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Assault Pistols - 1993

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Section:

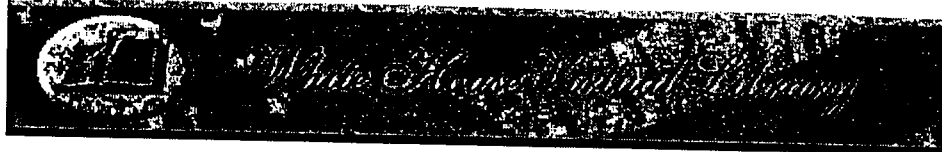
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Shelf:

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White House Press Release

Memorandum For The Secretary Of The Treasury - Importation of Assault Pistols

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 11, 1993

August 11, 1993

Memorandum For The Secretary Of The Treasury

Subject: Importation of Assault **Pistols**

A category of **pistols** commonly referred to as assault **pistols** has increasingly become the weapon of choice for drug dealers, street gang members, and other violent criminals. These **pistols**, generally characterized by their bulky military-style appearance and large magazine capacity, include domestically manufactured Tec-9's and Mac-10's as well as imported models like the Uzi **pistol** and the H&K Sp-89. Their popularity appears to stem from their intimidating appearance and their considerable firepower.

These weapons have been used to harm and terrorize many Americans, particularly our children, in recent years. As a result, it is no longer possible to stand by and witness the deadly proliferation of these weapons without acting to protect our communities.

Although addressing the domestic production of these weapons requires a change in the statute, which I support, existing law already bans the importation of firearms unless they are determined to be particularly suitable for or readily adaptable for sporting purposes. I am informed that shortly after enactment of the Gun Control Act of 1968, the Treasury Department adopted a factoring system to determine whether handguns were importable pursuant to this standard. The system entails the examination of the firearm against a set of criteria, with points being awarded for various features. A minimum score is required before importation is approved. The criteria and weighted point system were designed to address the crime gun of the day, the cheap, easily concealable "Saturday Night Special." Under this 25-year old system, small caliber, easily concealable handguns score few points and are banned from importation.

However, assault-type **pistols** -- the new crime gun of the day -- because of their large size, weight, and caliber, easily score the necessary points to qualify for importation even though none of these **pistols** appears to have any legitimate sporting purpose. Accordingly, it is time to reassess how the present regulatory approach can be made more effective in achieving the legislative directive to preclude importation of firearms that are not particularly suitable for or readily adaptable for sporting purposes.

I hereby direct you to take the necessary steps to reexamine the current importation factoring system to determine whether the system should be modified to ensure that all nonsporting handguns are properly denied importation. You have advised me that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (Atf) will issue a notice of proposed rule-making in the near future that will propose changes to the factoring system to address the assault **pistol** problem. You have further advised me that effective immediately action on pending applications to import these weapons will be suspended, and that final action on any application will be delayed until this review process is completed.

Nothing herein shall be construed to require actions contrary to applicable provisions of law. You are hereby authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the Federal Register.

William J. Clinton

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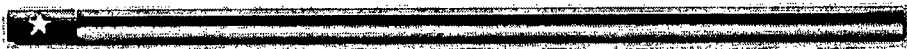
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