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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 15, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: DAVID DEMAREST  
TONY SNOW *TS*

FROM: MARY KATE GRANT *MKG*

SUBJECT: VANPAC AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

I. SUMMARY

On Wednesday, October 16, at 11:45 a.m. in the Rose Garden, you will make remarks and present awards to the investigators and prosecutors (called VANPAC) who solved the mail bombing murder of Alabama Federal Judge Robert Vance. In addition to the VANPAC team members, the audience will be 150 local prosecutors brought to Washington by the Justice Department to lobby the House of Representatives for the crime bill.

II. DISCUSSION

The remarks (9 minutes, on cards) pay tribute to those who put Vance's killer behind bars and calls on those present to urge Congress to pass the crime bill.

Grant/Simon  
A:Vance / Draft three  
October 15, 1991

**PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: AWARDS CEREMONY FOR VANPAC TASK FORCE  
THE ROSE GARDEN  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1991  
11:45 A.M.**

Welcome, everyone, to the White House ... and a special hello to our very able acting Attorney General, Bill Barr.

It's an honor to have with us today the true experts on crime and justice in this country: our state and local law enforcement officials. Each of you is here today because you have made a solemn pledge -- and have made great personal sacrifices -- to protect and defend society against the threat of violent crime and drugs. Every American agrees that we have a crime problem in this country. And every American deserves a tough crime bill that strengthens our criminal justice system.

Let me share a story with you. Two years ago, a series of gruesome crimes shocked America. The terror began one peaceful morning when, along with the rest of the day's mail, a parcel arrived at the home of Federal Appeals Court Judge Robert Vance in Mountainbrook, Alabama.

When Judge Vance sat down to open the package, a pipe bomb inside blasted him across the room. Judge Vance was killed, and his wife was severely injured.

The nightmare didn't stop there. Two days later, Alderman Robert Robinson, a prominent official of the N.A.A.C.P., returned to his law office in Savannah, Georgia, after spending the day in court. Along with other papers, a package awaited him in his office. The pipe bomb inside exploded, and Robert Robinson died

Bob  
Buchman  
DoJ

616-2033

too -- a senseless and violent tragedy brought about by an anonymous terrorist.

That same day, packages containing bombs also arrived at a federal courthouse in Atlanta and an N.A.A.C.P. office in Jacksonville. Thank God those bombs were found before more innocent persons were murdered ... in fact, one investigator said it was nothing short of a miracle.

A torrent of threatening letters followed, targeting federal judges, prominent blacks, and civil rights leaders.

With the first bombings, federal authorities began a massive investigation, spearheaded by a task force named VANPAC, after its first victim, Judge Vance. VANPAC was directed by Department of Justice officials, including at the F.B.I. and the U.S. Marshals Service, but other agencies joined in: the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the Postal Inspection Service; and the Internal Revenue Service.

Because of the hard work of the Task Force, they soon zeroed in on a suspect -- got an indictment -- and a conviction in the bombings and related crimes -- and brought a sentence of seven life terms without parole and 400 years imprisonment. The VANPAC case was a great success in the annals of law enforcement and a very important achievement in defense of civil rights.

My congratulations to the two selfless public servants who led the Task Force to its amazing achievements: Louis Freeh, the chief prosecutor and Assistant U.S. Attorney; now a Federal District Judge in Manhattan. And Larry Potts, the chief

[FREE]

Bob  
Buchman

investigator and a Deputy Assistant Director of the F.B.I. To both of them and to their VANPAC colleagues, we owe a debt of gratitude for a job well done. //

Each murder in this country is a tragedy. But the murders of Judge Vance and Robert Robinson took on added meaning: they were part of one man's terrorist war against our courts, our rule of law, our civil rights, and upon our very system of government.

We will not tolerate assaults on these ideals. No American should live in fear of random, senseless violence. No one will be allowed to terrorize our people. //

We are constantly struggling to fight crime of all types. The VANPAC investigation is an excellent example of law enforcement's **swift, professional response** to violent crime in this country. Despite the many obstacles they faced in the criminal justice system, the **VANPAC Task Force leapt into action from the moment of the first bombing.**

Yet when it comes to removing those obstacles before prosecutors and investigators -- on this and many other cases -- time and again, **Congress slumps into inaction.**

I firmly believe that lawmakers must do everything in their power to **support** our law enforcement officials on the front lines. This means sufficient resources -- particularly for prisons -- tough penalties, and reforms to the criminal justice system. It means being on the cutting edge of law enforcement -- creating a 21st century law enforcement system to deal with 21st century criminals. Most importantly, it means holding the

rights of victims higher than the rights of criminals. **Our crime bill -- and only our crime bill -- supports our men and women on the front lines.**

*Paul  
McMullin  
OPD  
005  
514-2061*

The VANPAC case illustrates well where federal law is lacking. Under current federal law, no death penalty exists for the mail-bombing murder of innocent Americans. **We've proposed it.** We've also proposed a death penalty for murdering federal judges and for killing someone in the course of a civil rights crime. Perpetrators of these heinous crimes should be prepared to pay with their lives. **We need a workable federal death penalty -- and we need it now.**

We need a crime bill that will stop the endless abuse of habeas corpus. We need a bill that guarantees that criminals who use serious weapons face serious charges -- and do serious time.

*Bob  
Buckman*

We need a bill that prevents evidence gathered in good faith from being thrown out on a technicality that opens the cell door and lets bad people walk scot free.

Each of you knows the difference -- between a tough crime bill that gives you what you need to win this fight -- and the anti-law enforcement proposals the House Democrats call a crime bill. This week, the House votes on a bill that marks a retreat from current law. It's time we tipped the scales of justice back -- toward the side of dedicated men and women like you.

I need your help in turning the House crime bill around. Your presence here today sends a powerful warning to the Congress

-- that the American people will not accept a crime bill that is tougher on law enforcement than it is on the criminals. //

The time has come. After ~~over a thousand days~~ <sup>two years</sup> of foot-dragging, the House is finally considering the crime bill. If you agree with what I've said here, act today. Let your Representatives know that the House Democrats' bill, as it stands now, is simply unacceptable. Tell them to support the Gekas death penalty amendment. Tell them to vote for the Hyde habeas corpus reforms and the Sensenbrenner amendment on the exclusionary rule. And finally, tell we need the McCollum equal justice act, so that we can have a death penalty that works.

*Leg. Affairs*

Tell them our police, prosecutors and people stand behind these key provisions -- they stand behind a strong crime bill.

Tell them it's time for a criminal justice system that allows us to see the truth come out, the guilty punished, the law upheld, and justice done. That's what our crime bill stands for, and that's what we stand for, and that's what our Representatives should stand for -- when the final vote is taken this week.

Again, my congratulations and thanks to the VANPAC team for a job well done. As our men and women on the front lines, you have shown what we can achieve when we stand united against criminals. We are lucky to have men and women like you defending us on the streets -- now we just need your powerful message to reach the halls of Congress.

God bless you all and thank you.

# # #

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Copy

SCHEDULE PROPOSAL

OCTOBER 4, 1991

TO: KATHY SUPER  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR  
APPOINTMENTS AND SCHEDULING

FROM: EDE HOLIDAY  
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND  
SECRETARY OF THE CABINET

REQUEST: To recognize those Department of Justice personnel involved in the apprehension and prosecution of the murderer of federal judge Robert Vance and NAACP official Robert Robinson, and to express support for the President's crime bill, soon to come to the House floor for consideration.

BACKGROUND: In December, 1989, Walter Leroy Moody, Jr. murdered Federal Circuit Judge Robert Vance and NAACP official and Alderman Robert E. Robinson by the use of mail bombs. The VANPAC Task Force, comprised of federal prosecutors and agents from the FBI, BATF, USPS, the U.S. Marshall's Service, and the IRS, was created to deal with this attack against the courts and the civil rights community. The Task Force succeeded in finding Moody, convicting him, and sentencing him to seven life terms and 400 years' imprisonment.

This event also will provide an appropriate forum to discuss the importance of Congressional passage of the President's Crime Bill. State and local prosecutors also will be invited to the event, which will be used as a kick-off for their lobbying campaign for House passage of the legislation.

DATE AND TIME: Week of October 14

LOCATION: Rose Garden/East Room

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Acting Attorney General William Barr  
FBI Director William Sessions  
Others TBD  
150 invited guests, including the VANPAC Task Force members and their families, and state and local prosecutors.

**AWARDS CEREMONY FOR VANPAC TASK FORCE \ ROSE GARDEN  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1991 \ 11:45 A.M.**

**WELCOME, EVERYONE, TO THE WHITE HOUSE ... AND A  
SPECIAL HELLO TO OUR VERY ABLE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL,  
BILL BARR. WE'RE HONORED TO HAVE HERE BILL SESSIONS,  
THE FBI DIRECTOR, STEPHEN HIGGINS, DIRECTOR OF ATF, AND  
MIKE MOORE, DIRECTOR OF THE MARSHALS SERVICE. AND I  
WANT TO WELCOME JUDGE GERALD TJOFLAT  
[JO-FLAT], WHO CAME ALL THE WAY FROM ALABAMA TO BE HERE  
TODAY.**

**- 2 -**

**IT'S AN HONOR TO HAVE WITH US TODAY THE TRUE  
EXPERTS ON CRIME AND JUSTICE IN THIS COUNTRY: OUR STATE  
AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS. EACH OF YOU IS  
HERE TODAY BECAUSE YOU HAVE MADE A SOLEMN PLEDGE -- AND  
HAVE MADE GREAT PERSONAL SACRIFICES -- TO PROTECT AND  
DEFEND SOCIETY AGAINST THE THREAT OF VIOLENT CRIME AND  
DRUGS. EVERY AMERICAN AGREES THAT WE HAVE A CRIME  
PROBLEM IN THIS COUNTRY. AND EVERY AMERICAN DESERVES A  
TOUGH CRIME BILL THAT STRENGTHENS OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
SYSTEM.**

LET ME SHARE A STORY WITH YOU. TWO YEARS AGO, A SERIES OF GRUESOME CRIMES SHOCKED AMERICA. THE TERROR BEGAN ONE PEACEFUL MORNING WHEN, ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE DAY'S MAIL, A PARCEL ARRIVED AT THE HOME OF FEDERAL APPEALS COURT JUDGE ROBERT VANCE IN MOUNTAINBROOK, ALABAMA.

WHEN JUDGE VANCE SAT DOWN TO OPEN THE PACKAGE, A PIPE BOMB INSIDE BLASTED HIM ACROSS THE ROOM. JUDGE VANCE WAS KILLED, AND HIS WIFE WAS SEVERELY INJURED.

THE NIGHTMARE DIDN'T STOP THERE. TWO DAYS LATER, ALDERMAN ROBERT ROBINSON, A PROMINENT OFFICIAL OF THE N.A.A.C.P., RETURNED TO HIS LAW OFFICE IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, AFTER SPENDING THE DAY IN COURT. ALONG WITH OTHER PAPERS, A PACKAGE AWAITED HIM IN HIS OFFICE. THE PIPE BOMB INSIDE EXPLODED, AND ROBERT ROBINSON DIED TOO -- A SENSELESS AND VIOLENT TRAGEDY BROUGHT ABOUT BY AN ANONYMOUS TERRORIST.

THAT SAME DAY, PACKAGES CONTAINING BOMBS ALSO ARRIVED AT A FEDERAL COURTHOUSE IN ATLANTA AND AN N.A.A.C.P. OFFICE IN JACKSONVILLE. THANK GOD THOSE BOMBS WERE FOUND BEFORE MORE INNOCENT PERSONS WERE MURDERED ... IN FACT, ONE INVESTIGATOR SAID IT WAS NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE.

A TORRENT OF THREATENING LETTERS FOLLOWED, TARGETING FEDERAL JUDGES, PROMINENT BLACKS, AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS.

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WITH THE FIRST BOMBINGS, FEDERAL AUTHORITIES BEGAN A MASSIVE INVESTIGATION, SPEARHEADED BY A TASK FORCE NAMED VANPAC, AFTER ITS FIRST VICTIM, JUDGE VANCE. VANPAC WAS DIRECTED BY DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICIALS, INCLUDING AT THE F.B.I. AND THE U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE, BUT OTHER AGENCIES JOINED IN: THE BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS; THE POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE; AND THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE.

BECAUSE OF THE HARD WORK OF THE TASK FORCE, THEY SOON ZEROED IN ON A SUSPECT -- GOT AN INDICTMENT -- AND A CONVICTION IN THE BOMBINGS AND RELATED CRIMES -- AND BROUGHT A SENTENCE OF SEVEN LIFE TERMS WITHOUT PAROLE AND 400 YEARS IMPRISONMENT. THE VANPAC CASE WAS A GREAT SUCCESS IN THE ANNALS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AND A VERY IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENT IN DEFENSE OF CIVIL RIGHTS.

MY CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TWO SELFLESS PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO LED THE TASK FORCE TO ITS AMAZING ACHIEVEMENTS: LOUIS FREEH [FREE], THE CHIEF PROSECUTOR AND ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY; NOW A FEDERAL DISTRICT JUDGE IN MANHATTAN. AND LARRY POTTS, THE CHIEF INVESTIGATOR AND A DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE F.B.I. TO BOTH OF THEM AND TO THEIR VANPAC COLLEAGUES, WE OWE A DEBT OF GRATITUDE FOR A JOB WELL DONE. //

EACH MURDER IN THIS COUNTRY IS A TRAGEDY. BUT THE MURDERS OF JUDGE VANCE AND ROBERT ROBINSON TOOK ON ADDED MEANING: THEY WERE PART OF ONE MAN'S TERRORIST WAR AGAINST OUR COURTS, OUR RULE OF LAW, OUR CIVIL RIGHTS, AND UPON OUR VERY SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. WE WILL NOT TOLERATE ASSAULTS ON THESE IDEALS. NO AMERICAN SHOULD LIVE IN FEAR OF RANDOM, SENSELESS VIOLENCE. NO ONE WILL BE ALLOWED TO TERRORIZE OUR PEOPLE. //

WE ARE CONSTANTLY STRUGGLING TO FIGHT CRIME OF ALL TYPES. THE VANPAC INVESTIGATION IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT'S SWIFT, PROFESSIONAL RESPONSE TO VIOLENT CRIME IN THIS COUNTRY. DESPITE THE MANY OBSTACLES THEY FACED IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, THE VANPAC TASK FORCE LEAPT INTO ACTION FROM THE MOMENT OF THE FIRST BOMBING.

**YET WHEN IT COMES TO REMOVING THOSE OBSTACLES BEFORE PROSECUTORS AND INVESTIGATORS -- ON THIS AND MANY OTHER CASES -- TIME AND AGAIN, CONGRESS SLUMPS INTO INACTION.**

**I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT LAWMAKERS MUST DO EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO SUPPORT OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS ON THE FRONT LINES. THIS MEANS SUFFICIENT RESOURCES -- PARTICULARLY FOR PRISONS -- TOUGH PENALTIES, AND REFORMS TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.**

**IT MEANS BEING ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT -- CREATING A 21ST CENTURY LAW ENFORCEMENT SYSTEM TO DEAL WITH 21ST CENTURY CRIMINALS. MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT MEANS HOLDING THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS HIGHER THAN THE RIGHTS OF CRIMINALS. OUR CRIME BILL -- AND ONLY OUR CRIME BILL -- SUPPORTS OUR MEN AND WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINES.**

**THE VANPAC CASE ILLUSTRATES WELL WHERE FEDERAL LAW IS LACKING.**

**UNDER CURRENT FEDERAL LAW, NO DEATH PENALTY EXISTS FOR THE MAIL-BOMBING MURDER OF INNOCENT AMERICANS. WE'VE PROPOSED IT. WE'VE ALSO PROPOSED A DEATH PENALTY FOR MURDERING FEDERAL JUDGES AND FOR KILLING SOMEONE IN THE COURSE OF A CIVIL RIGHTS CRIME. PERPETRATORS OF THESE HEINOUS CRIMES SHOULD BE PREPARED TO PAY WITH THEIR LIVES. WE NEED A WORKABLE FEDERAL DEATH PENALTY -- AND WE NEED IT NOW.**

**WE NEED A CRIME BILL THAT WILL STOP THE ENDLESS ABUSE OF HABEAS CORPUS. WE NEED A BILL THAT GUARANTEES THAT CRIMINALS WHO USE SERIOUS WEAPONS FACE SERIOUS CHARGES -- AND DO SERIOUS TIME. WE NEED A BILL THAT PREVENTS EVIDENCE GATHERED IN GOOD FAITH FROM BEING THROWN OUT ON A TECHNICALITY THAT OPENS THE CELL DOOR AND LETS BAD PEOPLE WALK SCOT FREE.**

EACH OF YOU KNOWS THE DIFFERENCE -- BETWEEN A TOUGH CRIME BILL THAT GIVES YOU WHAT YOU NEED TO WIN THIS FIGHT -- AND THE ANTI-LAW ENFORCEMENT PROPOSALS THE HOUSE DEMOCRATS CALL A CRIME BILL. THIS WEEK, THE HOUSE VOTES ON A BILL THAT MARKS A RETREAT FROM CURRENT LAW. IT'S TIME WE TIPPED THE SCALES OF JUSTICE BACK -- TOWARD THE SIDE OF DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN LIKE YOU.

I NEED YOUR HELP IN TURNING THE HOUSE CRIME BILL AROUND.

YOUR PRESENCE HERE TODAY SENDS A POWERFUL WARNING TO THE CONGRESS -- THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL NOT ACCEPT A CRIME BILL THAT IS TOUGHER ON LAW ENFORCEMENT THAN IT IS ON THE CRIMINALS. //

THE TIME HAS COME. AFTER TWO YEARS OF FOOT-DRAGGING, THE HOUSE IS FINALLY CONSIDERING THE CRIME BILL. IF YOU AGREE WITH WHAT I'VE SAID HERE, ACT TODAY. LET YOUR REPRESENTATIVES KNOW THAT THE HOUSE DEMOCRATS' BILL, AS IT STANDS NOW, IS SIMPLY UNACCEPTABLE.

**TELL THEM TO SUPPORT THE GEKAS DEATH PENALTY AMENDMENT. TELL THEM TO VOTE FOR THE HYDE HABEAS CORPUS REFORMS AND THE SENSENBRENNER AMENDMENT ON THE EXCLUSIONARY RULE. AND FINALLY, TELL WE NEED THE MCCOLLUM EQUAL JUSTICE ACT, SO THAT WE CAN HAVE A DEATH PENALTY THAT WORKS.**

**TELL THEM OUR POLICE, PROSECUTORS AND PEOPLE STAND BEHIND THESE KEY PROVISIONS -- THEY STAND BEHIND A STRONG CRIME BILL.**

**TELL THEM IT'S TIME FOR A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM THAT ALLOWS US TO SEE THE TRUTH COME OUT, THE GUILTY PUNISHED, THE LAW UPHELD, AND JUSTICE DONE. THAT'S WHAT OUR CRIME BILL STANDS FOR, AND THAT'S WHAT WE STAND FOR, AND THAT'S WHAT OUR REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD STAND FOR -- WHEN THE FINAL VOTE IS TAKEN THIS WEEK.**

**AGAIN, MY CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS TO THE VANPAC TEAM FOR A JOB WELL DONE. AS OUR MEN AND WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINES, YOU HAVE SHOWN WHAT WE CAN ACHIEVE WHEN WE STAND UNITED AGAINST CRIMINALS.**

**WE ARE LUCKY TO HAVE MEN AND WOMEN LIKE YOU DEFENDING  
US ON THE STREETS -- NOW WE JUST NEED YOUR POWERFUL  
MESSAGE TO REACH THE HALLS OF CONGRESS.**

**GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND THANK YOU.**

**# # #**



Grant/Simon  
A:Vance  
October 15, 1991  
Draft two

**PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: AWARDS CEREMONY FOR VANPAC TASK FORCE  
THE ROSE GARDEN  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1991  
11:45 A.M.**

Welcome, everyone, to the White House ... and a special hello to our very able acting Attorney General, Bill Barr.

[other acknowledgements]

Two years ago, a series of gruesome crimes shocked America. The terror began one peaceful morning when, along with the rest of the day's mail, a package arrived at the home of Federal Appeals Judge Robert Vance in Mountainbrook, Alabama.

The package was marked as if it had been sent by a fellow judge, but when Judge Vance sat down to open it, a pipe bomb inside blasted him across the room. Judge Vance died a horrible death, right in front of his wife, who was herself severely injured.

The nightmare didn't stop there. Two days later, Alderman Robert Robinson, an official of the N.A.A.C.P., returned to his law office in Savannah, Georgia, after spending the day in court. Along with other papers, a package awaited him in his office. He opened it, and the pipe bomb inside blew his office to bits. Robert Robinson died a grisly death, a senseless and violent tragedy brought about by an anonymous terrorist.

That same day, packages containing bombs also arrived at a federal courthouse in Atlanta and an NAACP office in

Jacksonville. Thank God those bombs were found before dozens more innocent persons were murdered ... in fact, one investigator said it was nothing short of a miracle.

A torrent of threatening letters followed, vowing to spread death and destruction across the nation. The letters targeted federal judges, prominent blacks, and leaders in the civil rights movement.

With the first bombings, federal authorities began a massive investigation, spearheaded by a task force named VANPAC, after its first victim, Judge Vance. VANPAC was directed by officials at the Department of Justice and the F.B.I., but other agencies joined in: the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the Postal Inspection Service; the U.S. Marshals Service and the Internal Revenue Service.

Despite skeptics and naysayers, the Task Force Members forged ahead ... fighting against this brutal attack and defending our most cherished principles of Constitutional law and civil rights. They soon zeroed in on a suspect named Walter Leroy Moody, Jr. Because of the hard work of the Task Force, Moody was convicted of the bombings and related crimes --and sentenced to seven life terms and 400 years imprisonment.

The VANPAC case was one of the greatest successes in the annals of law enforcement. It also will be remembered as one of our most monumental achievements in defense of civil rights in this century. And most importantly, its successful conclusion put a terrifying episode in American life behind us.

My congratulations to the two selfless public servants who guided the Task Force to its amazing achievements: Louis Freeh, the chief prosecutor and Assistant U.S. Attorney; now a Federal District Judge in Manhattan. And Larry Potts, the chief investigator and a Deputy Assistant Director of the F.B.I. To both of them and to their VANPAC colleagues, we owe a debt of gratitude for a job well done. //

Each murder in this country is a tragedy. But the random murders of Judge Vance and Robert Robinson took on added meaning: they were part of Moody's terrorist war against our courts, our rule of law, our civil rights, and upon our very system of government.

**We will not tolerate assaults on these ideals. No American should live in fear of random, senseless violence. No one will be allowed to terrorize our people. //**

We are constantly struggling to fight crime of all types. The VANPAC investigation is an excellent example of law enforcement's **swift, professional response** to violent crime in this country. Despite the many obstacles they faced in the criminal justice system, **the VANPAC Task Force leapt into action from the moment of the first bombing.**

Yet when it comes to removing those obstacles before prosecutors and investigators -- on this and many other cases -- time and again, **Congress slumps into inaction.**

I firmly believe that lawmakers must do everything in their power to **support** our enforcement officials on the front lines.

This means sufficient resources -- particularly for prisons -- tough penalties, and reforms to the criminal justice system. Most importantly, it means holding the rights of victims higher than the rights of criminals. **Our crime bill -- and only our crime bill -- supports our men and women on the front lines.**

The VANPAC case illustrates well where federal law is lacking. Under current federal law, no death penalty exists for mail bombing innocent Americans. **We've proposed it.** We've also proposed a death penalty for murdering federal judges and for killing someone in the course of a civil rights crime. Perpetrators of these heinous crimes should be prepared to pay with their lives. **We need a workable federal death penalty -- and we need it now.**

We need a crime bill that will stop the endless abuse of habeas corpus. We need a bill that guarantees that criminals who use serious weapons face serious charges -- and do serious time. We need a bill that prevents evidence gathered in good faith from becoming a technicality that throws open the cell door and lets bad people walk scot free.

Each of you knows the difference -- between a tough crime bill that gives you what you need to win this fight -- and the anti-law enforcement proposals that the House Democrats call a crime bill. This week, the House will vote on a bill that marks a retreat from current law. It's time we tipped the scales of justice back -- toward the side of dedicated men and women like you.

I need your help in turning the House crime bill around. Your presence here today sends a powerful warning to the Congress -- that the American people will not accept a crime bill that is tougher on law enforcement than it is on the criminals. //

The time has come. After three years of foot-dragging, Congress is finally considering the crime bill. But I need you to let your representatives know which crime bill we support. Tell them our police, our prosecutors and our people stand behind only one bill -- and that one is the Administration's crime bill.

Tell them it's time for a criminal justice system that allows us to see the truth come out, the guilty punished, the law upheld, and justice done. **That's what our crime bill stands for, and that's what we stand for, and that's what our Representatives should stand for -- when the final vote is taken this week.**

Again, my congratulations and thanks for a job well done in bringing Walter Moody to justice. You have shown what we can achieve when we stand united against criminals. We are lucky to have men and women like you defending us on the streets -- now we just need your powerful message to reach the halls of Congress.

God bless you all and thank you.

# # #

# DRAFT

In 1989, a series of grave crimes shocked the nation.

Each offense was horrible in itself.

Together, they were an attack on our most cherished principles of the Constitutional rule of law and civil rights.

The terrorism began when a package was delivered to Federal Judge Robert Vance of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals at his home in Mountainbrook, Alabama.

When Judge Vance opened the package, a pipe bomb inside exploded with incredible force. Judge Vance was thrown across the room and died of terrible wounds to his abdomen.

His severely injured wife later described the scene to investigators in these words: "I heard Bob make a couple of noises like if someone hits you in the stomach and knocks the breath out of you, the sound of breath going out and that was the only sound I ever heard him make."

Two days later, the terrorism spread.

Alderman Robert Robinson, an official of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, returned to his law office in Savannah, Georgia, and opened a package that had been delivered while he was in court.

That package also contained a pipe bomb that exploded.

The occupant of an adjoining office, Emerson Brown, rushed to Robinson's aid. He described the scene to investigators in these words: "...his right arm had been blown off just below the

# DRAFT

shoulder...by the time I put my arm around him, I noticed that on the right side his abdomen had been blown out."

Robinson died three hours later.

On that same day, packages containing bombs also were delivered to a federal courthouse in Atlanta and an NAACP office in Jacksonville, Florida.

Both bombs were detected and disarmed, and one investigator said it was miraculous that dozens of other innocent persons had not been killed.

A torrent of threatening letters followed, vowing to spread death and destruction across the nation. They were threats against the federal courts, against blacks, against civil rights.

The federal government reacted swiftly to the violence and the threats. A massive investigation began at once, with a task force directed by officials of the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Other agencies taking part included the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the Postal Inspection Service; the U.S. Marshals Service; and the Internal Revenue Service.

The investigation went on month after month without anyone being charged with the bombings. There even came a point when some skeptics said the murders would never be solved.

It was one of the most intricate, difficult cases that veteran federal agents had ever faced.

But the devotion of the Task Force members to the law and to the people of this country never wavered. And it eventually

# DRAFT

resulted in the arrest of the bomber.

The most solid of cases was developed against Walter Leroy Moody, Jr., who was convicted of the bombings and related crimes. Evidence introduced at his trial clearly showed his racist motives for the bombings.

In August, Moody was sentenced to seven life terms in federal prison--with no possibility of parole.

The Task Force of prosecutors, investigators, and other specialists displayed enormous energy and amazing self-sacrifice.

It is one of the greatest successes in the annals of law enforcement.

It is one of the most magnificent achievements of this century in civil rights enforcement.

More than 50 persons are being honored today for their work in what was known as the VANPAC Task Force. Each made a notable contribution.

I want to give special recognition to the two selfless public servants who headed the Task Force and guided it to its amazing achievements.

One is Louis J. Freeh, the chief prosecutor and an Assistant United States Attorney, who is now a Federal District Judge in Manhattan.

The other is Larry A. Potts, the chief investigator and a Deputy Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Everyone who cherishes the law and our democracy owes them and their colleagues a great debt of gratitude.

# DRAFT

Each murder in this country is a tragedy. The murders of Judge Vance and NAACP official Robinson took on an added dimension because they were part of defendant Moody's terrorist war against everything that law-abiding Americans cherish.

It was a war against our courts and rule of law. It was a war against a minority group. It was a terrorist attack on our very system of government.

There are things sacred about the concepts and processes of self-government in our nation.

One of them is the rule of law, which helps preserve our democracy and all of our freedoms.

Another is the concept of civil rights--that every ethnic, racial, and religious group is guaranteed the full blessings of equality.

We will not tolerate assaults on these principles. No one will be allowed to destroy with violence our democratic way of life. No one will be allowed to terrorize our people or torment them endlessly with fear.

We simply will not allow it--no matter what the cost of defending and preserving domestic freedom.

The nation is also faced today with many other kinds of crime that exact a terrible toll.

This continuing struggle against crime of all types requires staying power, determination, and a high level of resources. And it also requires new legal tools for federal law enforcement agencies.

# DRAFT

One thing that must be done now is for Congress to pass an anti-crime bill that will help the government be even more successful against a wide range of violent crimes and drug offenses.

Observers have noted that Moody fully deserved to be executed because of the heinous nature of his crimes against a judge, a civil rights leader, and others. But the same observers also point out that in the federal legal system there is no workable death penalty--not even for the very worst of crimes.

[PLEASE NOTE: Add material on crime legislation.]

####

OUTLINE OF  
EVENTS:

TBD

REMARKS:

To be provided by speechwriters.

MEDIA

COVERAGE:

Open

PROJECT

OFFICER:

Jim Fitzhenry (x2800)

1940 EOB

Leigh Ann:

What do you think of the following proposed sequence of events for the VANPAC event?

- o POTUS walks to the dais, where Attorney General Barr is standing.
- o A color guard walks up the center aisle, presents the colors, and Bill Barr leads the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. The color guard then departs. (Specifically requested by DOJ).
- o Bill Barr will give preliminary remarks and will introduce POTUS.
- o POTUS delivers his remarks about the VANPAC task force and the Crime Bill.
- o At the conclusion of his remarks, both POTUS and Bill Barr stand by the award table while Assistant A.G. Robert Mueller walks to the podium and calls off the names of the seven award winners.
- o Each award recipient walks to the dais, receives the award, poses for a photo, and sits back down.
- o As the last recipient sits back down, Mr. Mueller thanks everyone for coming and concludes the event.

If possible, call me tonight and tell me what you think. I'm at x2800.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leigh Ann".

# DRAFT

## Script for Award Presentations

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to present the seven major awards being made today to members of the VANPAC Task Force.

The other VANPAC task force members being honored for special achievements will receive their awards within the next few days.

The first category today is the Exceptional Leadership Award for the two persons who supervised the successful investigation and prosecution of this historic civil rights case.

If I could ask Louis J. Freeh to come forward. As an Assistant U.S. Attorney, he was the Task Force's chief prosecutor. And we are very pleased that he is now a Federal District Judge in Manhattan. Let me extend my sincere thanks for your splendid achievement.

[President gives award to Freeh.]

The other Exceptional Leadership Award goes to Larry A. Potts, who was the chief investigator for VANPAC and is a Deputy Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Congratulations on an excellent job.

[President gives award to Potts.]

We next honor the five recipients of the Dedicated Service Award--one prosecutor and four case agents who made major

# DRAFT

contributions to the successful conclusion one of the most important civil rights cases in the nation's history.

First, the award to Howard M. Shapiro, an Assistant United States Attorney who was a prosecutor for the Task Force. Congratulations.

[President gives award.]

The next award is to John D. Behnke of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a VANPAC case agent. Congratulations.

[President gives award.]

We also are recognizing the achievements of Tracey A. North of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a case agent. Congratulations.

[President gives award.]

Our next recipient is Brian M. Hoback of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, a case agent. Congratulations.

[President gives award.]

And finally, the Dedicated Service Award for John W. Farrell of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, another case agent.

In conclusion, I want to thank each and every one of the more than 50 Task Force members who are here today for their historic achievements.

You have my gratitude for a crucially-important job faithfully performed at the highest standards.

####

## VANPAC and the Crime Bill: A White House Event

There is a natural connection between a presidential recognition of the VANPAC Task Force, the investigative team in the prosecution of Walter Leroy Moody, Jr., for the mail bombings killing Judge Robert Vance and NAACP leader Robert Robinson, and a meeting with state and local prosecutors concerned about this year's crime bill. The connection can be summarized in four points:

1. The President's Crime Bill is concerned with violent crime, particularly the heinous version displayed in the Moody bombings.
2. The VANPAC investigation is an excellent demonstration of the professionalism and commitment of law enforcement in response to violent crime. Despite significant problems with the criminal justice system, we repeatedly see that law enforcement officers are willing to make significant personal sacrifices as a normal manner of service.
3. Lawmakers must do everything in their power to support those in law enforcement. This means sufficient resources (particularly for prisons), adequate penalties, and reforms to the criminal justice system. The President's Crime Bill was specifically crafted to address this lack of support.
3. The VANPAC case illustrates well where the federal law is lacking. Under current federal law, there is no possibility to impose the death penalty against Moody. There is no death penalty for mailing explosive materials. The President's bill proposes such a penalty, as well as one for murdering federal judges and for killing someone in the course of a civil rights violation. Furthermore, if Alabama seeks the death penalty against Moody, the House Judiciary Committee's version of the crime bill would have the effect of blocking the possible imposition of that penalty.

50 Van Pae

150 local prosecutors

Moody should have got  
death penalty

Bob Buckman

616-2033



20TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

## The Associated Press

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June 28, 1991, Friday, AM cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 741 words

HEADLINE: Jury Convicts Moody on All Charges in Mail-Bombing Deaths

BYLINE: By TONY KENNEDY, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: ST. PAUL, Minn.

KEYWORD: Mail Bombing Trial

## BODY:

A jury Friday convicted Walter Leroy Moody Jr. of all charges in the mail-bomb deaths of a federal judge and a civil rights lawyer in the Southeast.

The conviction came 18 months after what Attorney General Dick Thornburgh called one of the most intensive investigations ever by the Justice Department.

Moody, 57, of Rex, Ga., showed no emotion and said nothing when the verdicts were read.

"He anticipated, in my opinion, the verdict," said Edward Tolley, one of Moody's lawyers. "We all anticipated what the verdict would be. We fought a good fight but we knew it would be an uphill battle."

Tolley said he expects to appeal.

Moody, who blamed the Ku Klux Klan for the slayings, was convicted on all 71 counts by the jury on its second day of deliberations.

The charges included first-degree murder in the death of Judge Robert Vance. Moody also was convicted of causing the death of Savannah, Ga., Alderman Robert E. Robinson and transporting explosive materials with intent to kill him.

Two of the four counts relating to Vance's death carry mandatory life sentences without parole and two carry a possible life sentence without parole.

Moody's attorney has said he expects Alabama and Georgia to file state murder charges. The attorney said possible death sentences in those states could supersede any federal sentence.

The judge's widow, Helen Vance, who was wounded in the bombing, said she was happy with the verdicts, and didn't care whether Alabama authorities would seek the death penalty.



The Associated Press, June 28, 1991

"I want him off the street," she said, "but I don't care anything about the death penalty."

U.S. District Judge Edward Devitt did not immediately schedule sentencing. Moody was being held at Oak Park Heights state prison.

The jurors met for about seven hours Thursday. When they resumed deliberations Friday, they asked for a definition of interstate commerce.

One of the counts accused Moody of "transporting explosive materials in interstate commerce" in the mail-bomb killing of Vance, an 11th U.S. Circuit judge.

The jury was told that anything sent through the mail is considered interstate commerce, even if it doesn't leave the state, said defense attorney Don Samuel. The bomb that killed Vance was mailed from Georgia.

The trial, which began June 4, was moved to Minnesota partly because of pretrial publicity in the Southeast.

The December 1989 bombings killed Vance at his home in Mountain Brook, Ala., and Robinson at his Savannah office.

Bombs sent to the federal court in Atlanta and to the Jacksonville office of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People were intercepted; a tear-gas bomb exploded in the Atlanta office of the NAACP caused no fatalities.

In Washington, Thornburgh said the conviction "represents the successful culmination of one of the most intensive investigations and manhunts ever carried out by the Justice Department."

He said a special interagency task force conducted an 18-month investigation using agents from seven federal, state and local police agencies. The FBI alone devoted more than 140,000 man hours and 11 months to the case, Thornburgh said.

Other charges against Moody included sending threatening letters to 17 judges and television stations across the country.

Moody was the only defense witness, taking the stand against the advice of his court-appointed attorneys. Over four days, he gave rambling, sometimes bizarre testimony during which he interspersed details of his sex life.

Moody blamed the Klan for the bombings and said he was unwittingly used by his former attorney, Michael C. Ford, to get parts for the bombs.

Moody's lawyers urged the jury not to concern itself with his allegations. They said there was no direct evidence that Moody mailed the bombs and that a conviction based on the prosecution's largely circumstantial evidence would be unfair.

Prosecutors said Moody had a vendetta against the court system for his 1972 pipe-bomb possession conviction.



The Associated Press, June 28, 1991

They said Moody sometimes masqueraded as a lawyer and hated blacks partly because he thought they received preferential treatment by the courts. But the prosecution said he killed Robinson and targeted the NAACP chiefly to make investigators think the crimes were racially motivated.

The prosecution said Vance was a perfect target because he had ruled in favor of black plaintiffs in a school desegregation case, saying their 20-year-old claim was not outdated.

GRAPHIC: LaserPhoto MP6

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 16, 1991

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
IN AWARD CEREMONY HONORING THE VANPAC TASK FORCE

The Rose Garden

11:45 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Everyone, welcome to the Rose Garden -- devoid of roses, but -- (laughter.) We are very pleased to see all of you here. A special hello, of course, to the man standing at my left, a man so well-known to those interested in law enforcement, Bill Barr. We're honored to have Bill Sessions with us, the FBI Director; Steve Higgins, the Director of ATF; Mike Moore, Director of the Marshals Service. And I want to welcome Judge Tjoflat, who came all the way from Alabama -- where is the Judge? I might get him to just stand since we're going to be talking about Alabama here in a minute. Welcome, sir. (Applause.)

It is an honor to have with us today the true experts on crime and justice in this country: our state and local law enforcement officials. Each of you is here today because you've made a solemn pledge, and have made great personal sacrifices, to protect and defend society against the threat of violent crime and drugs. Every American agrees that we have a crime problem in this country; that is the understatement of the year. And every American deserves a tough crime bill that strengthens our criminal justice system.

Let me just share a story with you. Most of you know it. Two years ago, a series of gruesome crimes shocked America. The terror began one peaceful morning when, along with the rest of the day's mail, a parcel arrived at the home of Federal Appeals Court Judge Robert Vance in Mountainbrook, Alabama.

And when Judge Vance sat down to open the package, a pipe bomb inside blasted him across the room. Judge Vance was killed, and his wife severely injured.

The nightmare didn't stop there. Two days later, Alderman Robert Robinson, a prominent official of the NAACP, returned to his law office in Savannah after spending the day in court. Along with other papers, a package awaited him in his office. The pipe bomb inside exploded, and Robert Robinson died, too -- a senseless and violent tragedy brought about by an anonymous terrorist.

That same day, packages containing bombs also arrived at a federal courthouse in Atlanta and an NAACP office in Jacksonville. Thank God those bombs were found before more innocent persons were murdered. In fact, one investigator, a real pro, said it was nothing short of a miracle. A torrent of threatening letters followed, targeting federal judges, prominent blacks, civil rights leaders.

With the first bombings, federal authorities began a massive investigation, spearheaded by a task force named VANPAC, named after its first victim, Judge Vance. And VANPAC was directed by Department of Justice officials, including at the F.B.I. and the U.S. Marshals Service. But other agencies all pitched in: ATF, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the Postal Inspection Service; the Internal Revenue Service.

MORE

Because of the hard work of the task force, they soon zeroed in on a suspect -- got an indictment and a conviction in the bombings and related crimes, and brought a sentence of seven life terms without parole and 400 years of imprisonment. The VANPAC case was a great success in the annals of law enforcement and a very important achievement in defense of civil rights.

My congratulations to the two selfless public servants who led the task force to its amazing achievements: Louis Freeh, the chief prosecutor and Assistant U.S. Attorney, now a Federal District Judge in Manhattan; and Larry Potts, the chief investigator and a Deputy Assistant Director of the F.B.I. To both of them and their VANPAC colleagues, we owe a debt of gratitude for a job so well done.

Each murder in this country is a tragedy. But the murders of Judge Vance and Robert Robinson took on added meaning: They were part of one man's terrorist war against our courts, our rule of law, our civil rights, and upon our very system of government. We will not tolerate assaults on these ideals. No American should live in fear of random, senseless violence. No one will be allowed to terrorize our people.

We are constantly struggling to fight crime of all types. The VANPAC investigation is an excellent example of law enforcement's swift, professional response to violent crime in this country. Despite the many obstacles they faced in the criminal justice system, the VANPAC Task Force leapt into action from the moment of that very first bombing.

And yet, when it comes to removing those obstacles before prosecutors and investigators -- on this and many other cases --time and again, Congress slumps into inaction.

I firmly believe that lawmakers must do everything in their power to support our law enforcement officials on the front lines. This means sufficient resources -- particularly for prisons -- tough penalties, and reforms to the criminal justice system. It means being on the cutting edge of law enforcement -- creating a 21st century law enforcement system to deal with 21st century criminals. Most importantly, it means holding the rights of victims higher than the rights of criminals. Our crime bill -- and only the crime bill that we have up on the Hill -- supports our men and women on the front line.

I'll diverse a minute to mention yesterday's lovely ceremony at the new memorial in honor of the fallen law enforcement officers. I'm sure some of you were there. But I can tell you on a very personal basis that Barbara and I were deeply moved at that memorial, at the service itself, particularly when we met the two surviving young children of a fallen officer. And I wish every single American involved in this concept of legislation to do something about crime could have been there at that moving memorial. I believe it would have made a tremendous difference. We must support those who are on the front lines of law enforcement.

The VANPAC case illustrates well where federal law is lacking. Under current federal law, no death penalty exists for the mail-bombing murder of innocent Americans. We've proposed it. And we've also proposed a death penalty for murdering federal judges and for killing someone in the course of a civil rights crime. Perpetrators of these heinous crimes should be prepared to pay with their lives. And we need a workable federal death penalty, and we need it now.

We need a crime bill that will stop the endless abuse of habeas corpus. We need a bill that guarantees that criminals who use serious weapons face serious charges and do serious time. And we need a bill that prevents evidence gathered in good faith from being

thrown out on a technicality that then opens the cell door and lets bad people just walk out of there scot-free.

Each of you knows the difference between a tough crime bill that gives you what you need to win this fight and the anti-law enforcement proposals that some of the House Democrats call a crime bill. They call what they've got a crime bill, and it goes just the wrong way in many categories. This week, the House votes on a bill that marks a retreat from current law -- a retreat. And it's time we tipped the scales of justice back toward the side of dedicated men and women involved in law enforcement in one way or another -- people like yourselves.

So I need your help in turning the House crime bill around. Your presence here today sends a powerful warning to the Congress that the American people will not accept a crime bill that is tougher on law enforcement than it is on criminals.

And the time really has come. After two years of foot-dragging, the House is finally considering the crime bill. And if you agree with what I've said, please act today. Let your representatives know that that House bill, the House Democrats' bill, as it stands now, is simply unacceptable. Tell them to support the Gekas death penalty amendment. Tell them to vote for the Hyde habeas corpus reform and the Sensenbrenner amendment on the exclusionary rule that I've mentioned. And finally, tell them we need the McCollum equal justice act so that we can have a death penalty that works.

And tell them our police, prosecutors and people stand behind these key provisions -- they stand behind a strong crime bill. I really believe that this issue transcends party politics. It gets right to the heart of what the American people want. And I think it's about time that we in the White House, working with the Congress, delivered. Tell them also that it's time for a criminal justice system that allows us to see the truth come out, the guilty punished, the law upheld, and justice done. And that's what I believe our crime bill stands for, and that's what we stand for, and that's what I'd like to see these representatives stand for when the final vote is taken this week.

And again, my sincere congratulations. My thanks to the VANPAC team for this inspirational work, a job so well done. As our men and women on the front lines, you have shown what we can achieve when we stand united against criminals. And we're lucky to have men and women like you defending us on the streets. And now we just need your powerful message to reach the halls of Congress.

And speaking of messages, I have another message now that I want to reach the halls of Congress; and, indeed, I will see that it does reach the United States Senate very, very soon. It's an important message about a man that I respect enormously. And today I am announcing my choice for the Attorney General to lead our Department of Justice. And I have chosen an individual who is a thorough professional, a defender of individual rights, and a person absolutely committed to this fight against crime. And he's also been tested by fire, working with several of you as evidenced in the recent events at the Talladega prison. And I was proud of him then, and I am proud today to send Bill Barr's name to the Senate as the next Attorney General of the United States. (Applause.)

ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL BARR: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. It's been a privilege to serve you these past three years at the Department of Justice, and I'm honored that you have selected me to serve in the position of Attorney General.

What makes it a particular honor is the opportunity to serve a President who is such a strong supporter of law enforcement.

(Applause.) And it's also a great honor to be nominated to succeed a great Attorney General like Dick Thornburgh. (Applause.) Now, as this ceremony clearly shows today, we have thousands of dedicated men and women at the Department of Justice who do an exceptional job, day in and day out, upholding the law, enforcing the law in an evenhanded way and with integrity. And I'm proud to be associated with each and every one of them, and if confirmed, proud to lead them.

Thanks again, Mr. President. (Applause.)

I'd like to ask Bob Mueller, the Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, to come forward and assist in the presentation of the awards.

(The awards are presented.)

END

12:03 P.M. EDT