The question-and-answer session began at 12 noon in the Map Room at the White House.

Miss Clark attended Katharine Gibbs School in New York City. She is a recipient of the Superior Honor Award (1970) and the Luther I. Replogle Award for Management Improvement (1975).

Miss Clark resides in Washington, D.C. She was born March 27, 1922, in Ridgefield Park, N.J.

THE PRESIDENT'S NEWS CONFERENCE OF JUNE 16, 1981

PROGRAM FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

THE PRESIDENT. Good afternoon.

Last November the American people gave the elected representatives in Washington an overwhelming mandate to rescue the economy from high inflation and high unemployment. That was last November. Today, 7 months later, people are still watching, and they're still waiting. And there's no longer any reason to delay.

Two major pieces of economic legislation are now before the Congress.

The first, an omnibus bill to reduce spending. A month ago, the House of Representatives approved by a 77-vote margin a long overdue and unprecedented budget resolution. That resolution ordered House committees to cut \$36 billion for spending next year, some \$140 billion over the next 3 years. And yet there is now clear danger of congressional backsliding and a return to spending as usual.

Some House committees have reported spending cuts they know can't be made, closing, for example, one-third of the Nation's post offices. One House committee claims to have achieved savings by elimi-

nating a day care program to provide suppers, but it also slipped into the change of the law to say that lunches can be served at suppertime.

This practice is unconscionable. The hard work of Congress in passing the bipartisan budget resolution was not an academic exercise. It was a solemn commitment that transforms a mandate from the people into a compact with the people. The Congress and the administration together must protect the integrity of that compact.

I urge the House leaders to revise the committee work so that it honestly and responsibly achieves the original spending goals. But if that proves impossible, let me be clear: My administration will have no other choice than to support the proposal of a number of Representatives in the House to offer a budget substitute on the floor that matches the resolution they voted for in May.

The second major economic item on the agenda is a cut in the tax rates that we promised the American people.

Some 12 days ago, I outlined the basic elements of a bipartisan tax plan that provides multiyear, across-the-board cuts in individual tax rates, and it is an essential feature of our overall economic program. A bill incorporating these principles was introduced last week by [Republican] Congressman Barber Conable and Democratic Congressman Kent Hance. I'm pleased to report from conversations with Senators and Congressmen, I'm convinced there is a gathering bipartisan consensus for this tax bill.

But, once again, time is fleeting. Just to take care of the paperwork associated with the tax changes that would be effective on October 1st, we must quickly have the legislation on the books.

More important, let us never forget the mandate of November. The people of

has happened. It would be just further tragic evidence if this latest happening should turn this off. But till he comes home and says, "I give up," why, I'm going to believe that we can do it.

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

Q. Mr. President, how appropriate do you believe is Israel's decision not to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and not to submit to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency? And I have a followup.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I haven't given very much thought to that particular question there. The subject about them not signing that treaty or, on the other hand, how many countries do we know that have signed it that very possibly are going ahead with nuclear weapons? It's, again, something that doesn't lend itself to verification.

It is difficult for me to envision Israel as being a threat to its neighbors. It is a nation that from the very beginning has lived under the threat from neighbors that they did not recognize its right to exist as a nation.

I'll have to think about that question you asked.

Q. What do you think the proper role of the United States is in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons technology?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, our position is—and it is unqualified—that we're opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and do everything in our power to prevent it. I don't believe, however, that that should carry over into the development of nuclear power for peaceful purposes. And so, it increases the difficulty, if you're going to encourage the one, because you have at least opened a crack in the door

where someone can proceed to the development of weapons.

But I'm not only opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, but, as I've said many times, I would like to enter into negotiations leading toward a definite, verifiable reduction of strategic nuclear weapons worldwide.

I'd better abandon the front row here for a minute.

HANDGUN CONTROL

Q. Mr. President, at a recent White House meeting Senator Edward Kennedy asked if you'd refuse to lead the fight against his legislation on handgun control, or Saturday night specials, sales of Saturday night specials. What was your answer?

THE PRESIDENT. Would I lead the fight against his—

Q. No, he asked that you not lead the fight against his legislation.

THE PRESIDENT. Oh.

Q. What was your answer?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, we had a very nice talk. And I told him that I believe that some of the things that we had tried in California served better, and that is to make the penalties for the carrying of a weapon, particularly in the commission of a crime, much stiffer than they are. California—we added 5 to 15 years to the prison sentence for anyone carrying a gun in the commission of a crime—convicted of that crime, whether they used the gun or not. And since, that's been augmented to include no probation—mandatory prison sentence.

I believe in that, because my concern about gun control is that it's taking our eyes off what might be the real answers to crime. It's diverting our attention. There are today more than 20,000 gun control laws in effect—Federal, State, and local—in the United States. Indeed, some

of the stiffest gun control laws in the Nation are right here in the District, and they didn't seem to prevent a fellow a few weeks ago from carrying one down by the Hilton Hotel. In other words, they are virtually unenforceable.

So, I would like to see us directing our attention to what has caused us to have the crime that continues to increase as it has and is one of our major problems in the country today.

UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS

Q. *Muchas gracias, Señor Presidente. Su causa es mi causa, su casa es mi casa* [your cause is my cause, your home is my home]—I wonder when I will be able to tell to the undocumented aliens in this country these same words. You spoke with López Portillo the other day, and he said that you are going to agree in order to give some opportunity to those undocumented workers. I would like that you clarify to the Nation what is the status of this situation.

THE PRESIDENT. If I understand your question—are you talking about visiting the White House or me visiting you? [Laughter] Either way it would be a pleasure. [Laughter]

Sam [Sam Donaldson. ABC News].

NUCLEAR WAR

Q. Mr. President, every President since Dwight Eisenhower seems to believe that if the Soviet Union and the United States actually get into a shooting war, say, in Europe, can't be contained and it would spread to a thermonuclear war. Do you agree?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, it's a frightening possibility, and history bears it out. If we want to look for one little bit of optimism anywhere, the only time that I can recall in history that a weapon possessed by both

sides was never used was in World War II—the use of poison gas. And possibly it was because the weapon was available to both sides. But the weapons are there, and they do extend to the battlefield use as well—the tactical weapons as well as the strategic.

And I have to believe that our greatest goal must be peace, and I also happen to believe that that will come through our maintaining enough strength that we can keep the peace.

Q. Sir, I have a followup. I ask the question, because I suppose that your defense strategy depends on whether you think if the Soviets invade Western Europe, a tactical nuclear war could be fought there and contained, or whether you think that it would spread inevitably to a thermonuclear exchange. What do you think?

THE PRESIDENT. I thought I answered it. I try to be optimistic and think that the threat of both sides would keep it from happening, and yet, at the same time, as I say, history seems to be against that, that there comes a moment in desperation when one side tries to get an advantage over the other.

CANDIDACY FOR SECOND TERM

Q. Mr. President, about 10 days ago your Chief of Staff said on a television interview program that he thought you were committed to running for a second term. And another aide of yours, Lyn Nofziger, has said virtually the same thing. Can you tell us, sir, if you are committed to running for a second term?

THE PRESIDENT. I think that having only been here 5 months, no one should be making a decision about what they're going to do 3 years and 7 months from now.

Q. Can you tell us why your aides are making such statements in public? Is it

Week Ending Friday, April 23, 1982

Geneva, Illinois

*Question-and-Answer Session With
Students at St. Peter's Catholic Elementary
School. April 15, 1982*

Mr. Sheppard: Mr. President, I'd like to have you meet our teacher of our eighth grade here, and the eighth grade students at St. Peter's School. President Reagan, we're very, very pleased to have you with us, and here are our students.

The President. Well, I'm pleased to see all of you. I'm very pleased. Someone once said that civics class—that's where you study what you read in the paper the day before. But I know better than that, having been in civics classes myself.

We don't have very much time here together. So, I think better than me trying to make any kind of a speech to you, what we should do is get to a dialog and a back and forth. I just came from speaking to a great meeting of teachers and educators there in Chicago and told them about our proposal in Washington for a tuition tax credit for parents of children going to schools like this. So, that's my civic contribution for the day. So, why don't you ask me any questions you might have.

Mr. Sheppard. Don't be bashful now; ask questions. Raise your hand.

Tuition Tax Credits

Q. How soon should we see the tax credits or the benefit of them?

The President. The benefit of the tax credits? Well, we're going to phase it in. It would start—if, of course, the Congress passes the legislation we're presenting—it would start being phased in in '83, that's next year, and be completed by '85. We have to kind of take it easy to start with, because of our budget deficits and the problem we're trying to solve on that.

Q. If the tax deduction is passed, what kind of influence can local government have on private schools?

The President. Well, this will not allow any government interference in any way in education, because the aid is going directly to the parents of children who are going to the schools. So, this will not lead to any government direction or interference in any way in education, if that was the meaning of your question.

Air Traffic Controllers

Q. Mr. President, do you think the government will ever relent on the hiring freeze of ex-air traffic controllers?

The President. All that clicking of cameras—I'm going to have to come a little closer to hear.

Q. Do you think that the government will ever relent on the hiring freeze of ex-air traffic controllers?

The President. Did you say air traffic controllers?

Q. Will the government ever hire them—the ex-ones?

The President. There were some who have been taken back and were hired back because they were able to establish that they were pressured into leaving. And now, the needs are being met very rapidly in the towers with applicants and trainees who are training to become air controllers, and I don't think there will be any further move in that direction.

The law provides that anyone who is discharged from government service is ineligible. We gave a waiver that they could get jobs—a waiver to that law so that they could get other jobs in government if they wanted, but we had—our loyalty had to go to those who stayed in and kept the airlines flying.

Inflation

Q. Mr. President, do you think—[inaudible]—brought under control, and if so, how would you go about doing it?

The President. Well, we've already begun doing it. Inflation was 12.4 percent when we began our administration and—it's fig-

Q. Can the Federal Government support Catholic education of schools?

The President. Support Catholic education of schools? No, this is ruled to be the separation of church and state that they can't do that, but this is why we're proposing a program that we think will help, by getting the aid through the tax credits directly to the parents and that this will help solve the problem.

I think both can benefit, because in that regard there could be tuition tax increases without penalizing the parent at all, because its advantage is the money that would otherwise have gone to taxes.

Line Item Veto

Q. Mr. President, in trying to pass a bill, have you ever wanted to add or subtract an amendment?

The President. Oh, yes. And I'll tell you, when I was Governor in California, the Governor had the right of what's known as line item veto, and so you could veto parts of a bill or even part of the spending in a bill. The President can't do that. The President must take the bill as it comes to him and either veto the entire bill. So, there's grown up in the Federal Government a little device whereby they hang an amendment of something that you really wouldn't want—someone particularly wants it, they want it—they hang it on a bill that you just cannot veto, some very necessary bill, and thus they get it passed.

I think, frankly—of course, I'm prejudiced—I think government would be far better off if the President had the right of line item veto.

Mr. Sheppard. Mr. President, I think maybe one more question according to your time schedule. Who has the best question?

The President. Well, it sounded good, but there were two hands went up, almost identical, at the time. Could I take those two if I make it short?

Mr. Sheppard. Of course, Mr. President.

The President. All right.

Cost of Education

Q. Mr. President, what can be done to bring the cost of education down so that the children in the middle-income group can afford college?

The President. Well, the cost of education has, again, been a result of inflation and, as we cure inflation, that is partly resolved.

But our program has been quite misunderstood—of loans and grants to college students of demonstrated need, who could not otherwise go. And that program has in it something in the neighborhood of \$12 billion. The Federal Government is providing some 7 million loans and grants for the roughly 11 million college students that there are in the country. And all a student has to do is prove that they have—that otherwise they couldn't go. And in proving that need, it will not only depend on the family's income, but also the number of children in the family to be educated, whether there are any unusual medical problems, and so forth. So, there is that kind of aid. But in addition, there are all kinds of other scholarship programs and even independent loan programs.

There was no such thing as a Federal program when I went to school, but I had to work my way through school; in fact, I washed dishes in a girls' dormitory. [Laughter] And I also had to borrow before I got out, but I borrowed from a private foundation that was set up where people contribute the money to a foundation just to lend, and then you pay the money back after you get out of school.

So, I think that there are sizable and good aid programs and even work-study programs to help.

Now, the young boy in the rear of the room. This does it then, I'm sorry.

Gun Control

Q. Mr. President, do you have any future plans on gun control?

The President. Future plans on—

Q. —gun control.

The President. Gun control?

Q. Yes.

The President. This basically belongs back at the State level. You must remember, the Constitution, in the tenth amendment, says the Federal Government shall do only those things prescribed in the Constitution.

But I believe in California that we took the path of gun control that was best. I don't believe there's any way you can keep the criminal from getting a gun, just as you

can't keep them from trying to steal anything they want. Now, the law that we passed in California, I heartily recommend to any society. We passed a law that said if a criminal is convicted of a crime and had in his possession a gun at the time he committed the crime, whether he used it or not, add 5 to 15 years to the prison sentence. And on top of that, then passed another law that said no judge can find a prisoner guilty who had a gun in the commission of a crime, and then give him probation. He must go to prison. And I think making it so costly to carry a gun is far more enforceable than trying to keep them from getting it.

Washington, D.C., has probably the strictest gun laws in the United States, and there are some 20,000 gun laws now in the United States. And yet March 30th a year ago, a young man that disabled me—he was in Washington, D.C., in broad daylight, out on the public street, standing, made his way among the press corps as I came out of the building, and all those laws did not keep him from having a gun and not only shooting me but shooting three other people.

So, as I say, I think the penalties—and one last thing I'll add to that. Years ago in England—England was always very proud of the fact that the English police did not have to carry guns. And the reason they didn't have to carry guns—and this sounds very cruel, and I'm not recommending this, but I just point out what that kind of a threat can do. In England, if a criminal carried a gun, even though he didn't use it, he was not tried for burglary or theft or whatever he was doing, he was tried for first-degree murder and hung if he was found guilty. They said that the fact that he carried the gun meant that he had premeditated using the gun to kill someone if necessary. And so the criminal stopped carrying guns, and the police didn't have to carry guns, and it all worked out very well until they eliminated capital punishment and changed things.

When, they've told me I've used up all the time.

Teacher. Mr. President, is it possible for this class to come up and get their civics books autographed by you?

The President. Yes, I don't care if it does take a few minutes. I'll write fast.

Note: Michael Sheppard, civics teacher, began the session at 11:44 a.m. by introducing the President to the eighth grade teacher and the eighth grade students of his civics class who participated in the session.

The President visited the school after addressing the National Catholic Education Association in Chicago. The transcript of the question-and-answer session was not available in time for inclusion in last week's issue.

Luncheon for Editors and Broadcasters from Southeastern States

Question-and-Answer Session Following the Luncheon. April 16, 1982

The President. Well, anyone who is still eating or drinking coffee or anything, keep right at it, and we'll have that dialog I mentioned. I didn't realize that I talked so long at first, until I sat down at the table and realized how cold the soup was. [Laughter]

I've had a request for the first question here.

News Coverage of the Recession

Q. Mr. President, you recently were critical of network coverage of some of your programs, and since we're all in the news and journalism business, I thought maybe you could respond to the question: Is this some sort of a beginning of an attack or an assault on the media?

The President. No, and the thing that you've just asked about—out in Oklahoma I had met with a group, the publisher and some others from the paper out there, and we were sitting around having a conversation about this. And what I actually protested was that I felt that the news media in general was just creating such a drumbeat of pessimism in this time of recession; that I've always felt that there is a psychological factor in recession, and that if you just keep hammering at this, you add to the recession. You have people that suddenly say, "Well, I won't buy this or that," or "I won't do what I was going to do because of the fear of it." And actually, I think some of this pessimism is—it can't really be justified as

recognized, encouraged, and promoted. And that's why we established the President's Volunteer Action Awards and brought this year's recipients to the White House.

One of those given the award was a man named Bill Sample. Bill was a Philadelphia policeman assigned to a local children's hospital. He saw the desperation—financial and emotional—of those with seriously ill children. Originally he did what he could out of his own pocket, and then he established the Sunshine Foundation to get others involved. The Foundation helps with expenses and, whenever possible, fulfills the child's dream—sending the little boy or girl to Disneyland or on a boat trip down the Mississippi. Today the Sunshine Foundation depends on 200 volunteers working in 7 chapters in 3 States. And whoever said that cops don't have a heart?

A major goal of the task force is to get the word out about good people like Bill Sample. Unfortunately, the news media, by and large, has been missing the biggest news story of the year: the surge of creative, innovative, problemsolving activity at the local level.

I recently met with representatives of 30 of the country's largest broadcasting groups and told them how one station, KAKE-TV, in Wichita, Kansas, was able to play a leading role in its own community. The news teams of KAKE focused in on some local problems and then called other cities to find ways that they were able, by enlisting support from private-sector and partnership efforts, to tackle those problems. And after hearing about what KAKE had accomplished the broadcasters enthusiastically endorsed the concept and told me their stations would try to emulate the effort in their own communities.

In short, there's much to be done. And while no one is capable of doing everything, everyone is capable of doing something.

I'd like to close with this thought. During the campaign I talked about family, neighborhood, work, peace, and freedom. And it wasn't just campaign rhetoric. And I say to you in utmost sincerity, it's time for us to return to some of these basic beliefs.

It won't be easy; it'll take commitment, hard work, and perseverance. But how great the results can be. And you in Chicago

know the importance of neighborhoods. You were once known as the city of neighborhoods. Well, this project today is a wonderful display of community spirit and support for something that you believe in. Fundamentals like this, which have played such a significant role, cannot be replaced whole-horse by Federal programs and paid bureaucracy.

Thomas Jefferson, the author of liberty, the father of our freedom, once wrote, "I deem it the duty of every man to devote a certain portion of his income for charitable purposes; and that it is his further duty to see it so applied as to do the most good of which it is capable." Jefferson knew well the relationship between the responsibility of which we speak today and the freedom of our people.

Another great American, Dwight Eisenhower, saw this when he quoted that young Frenchman, de Tocqueville's line: "America is great because America is good. And if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great."

All of us are aware of the reservoir of goodness which lies waiting to be tapped. Let's make it our job—everyone's job—to encourage our fellow citizens to do those good works which need to be done. With the help of God we can and we will keep America the great and the free nation that it is.

Thank you again for what you're doing and for your presence here today. God bless you.

Note: The President spoke at 1:27 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago, Ill. Prior to his remarks, he attended a reception for luncheon headtable guests at the hotel.

Providence-St. Mel High School

*Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the Student Body.
May 10, 1982*

The President. Well, Mr. Adams,¹ to the teachers here at this school, and to all of

¹ Paul Adams, principal of Providence-St. Mel High School.

table a treaty calling for a total elimination of their SS-20's and no implanting of our Pershing missiles in all of Europe. And, so far, the Russians—their first offer was back, they suggested that we freeze the weapons the way they were. Well now, you can figure out what that means. They wanted to freeze the weapons with 900 nuclear warheads aimed at Europe, and Europe has none aimed at them. I don't think that's a very fair freeze. So, we're trying to get those eliminated.

Now we want to go into negotiations on all of them, but it has to be—we can't do it unilaterally. Can you imagine what would happen in the world if you left the Soviet Union, with its pattern of aggression, with the fact that what it's doing in Afghanistan, how it's shown that it wants to interfere in other countries—if we did away with ours and left them with those thousands and thousands of missiles, that in 28 minutes from the time someone pushes the button could be hitting the targets in our country? So, we have said to them, "All right. Let's both of us start reducing those weapons down, keeping—and being equal, and get them down to where they don't constitute the threat. And of course the ultimate goal that we could all dream of is the same one that's in Geneva now, getting rid of them forever.

And believe it or not, you can be proud of your country. Under President Eisenhower, a number of years ago, this country, we had the weapon then, and the Soviet Union was just beginning to try and build them. But we had them, and President Eisenhower offered to the Soviets and to the world to turn all such weapons over to an international body like the United Nations and take all of them away as a threat between nations. And the Soviet Union refused. So, we're going to try again.

Q. Thank you.

Gun Control

Q. My name is Toni Duffy—

The President. Oh, could I just finish with the three that are there, then?

All right. He tells me my time is up. We'll take these three then. I'm sorry.

Q. —and I would like to ask you what are your feelings concerning gun control?

The President. What?

Q. What are your feelings concerning gun control?

The President. Oh, feelings concerning gun control. I would like to tell you something we did in California that I think's the only answer. I don't believe that taking guns away from honest people is going to keep the criminals from getting them.

There probably are no stricter gun controls in the world than those in Washington, D.C. There are over 20,000 gun-control laws in the United States today. But the fellow that decided to use me for target practice a year ago last March, there he was on the street at 2 o'clock in the afternoon in spite of all those laws against it, and he had a gun.

What we did in California is what I recommend is the answer. We passed a law when I was Governor that said that anyone who commits a crime, if he had in his possession a gun at the time he committed the crime, whether he used the gun or not, add 5 to 15 years to the prison sentence—and no probation, he had to go to prison. And I think that might take some of the guns out of the pockets of the criminals.

Foreign Relations

Q. Mr. President, my name is Matthew Hicks, and my question is if the United States is a democracy, why do we support and are allied to countries such as Argentina and South Africa which are dictatorships?

The President. What we're trying to do, we've had in the past abandoning those countries, saying we won't do any business or have any relations with them. And it didn't accomplish anything. And in many instances—not those two particular countries—but a number of other countries in the world, emerging countries, wound up with even more authoritarian governments than the dictatorships you name. They ended up under the totalitarianism of Soviet-inspired communism—Angola, policed by Cuban troops that the Soviet has put there; South Yemen; Ethiopia; countries of that kind.

My belief is that we can do better with what I have called quiet diplomacy, that, no, we don't approve of the practices in some of those countries, but let us befriend

for peace and stability in that troubled region.

We focused on the situation in Lebanon and the negotiations on the Palestinian question. I welcomed President Reagan's assurances of the U.S. determination to continue to play the role of the full partner in the peace process. I also welcomed his reaffirmation of the United States commitment to support the territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty of Lebanon.

The time factor is crucial to the success of our endeavors. Top priority must be given to reaching agreement on the withdrawal of Israeli forces. Upon achieving that, other aspects of the problem would be easier to solve.

We have always seen the necessity to make meaningful progress towards a comprehensive settlement. In this respect, the centrality of the Palestinian problem in the entire dispute becomes self-evident. With this in mind, we supported President Reagan's initiative on September 1st, 1982. We earnestly hope that the weeks ahead will witness movement towards the negotiating table by all the parties concerned.

I am pleased to say that I was encouraged by what I heard from King Hussein of Jordan and the Palestinian leadership, together with several other Arab leaders. I believe that a golden opportunity exists, and it would be a grave mistake to miss it.

I also believe that the peace process would be enforced if the United States moves further in the direction of supporting the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

We agreed that the Israeli settlement policy is a serious obstacle to peace. Therefore, efforts must be exerted to bring about a total freeze of settlement activities.

I discussed with the President certain aspects of the war between Iran and Iraq and the need to exert additional efforts for the purpose of achieving an immediate termination of hostilities.

On bilateral matters, we discussed issues related to economic and to military cooperation. I expressed to President Reagan our gratitude to the American people for their unwavering support. This will enhance our ability to cope with the economic problems we are confronting. The United States has proven it is a real and reliable friend. We

are determined to deepen that friendship and intensify our cooperation.

Thank you.

Reporter. Mr. President, have you changed your mind about corporate taxes?

The President. I said yesterday that I would kick myself for saying that. I have. [Laughter]

Note: President Reagan spoke at 1:28 p.m. to reporters assembled at the South Portico of the White House.

Earlier in the day, President Mubarak met with the President in the Oval Office. Participants in the meeting included, on the American side, Vice President George Bush, Secretary of State George P. Shultz, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs William P. Clark, and Ambassador Philip C. Habib, special representative of the President to the Middle East, and, on the Egyptian side, Deputy Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butrus Butrus Ghali, and Ashraf 'Abd al-Latif Ghorbal, Egyptian Ambassador to the United States.

The two Presidents then went to the Cabinet Room for a meeting with an expanded group of their advisers. The meeting was followed by a working luncheon in the Residence.

Gun Control Act of 1968

Statement Concerning Amendments to the Act. January 27, 1983

Since its inception, this administration has been committed to removing unnecessary and burdensome Federal redtape. We are also committed to the idea that it is the criminal who is responsible for violence and crime, not the law-abiding firearms owner. Accordingly, my administration has sought to remove those restrictions that operate only to burden the law-abiding and to concentrate law enforcement resources upon criminals.

I was pleased, therefore, to sign into law two amendments to the Gun Control Act of 1968 which remove the recordkeeping re-

quirement on sales of .22 rimfire ammunition. Prior to this, dealers were required to verify and record the identity, birthdate, and ammunition type for most retail ammunition sales. Since several billion rounds of ammunition are sold to sportsmen and sportswomen each year, a tremendous amount of time and paperwork was involved in recording these sales. Yet there was little evidence that these recordkeeping requirements were of significant use in solving crime.

These amendments will remove needless recordkeeping requirements for the most popular sporting ammunition, the .22 rimfire, and thus eliminate the paperwork on over a billion rounds annually.

Note: The amendments were contained in H.J. Res. 631, which provided for continuing appropriations for fiscal year 1983. As enacted, H.J. Res. 631 is Public Law 97-377, approved by the President on December 21, 1982.

Republican National Committee

Remarks at a Reception Honoring Richard Richards. January 27, 1983

The President. Say, you're here from all over, aren't you? Thank you. Thank you for a very—

Audience member. [Inaudible]—in Boston.

The President. What?

Audience member. We love you in Boston.

The President. Thank you. And I want to tell you, for one of us to get loved in Boston—[laughter]—takes some doing.

But I want to thank you very much. You aren't by any chance Republicans, are you? [Laughter] I knew I was among friends. But I dropped by to say a few words, if I could, about a personal friend of mine—and of the GOP as well.

You know, Robert Louis Stevenson once said that a friend is a present you give yourself. And in Dick Richards, I think we've given ourselves quite a gift, a very good friend.

Back in '76 when we had an incumbent President and I happened to be a challenger, Dick was the State chairman in Utah. And he put himself on the line, becoming the first State chairman to endorse me. I've never forgotten the courage and conviction that it took to do that, and, Dick, I want you to know that I'll always be grateful.

But Dick is not just a friend. As head of the RNC, he's been a friend of all Republicans. During his tenure as Chairman, he's devoted himself to raising money and providing expertise for our cause and our candidates. And during his tenure, the RNC subsequently raised more money than at any other time in Republican Party history.

He also devoted himself to—[applause]—and he deserves that. He also devoted himself to fortifying our country and our—or our county and our State organizations, I should say. He created a labor advisory board, opening channels to organized labor, and he made real progress in recruiting and financing qualified minority candidates. And, Dick, that's a record which honors you personally, but I think, also, all of us take pride in it. Now—[applause]—yes, you can.

But now, about the new leadership—Paul Laxalt has agreed to serve as a General Chairman and to help coordinate the activities of all the Republican committees. And Frank Fahrenkopf will serve as Chairman of the RNC, and we look forward to working with Frank as he discharges the historic responsibilities of that chairmanship.

And if I can, I'd like to give a more upbeat prognostication about our party's future than some of those you may have been hearing or reading in certain newspapers that just want to be coldly calculating about us.

I think our party's going to be in good shape by 1984, despite what you read in the paper. We'll do well because of what you might call the "Republican strategic triad." That's fundraising ability, nuts and bolts organization, and talented candidates. And let me say the issues, also, will start to break our way as the economy improves and many of our problems will begin to correct themselves. We're going to have a good record to run on in 1984. And as just an indication of that, General Motors has just announced that over the next 3 months

ernment based on justice, democracy, and the rights of the individual.

Twenty-two years later Soviet tyranny imposed itself on Lithuania and denied the Lithuanian people their just right of national self-determination. In the intervening years, the United States has refused to recognize the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

An enduring belief in freedom for all people unites Americans everywhere. But we must be vigilant in the protection of our common ideal, for as long as freedom is denied others, it is not secure here.

We mark this anniversary of Lithuanian independence with a renewed hope that the blessings of liberty will be restored to Lithuania.

The Congress of the United States, by House Joint Resolution 60, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim February 16, 1983, as Lithuanian Independence Day.

Now, Therefore, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim February 16, 1983, as Lithuanian Independence Day.

I invite the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and deeds and to reaffirm their dedication to the ideals which unite us and inspire others.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of February, 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, 11:19 a.m., February 17, 1983]

The President's
News Conference of
February 16, 1983

Employment Programs

The President. I have a short statement to make before we get to your questions. I assume that you do have some questions. I

would especially like to speak to our citizens who've been hurt by unemployment.

One of the most discouraging things about the recent recession was its duration. The figures show that industrial production leveled out in '79, has generally declined since then. But there was encouraging news as you all know today. Industrial production was up nine-tenths of 1 percent in January, with autos and steel up sharply. And this upturn has been supported by other favorable economic signals in recent weeks, including today's report that January housing starts are up 36 percent over the previous month to the highest monthly level since 1979.

As a result of the economic program we have already in place, the recovery is beginning to flex its muscles. But far too many Americans are still unemployed. The question still before us is how to ease the burden on the jobless without threatening the long-term recovery. And with this balance in mind, I recently instructed the Office of Management and Budget to see what we could do to increase employment by providing more relief in the short term. But I told them not to bring me just another quick fix.

Since then, we've been working toward a bipartisan compromise on jobs and humanitarian aid. And I hope that in the next several days, we can reach an agreement with the Congress so that a bill can be on my desk in March.

The bipartisan compromise has three basic elements. First, it would provide \$4 billion in accelerated expenditures for needed Federal construction and repair projects. These projects directly and indirectly could provide as many as 470,000 jobs. Second, we would provide \$2.9 billion to fund the supplementary employment insurance—or unemployment insurance, I should say, the programs through the end of the year. And, third, we're seeking 300 million in additional humanitarian relief for those who are in serious distress.

Contrary to previous plans, this one is consistent with our basic long-term recovery program and my own personal principles. It funds no make-work jobs. Instead we're speeding up projects that are already planned and needed. This approach also

But the AWACS, this is not an unusual happening. We have conducted joint exercises and training exercises with the Egyptian Air Force—one, last year. We'll do more in the future. And these planes have been there for quite some time in Egypt, the AWACS planes, for this kind of an exercise, and that's what they're going to conduct.

Q. So, if I may follow up, sir. You don't see, then, any unusual or particular threat from Libya toward Egypt or its neighbors at this moment beyond the general attitude the Libyans have had?

The President. Well, as I've said to you, we're well aware of their propensity for doing things like that, so we wouldn't be surprised. But this is an exercise that we've done before, are going to do again, and going to do it now. And there, as I say, has been no naval movement at all.

Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News]?

Q. Sir, I'd like to follow up on Lou's question. We understand that the threat may be from Qadhafi to the Sudan. And my question to you is, how serious is the threat to the Sudan? And, if necessary, would you use American forces to stop Qadhafi?

The President. I don't think there's any occasion for that; it's never been contemplated. But we've known that the Sudan is one of the neighboring states that he has threatened with destabilizing and so forth, just as he has with Chad. And that's all I can say about that. But, no, we don't have any forces in that area that would be involved.

Q. Well, sir, the question arises because, you'll remember very well, in 1981 we shot down two of Qadhafi's aircraft that we said were challenging us in the Gulf of Sidra. I take it if we do have naval forces there, we'd repeat that, if necessary?

The President. Well, this was an exercise that is held annually by our navy, and part of the force was deployed narrowly in the Gulf of Sidra, which he had tried to claim—international water or was—not international waters, I'm sorry—was his waters. This is as if we ran a line from the Texas border over to the tip of Florida and said the Gulf of Mexico is American waters. No one else can get in.

But in that instance, it was just very clear cut. They sent out planes, and they shot

missiles at two of our airplanes that were up there. And two of our airplanes turned around and shot missiles at them. And we were just better shots than they were.

Q. Would we do it again if necessary, sir?

The President. I think that any time that our forces, wherever we have put them, are fired upon, I have said, they've got a right to defend themselves, yes.

Now, Godfrey [Godfrey Sperling, *Christian Science Monitor*]?

Gun Control

Q. To another very difficult problem, Mr. President: crime. You are aware, I am sure, that the United States has an utterly disgraceful number of murders. Do you believe that there's any correlation between the wide dissemination of guns in this country and this disgraceful record? And, in short, isn't it time for a truly effective gun control law?

The President. We get back to the old argument again—and I have stated many times—you cannot find in the States, the various States that have gun control laws, that there is any proportionate difference in the crimes committed where there are those very strict laws and where they are far looser in their laws.

I think that what we should be aiming at all over the country is what we did in California, and that is that—never mind whether you're going to try to take guns away from good people, the criminal is going to find a way to have a gun. What we did was say that anyone convicted of a crime, if he had a gun in his possession at the time the crime was committed, whether he used it or not, add 5 to 15 years to the prison sentence and make the prison sentence mandatory. No probation could be given. And I think that is more of an answer. The guns aren't making people criminals; criminals are using guns.

Q. Well, I've been wanting to ask you this for a long while, and with Mr. Hinckley in the news again this last week, don't you think that things might have been different if Hinckley hadn't had more difficulty in being able to get a gun?

The President. Sure would have been more comfortable, except that at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, thereabouts, out there sur-

rounded by many of you, he did what he did in an area that has about the strictest gun control laws that there are in the United States. Now, how effective are gun control laws for someone that wants to commit a crime using a gun when he could choose the place where there's supposed to be least likely to have one?

Candy [Candy Crowley, Associated Press Radio]?

Lebanon

Q. Mr. President, in a recent interview you indicated that if the stabilization of Lebanon would require more peacekeeping forces that we ought to be willing to do that. My question is, is the U.S. proposing or is it backing a plan that would include more peacekeeping forces in Lebanon, and would those forces be somewhere other than the Beirut area?

The President. We have said—and there had been talk of this with regard to the difficulty in getting the present forces of the PLO, the Syrians, and the Israelis out of Lebanon while they establish themselves and their government—we have said that if in consultation with our allies, the multinational forces, if an increase and redeployment of those forces could aid and speed up this getting of the other forces out of there, I would be willing to go along with that. Of course, we would have to have the equal agreement of our allies in that, or maybe other countries could join, too.

And I think it would be well worth it, because I think this is too great an opportunity to finally bring peace to the Middle East for us to let this go by. And I would like—as I say, I think it would be well worth the price to have them there. It doesn't mean that their duty would be very much any different than it is today. It's to be a stabilizing force while Libya [Lebanon]¹ recovers from this long period of warlords with their own armies and so forth, and establishes its sovereignty over its own borders.

Q. If I could follow up, you seem to be indicating that you have decided. Have you

proposed it? Is it part of the plan that Mr. Habib² has taken?

The President. No, this is just, as I've said, that if this should become a factor, and this could be the key element in resolving this situation, this departure of forces from Lebanon. Then, yes, I would be willing to go along with this.

West German Elections

Q. Mr. President, as you know, there's an election approaching in West Germany, and the latest polls appear to give the opposition a prospect at least of winning those elections in March. My question to you is, what do you think the consequences would be for the Western Alliance if a new German Government took office and declined to deploy the Pershing missiles?

The President. I think it would be a terrible setback to the cause of peace and disarmament. So far I've had no indication that that would be a possibility. Herr Vogel³ has been here in this country. He indicated support of what it is that we're proposing in the arms reduction talks, and he seemed to indicate his knowledge of how important our continued plan to deploy—remember, at their request—those missiles would be in securing this reduction in armaments.

So, we're not going to inject ourselves into anyone else's internal affairs or elections at all. But I believe that the Vice President's trip there found great support all over Europe of what it is we're doing, and in Germany, even, from the fact that there is—they're preparing for an election.

Q. So, you think the deployment question will not turn on the West German elections, then?

The President. No, I don't. I don't really believe that.

When I said it would be terrible, I did not mean that to infer as that someone else might win an election. I meant that it would be terrible if any of our allies withdrew from their present position of support for this.

²Philip C. Habib, the President's Special Representative for the Middle East.

³Hans-Jochen Vogel, Social Democratic Party candidate for Chancellor.

¹White House correction.

you can choose for yourself, stiffer requirements for graduating. All of those things, I think your school is engaged in and is doing right now.

Mr. Garcia. Okay. Anyone else? Are there any other questions? Okay, then give—pass the microphone over to Robin—Robin. Pass it down to Robin. There you go.

Q. Mr. President, how do you like living in the White House?

The President. How do I like living in the White House?

Q. Yes.

The President. Well, I've described it several ways and several different ways. I told them once when I was a kid and my father worked in a store, we lived above the store. It's a little bit that way in the White House. You go to work in an elevator—[laughter]—and go home from work in an elevator. No, it's very beautiful, and you're impressed by the history of the building and can't complain about the lack of comfort. It is a most comfortable place to live.

At the same time, there is a little feeling of being a bird in a gilded cage. You're rather restricted and limited in what you can do. Once you get upstairs there, that's about where you are until it's time to go to work again. And that's why I found why so many Presidents, including myself now, on weekends go to Camp David, where you can get back to a normal house and open a front door and walk out in the yard if you want to, take a hike, and do things of that kind. You are restricted there in the heart of the city.

But the history of it never ceases to impress you, the knowledge of all the people that have lived there. It used to be that the White House was also all the offices of the President's staff and Cabinet and so forth. And it was in the time of Teddy Roosevelt when—

Mr. Garcia. Mr. President?

The President. What?

Mr. Garcia. I think our time is pretty short now, and I see a signal coming over here. And it's—

The President. All right.

Mr. Garcia. —been a pleasure to have you visit with us here at—

The President. Well, I've enjoyed it.

Mr. Garcia. Okay, so we want to thank you very much.

The President. I left Teddy Roosevelt way up in the air. And I was just going to tell that they had seven children, and his wife one day told him that he was going to have to get all those employees of his out of the White House or she couldn't raise seven kids. [Laughter] And that's when they built the Oval Office and all the places where we now have the offices that we go to in an elevator.

Well, listen, I've taken too much of your time. And let me just once again say, really, take seriously what is happening here. This is a course that can be as important as anything in the world to all of you and what your futures—what you want your futures to be.

Mr. Garcia. I think that's about it.

The President. Sure. [Inaudible]

Mr. Garcia. No, not at all. We want to thank you very much. It's been an honor to have you here.

Note: The question-and-answer session began at 10:21 a.m. in the Pioneer High School courtyard. The students were participants in the high school's Limited English Proficiency Clinic, which is taught by Daniel A. Garcia.

"Salute to the President" Dinner

Remarks at the California Republican Party Fundraising Dinner in Long Beach, Calif. June 30, 1983

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Ed, thank you very much. And I thank you all for that wonderful California welcome. I, too, miss those who couldn't be here tonight. But, Bill, you mean they're still doing it on the night before the first of July?

Response. Hasn't changed in 16 years.

The President. I can remember 8 years of waiting up there until 3 and 4 in the morning. You see, they stop the clock at midnight, so that it won't be the first of July, while they go on doing what they're doing.

Well, seeing old friends like you here tonight is the best part of the trip. And now,

with courage makes a majority." George wants to make it safe for Californians to walk their streets again without having to be afraid. He said no to Prop. 15 because you won't get gun control by disarming law-abiding citizens. There's only one way to get real gun control: Disarm the thugs and the criminals, lock them up, and if you don't actually throw away the key, at least lose it for a long time.

George always wants to help working people keep their earnings safe from all those who would bleed them dry with higher and higher taxes. I note that there have been some complaints about and against Prop. 13—anything to get more tax dollars. Maybe you could help George by sending a message: Tell them the people approved Prop. 13, the people still want Prop. 13, and the people will defend Prop. 13.

I think I can sympathize with what George is up against. When I was here a year ago, I said that we were in an epic contest with the proponents of "No," the people who offer the politics of no growth, no take-home pay, no incentives to work or save.

We arrived in Washington to find an economic calamity dumped in our laps—spending increasing at an annual rate of 17 percent, double-digit inflation, record interest rates, and a tax system pushing working families into higher brackets faster than they could earn and save.

It took us nearly the entire first year to get our program approved and, even then, the tax cut had to be watered down. We had proposed a 30-percent cut; they gave us 25 percent, and they delayed the start of that for several months.

The morning after the tax cut passed, the liberals there in the Congress started announcing that the program had failed. I borrowed their favorite word, "fairness," and said that fairness required that they give us a little more time, like 24 months instead of 24 hours. And they made predictions then, more predictions than the TV weatherman. [Laughter] They said our program would guarantee double-digit inflation. They had left us an inflation rate of 12.4 percent. That has been knocked down to 3.5 percent for the last year, the lowest in 10 years. And for the last 6 months, it's

been less than 2 percent. They said the program would push interest rates to a new record. Well, the prime rate was 21.5 percent when they left town. Today, it's 10.5 percent.

And then they got mean. They tried to cap the last installment of your tax cut. But yesterday morning, 55-45, the Republican Senate voted to give you the full 10-percent cut, beginning tomorrow morning. And it will be followed by indexing in 1985. If they had their way, they'd tax motherhood and apple pie.

A recovery is gaining momentum, and the economy is beginning to sparkle. Tax rates have been cut. Real wages are improving. Retail sales are up. Productivity has reversed its decline. The stock market has surged into new high ground. Venture capital investments have reached record levels. Production is increasing in one industry after another. More and more workers are being called back. And the words of Al Jolson are true today, "You ain't seen nothing yet." How come they don't call it Reaganomics anymore? [Laughter]

You know, I never called it that. That wasn't my choice. I've always thought that what we put in operation there was the people's program, your program. And anyway, Reaganomics, that was better than taxonomics, and the last thing we need is more taxes for more spending. And if they can't get that straight, then I am prepared to veto their budget-busting appropriation bills, again and again and again.

Tax rates affect prices for working, saving, and investment. And when you raise the price of those productive activities, you get less of them and more activity in the underground economy and the tax shelters. And if you're in business, you know you can't force the public to buy products that aren't selling by raising the price. Too many in Washington and across the country still believe that we can raise more revenues from the economy by making it more expensive to work, save, and invest in the economy.

Do you know that since the capital gains tax rate was cut in 1978, Federal revenues from that tax have gone up in spite of the lower rate? And since the top rate of personal income tax was lowered from 70 to 50

*Gen Counsel --
See highlighted
sections on pp. 2-5*

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Phoenix, Arizona)

For Immediate Release

May 6, 1983

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE 112TH ANNUAL MEMBERS BANQUET
OF THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

Phoenix Civic Plaza
Phoenix, Arizona

1:02 P.M. MST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you very much. President Gaffney, officers, Members of the Congress, honored guests, may I add with pride and pleasure, my fellow members of the National Rifle Association, -- (applause) -- 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. (Applause.)

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 1,000 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. Applause.)

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 the world that I've just received. For the past two 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. (Applause.)

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 negotiation and we will never swerve from that path. I want to salute Prime Minister

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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. (Applause.)

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 2.5 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. (Applause.) 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 laws. I happen to know this from personal experience. (Applause.)

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 be 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

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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. Hard-core 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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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 or federal offenses. (Applause.) 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. (Applause.)

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

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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 would be a lot of smiles in this place if you would adopt gun control." (Applause.)

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 five years coincides with a nationwide crackdown on career criminals." Serious reported crime dropped by four 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. (Applause.) Another way NRA can help police is to support our efforts for a minimum mandatory term of five years imprisonment, and perhaps there will be some disagreement in this but I have to say it, for the use of armour-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 bullet-proof 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 \$187.5 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,

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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 and Congressman Volkmer. I look forward to signing a bill that truly protects the rights of law-abiding citizens, without diminishing the effectiveness of criminal law enforcement against the misuse of firearms.

Your leadership's -- (applause) -- support has been important to us. Just last year, I signed two amendments into law. One eliminated unnecessary record-keeping 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 -- (applause) -- 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. (Applause.)

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 -- (applause) -- Teddy -- 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 -- (applause) -- 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. (Applause.)

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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 wet lands.

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 sports-ment. 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 will 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 preserving 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

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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, 21.5 percent interest rates -- the highest in more than 100 years -- the worst tax burden in our peacetime history, are the last people who should be giving sermons on fairness and compassion. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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.. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.) 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 had known something about it. We had shortages of skilled manpower, faulty equipment, lack of spare parts, and insufficient fuel and ammunition for proper training.

MORE

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. (Applause.) 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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

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. (Applause.)

Now, nine 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 sea lanes 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've 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 benefitting from their own risks -- only then will their society become dynamic,

MORE

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. (Applause.)

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 suggestions -- (laughter)(applause) -- 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 have 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.

END

1:32 P.M. MST

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PJR Subj
(Gun Control
Amendments)
NRA)

For Immediate Release

January 27, 1983

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Since its inception, this Administration has been committed to removing unnecessary and burdensome federal red tape. We are also committed to the idea that it is the criminal who is responsible for violence and crime, not the law-abiding firearms owner. Accordingly, my Administration has sought to remove those restrictions that operate only to burden the law-abiding and to concentrate law enforcement resources upon criminals.

I was pleased, therefore, to sign into law two amendments to the Gun Control Act of 1968 which remove the recordkeeping requirement on sales of .22 rimfire ammunition. Prior to this, dealers were required to verify and record the identity, birthdate, and ammunition type for most retail ammunition sales. Since several billion rounds of ammunition are sold to sportsmen and sportswomen each year, a tremendous amount of time and paperwork was involved in recording these sales. Yet there was little evidence that these recordkeeping requirements were of significant use in solving crime.

These amendments will remove needless recordkeeping requirements for the most popular sporting ammunition, the .22 rimfire, and thus eliminate the paperwork on over a billion rounds annually.

#

RJR Subj.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 25, 1983

FOR: RICHARD G. DARMAN
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND
DEPUTY TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING *Orig. signed by FFF*
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Proposed Statement to the National
Rifle Association re: Amendments
to the Gun Control Act of 1968

Our office has reviewed the above-referenced draft statement and has no legal objection to its issuance.

FFF:PJR:ph 1/25/83

cc: FFFielding
PJRusthoven ✓
Subject
Chron.

TJR 2/1/83

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 25, 1983

FOR: FRED F. FIELDING

FROM: PETER J. RUSTHOVEN *PJR*

SUBJECT: Proposed Statement to the National Rifle Association re: Amendments to the Gun Control Act of 1968

Richard Darman's office requested comments by close of business today on the above-referenced draft statement, which Ed Meese, in response to a request from the National Rifle Association, asked be prepared and issued for publication in the NRA magazine and distribution to NRA members. The statement was prepared by OPD and has been approved by Meese.

The background of this matter involves the inclusion in the latest continuing appropriations measure, at the sponsorship of Senator Robert Dole (R.-Kan.), of an amendment to the Gun Control Act of 1968 eliminating record-keeping requirements on the sale of .22-caliber ammunition (apparently the most popular sporting ammunition). The amendment had no effect on recordkeeping requirements for sales of firearms themselves.

The proposed statement recites the Administration's commitment to elimination of "restrictions which operate only to burden the law-abiding," and notes the President's "view that it is the criminal who is responsible for crime and violence in these United States, not the law-abiding firearms owner." The amendment is described as eliminating "the paperwork as to well over a billion rounds annually." An NRA press release dated December 24, 1982, quotes Senator Dole as stating, "There has never been a case solved by use of ammunition recordkeeping information in 14 years."

This statement will draw the predictable fire (pardon me) from the predictable sources, few of which are likely to have much sympathy for the Administration in any event. Substantively, the statement appears accurate and, given the subject matter, not inflammatory. Since (a) there appears to be no legal objection to the statement, (b) it will be well received by the NRA membership, and (c) the Counsellor evidently has a personal interest in this matter, I do not recommend making any objection to its issuance.

A memorandum for Darman is attached for your review and signature.

Attachment

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 25, 1983

FOR: RICHARD G. DARMAN
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND
DEPUTY TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Proposed Statement to the National
Rifle Association re: Amendments
to the Gun Control Act of 1968

Our office has reviewed the above-referenced draft statement and has no legal objection to its issuance.

WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

- O - OUTGOING
- H - INTERNAL
- I - INCOMING
Date Correspondence Received (YY/MM/DD) / /

Name of Correspondent: Richard G. Darman

MI Mail Report User Codes: (A) (B) (C)

Subject: Proposed Statement re Amendments to Gun Control Act of 1968

ROUTE TO:	ACTION	DISPOSITION
Office/Agency (Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CU Holland</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>8310124</u>
	Referral Note:	
<u>CUAT 09</u>	I	<u>8310124</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>58310125</u>
	-	<u> / / </u>
	Referral Note:	
	-	<u> / / </u>
	Referral Note:	
	-	<u> / / </u>
	Referral Note:	

ACTION CODES:

- A - Appropriate Action
- C - Comment/Recommendation
- D - Draft Response
- F - Furnish Fact Sheet
to be used as Enclosure

- I - Info Copy Only/No Action Necessary
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- S - For Signature
- X - Interim Reply

DISPOSITION CODES:

- A - Answered
- B - Non-Special Referral
- C - Completed
- S - Suspended

FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

- Type of Response = Initials of Signer
- Code = "A"
- Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments: _____

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.
Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOB).
Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.
Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 1/24/83 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 1/25/83 c.o.b.

SUBJECT: PROPOSED STATEMENT RE AMENDMENTS TO GUN CONTROL ACT OF 1968

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FULLER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEESE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	GERGEN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAKER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HARPER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEAVER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	JENKINS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STOCKMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MURPHY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CLARK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROLLINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/> P	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SS	WILLIAMSON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DOLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	VON DAMM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DUBERSTEIN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BRADY/SPEAKES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FELDSTEIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FIELDING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Remarks:

May we have your comments on the attached Statement by close of business tomorrow, January 25. Thank you.

Richard G. Darman
Assistant to the President
(x2702)

Response:

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

24 January 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD DARMAN

FROM:

KENNETH CRIBB, JR. *Ken*

SUBJECT:

Proposed Statement Acknowledging RR's Signature
of Amendments to Gun Control Act of 1968

NRA has asked for a Presidential statement acknowledging that RR signed into law provisions which would remove the requirement of record-keeping on sales of .22 - caliber ammunition. The statement would be published in the NRA magazine and distributed to the entire membership.

Ed Meese has asked OPD to prepare the attached statement and has approved it. He requests that you arrange expedited clearance in order to make the NRA deadline.

Attachments

DRAFT

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Since its inception, this Administration has been committed to the view that it is the criminal who is responsible for violence and crime in these United States, and not the law-abiding firearms owner. Accordingly, my Administration has supported the removal of restrictions which operate only to burden the law-abiding. Instead, we are seeking to concentrate law enforcement resources upon criminals.

I was, therefore, pleased to sign into law two amendments to the Gun Control Act of 1968 which remove the requirement of recordkeeping on sales of .22 rimfire ammunition. Prior to this, dealers were required to verify and record the identity, birthdate, and ammunition type for most retail ammunition sales. Since several billion rounds of ammunition are sold to sportsmen and sportswomen each year, there is a tremendous amount of time and paperwork involved in recording these sales. Yet there has been little evidence that these recordkeeping requirements have been of significant use in solving crime.

These amendments will, at least, remove needless recordkeeping requirements for the most popular sporting ammunition, the .22 rimfire, and thus eliminate the paperwork as to well over a billion rounds annually.

NRA Institute for Legislative Action

News Release

FOR RELEASE UPON RECEIPT
CONTACT: NRA (202) 828-6311

DECEMBER 24, 1982

HJ Res 631

RECORDKEEPING DROPPED FOR .22-CALIBER AMMO

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1969, A SIGNIFICANT PRO-GUN AMENDMENT HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE GUN CONTROL ACT OF 1968.

WITH PUBLIC LAW 97-377 (THE CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS BILL) SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT ON DEC. 21, THE RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENT ON THE SALES OF ALL .22-CALIBER RIMFIRE AMMUNITION WAS DELETED FROM THE FEDERAL GUN LAW.

SPONSORED BY U.S. SEN. ROBERT DOLE (R-KAN.) AND APPROVED BY VOTES IN BOTH THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE, THE REVISION IN THE '68 ACT REMOVES THE UNNECESSARY AND TREMENDOUS REGULATORY BURDEN ON THE LEGITIMATE SALE OF .22 AMMUNITION TO LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS. THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT ITSELF HAS LONG ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SUCH RECORDKEEPING ON THE BILLIONS OF .22 ROUNDS SOLD EACH YEAR WAS WASTEFUL REDTAPE WITH ABSOLUTELY NO LAW ENFORCEMENT VALUE. AS SEN. DOLE NOTED ON THE SENATE FLOOR, "THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A CASE SOLVED BY USE OF AMMUNITION RECORDKEEPING INFORMATION IN 14 YEARS."

"THIS PROVISION IS ONE OF MANY SUCCESSSES IN REFORMING THE FEDERAL GUN LAW THAT WE EXPECT TO SEE IN THE COMING YEAR," SAID WARREN CASSIDY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NRA INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION.

-- 30 --

PJR Subj

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 18, 1982

Dear Dr. Eisenhower:

In reviewing my correspondence recently I discovered with some dismay that I had failed to respond to your thoughtful letter to the President of last August, dealing with the problems of violent crime and whether additional legislation to control concealable handguns should be enacted. I sincerely apologize for this oversight.

As you know, the President is deeply concerned about violent crime and improving the ability of all levels of government to respond more effectively to this problem. This concern led to creation of the Attorney General's Task Force on Violent Crime, which reviewed all aspects of this problem in considerable depth.

Handgun control legislation is, of course, a difficult and controversial issue on which thoughtful persons equally concerned about stopping violent crime frequently disagree. Nonetheless, I greatly appreciated the benefit of having your thinking on this matter, and took the liberty of sharing your letter with persons on my staff and others in the White House.

Again, please accept my thanks for your letter and my apologies for inadvertently failing to respond before now. With all good wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

Orig. signed by FFF

Fred F. Fielding
Counsel to the President

Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower
4545 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21210

FFF:PJR 2/19/82
cc: FFFielding
✓PJRusthoven
Subject
Chron.

RJR Subs.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 18, 1981

FOR: FRED F. FIELDING
FROM: PETER J. RUSTHOVEN *PJR*
SUBJECT: Letter from Dr. Milton Eisenhower re:
President's Position on Gun Control

Our office has been asked to respond to a letter to the President from Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, President Eisenhower's brother, urging the President to change his mind on the appropriateness of gun control legislation and to adopt the recommendations on this subject made by the Attorney General's task force on violent crime.

Attached for your review and signature is a proposed response to Dr. Eisenhower, which does not commit the President one way or the other on the handgun control issue. As you are aware, from all public reports the President remains basically opposed to gun control legislation.

It is my understanding that Herb Ellingwood is working on review of the task force recommendations and on crime issues generally (to the degree our office is involved in such matters), and that Michael Uhlmann has similar responsibilities within the Office of Policy Development. Accordingly, also attached is a short memorandum to Uhlmann, with copy to Herb, forwarding Dr. Eisenhower's letter and your response.

Attachments

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 18, 1981

Dear Dr. Eisenhower:

The President has asked me to respond to your thoughtful letter addressing the problem of violent crime and the advisability of additional legislation aimed at controlling concealable handguns.

As you know, the President is deeply concerned about violent crime and improving the ability of all levels of government to respond effectively to this problem. This concern led to creation of the Attorney General's task force to study this entire problem and make recommendations on proper steps that might be taken by the Federal Government to further our efforts to protect our citizens from domestic violence.

The President also recognizes that handgun control is a difficult and often controversial issue, and that many citizens share your belief that further legislation is needed in this area. He also believes that such legislation raises important questions of effectiveness and enforceability, as well as the issue whether particular proposals should be considered at the state and local rather than the Federal level.

The recommendations of the Attorney General's task force on this and other topics are now being carefully considered. I appreciate your sharing your views on this matter, and have taken the liberty of forwarding copies of your letter to others in the White House directly involved in studying the task force recommendations.

Again, thank you for taking the trouble to set forth your thoughts on this issue. Please accept my best wishes on behalf of the President for your work on the Eisenhower Foundation for the Prevention of Violence.

Sincerely,

Fred F. Fielding
Counsel to the President

Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower
4545 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21210

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 18, 1981

FOR: MICHAEL M. UHLMANN
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Letter from Dr. Milton Eisenhower re:
President's Position on Gun Control

Attached for your information is a copy of a letter to the President from Dr. Milton Eisenhower, urging the President to adopt the recommendations on gun control legislation made by the Attorney General's task force on violent crime. Also attached is a copy of our reply to Dr. Eisenhower's letter.

Attachments

cc: Herbert E. Ellingwood

ID # 837665

JL 003
PR

WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

O - OUTGOING

H - INTERNAL

I - INCOMING

Date Correspondence Received (YY/MM/DD) 81108126

28 AUG 1981

Name of Correspondent: Milton S. Eisenhower

MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Expresses views concerning accountable handguns. Requests the President give serious consideration to the report in the hands of the Attorney General re. same

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Office/Agency (Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CU File</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>81108126</u>		<u>1 1</u>
<u>WAT 09</u>	Referral Note: <u>D</u>	<u>DD 81108131</u>		<u>S 81109108</u> DD
	Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>		<u>1 1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>		<u>1 1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>		<u>1 1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>		<u>1 1</u>

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Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.
Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

Fred Fielding

MILTON S. EISENHOWER

4545 NORTH CHARLES STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21210

PRESIDENT EMERITUS
THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

August 20, 1981

Dear Mr. President:

037665

I write you as one who has worked intimately with eight of your predecessors in the White House and as the former Chairman of a Presidential Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, an eighteen-month task carried out by appointment of President Johnson and concluded under President Nixon. The Commission had the assistance of two hundred of the leading psychologists, criminologists, sociologists, law-enforcement officers, lawyers and others. The Commission's report and a dozen supporting volumes written by research task forces are in the files of the White House.

In 1969, at the time of our report, the rate of violent crime in the United States had doubled in the 1960's following a half century of gradual decline in that rate.

The rate doubled again in the 1970's. It is still increasing alarmingly. It is now so severe that it has changed the very character of American life, with hundreds of thousands fleeing the crime-ridden cities and settling in the electronic sanctuaries of the suburbs which are now armed camps.

Today, at age 82, I am still at work on this problem, now as a private citizen. I am chairman of the newly formed (Milton) Eisenhower Foundation for the Prevention of Violence. Supported by private funds, we shall study many existing examples of crime reduction by community efforts, give widespread distribution to publications which explain these efforts, and help with the initial financing of new community programs.

I know of your past opposition to the control of concealable handguns, but you must be aware of the fact that sixty million concealable handguns, including the so-called Saturday night specials now in the hands of the people, are seldom used by a householder to eject an intruder from the house. Indeed, in less than one percent of the intrusions of thieves and other criminals is the house-owned gun so used. But those very guns are responsible for as many as seventy-five percent of all murders and a high percentage of other violent crimes. Indeed, more children are killed in the home by accident than intruders are driven out by use of home-owned guns.

Your task force, appointed by the Attorney General, has unanimously made reasonable and useful recommendations to check

the importation of parts for Saturday night specials, to establish a waiting period for purchasers of concealable handguns so that appropriate examinations of applicants may be made, and to take other helpful actions.

Between seventy-five and eighty percent of the American people want some type of control brought to bear on the original sale, theft, transfer, and use of concealable handguns. I hope you will give the most serious consideration to the report now in the hands of the Attorney General. The American people will bless you for changing your mind with respect to this problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William F. Buckley Jr.", written in a cursive style.

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500