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Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Domestic Policy Council

Series/Staff Member: Jose Cerda

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 5874

FolderID:

Folder Title:

Event - POTUS [President of the United States] - Mtg. [Meeting] w/ [with] Law Enf. [Enforcement] Leaders, May 19, 1995 [1]

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Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association

Office of Public Affairs
1 Whitman Avenue
Metuchen, NJ 08840

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAY 11, 1995

"On behalf of this nation's 30,000 federal special agents, criminal investigators and enforcement officers I want to publicly thank former President George Bush for courageously standing up and denouncing the vile and unfounded charges leveled against federal law enforcement by the National Rifle Association", said Mr. Victor G. Oboyski, National President of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA).

"Where many prominent citizens and government leaders could have stood up for law enforcement, but did not, you had the grit to take action against the evil, self-serving rhetoric of the NRA which placed law enforcement and the American people in jeopardy," Oboyski said.

In addition to thanking Mr. Bush, FLEOA's National President rejected the need for a Congressional review of Waco and federal law enforcement. "Such reviews are solely political. They fail to address crime issues and domestic terrorism. They only placate the far right," Oboyski said.

According to FLEOA's National President the time for looking backwards is over. Congress, the Administration, and the American people should be asking:

- How hard is it for paramilitary militias and cults to purchase numerous assault weapons and convert them to fully automatic machine guns?
- How difficult is it for them to amass large amounts of ammunition and gun powder?
- How many other paramilitary or cult type groups are actively amassing arsenals right now?
- How good is our intelligence on these groups and how do we prevent another Oklahoma City?
- Could American's be subject to chemical or biological or radiological attacks from these groups similar to those launched in Japan?
- Is federal law enforcement operationally and legally prepared to deal with heavily armed paramilitary or cult groups and the possibility of subsequent stand-offs.

Oboyski said, "I wrote in 1993 that Waco, the LA Riots, the World Trade Center Bombing and the killing of CIA employees, in Virginia, were the sounds of warning bells going off. I stated that law enforcement had better be prepared, trained and funded to cope with the worst-case scenarios in a disciplined, systematic manner. If Congress convenes to honestly examine the America's problems and provide solutions, Oboyski continued, they had better concentrate on domestic terrorism and the terrible alienation which spawned the Oklahoma City violence."

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"A Professional Association for Federal Law Enforcement Officers"



FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

Representing Members Of

AGENCY for INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
AGRICULTURE
 - OIG & Forest Service
COMMERCE
 - Export Enforcement, OIG
 & National Marine Fisheries
DEFENSE
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 - Marshals Service
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LABOR
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TREASURY
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DEAL WITH DOMESTIC TERRORISM: DON'T PANDER TO IT, SAYS FLEOA PRESIDENT

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Friday, May 05, 1995

***Alan B. Bernstein
Tel: (908) 321-1011***

New York City - Victor G. Oboyski, National President of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, said today that any Congressional hearings which reopen the tragedies at Ruby Ridge and Waco, TX do little more than pander to the politics of the extreme right. The problem of today is making sure that there are no more "Oklahoma Cities".

"More Congressional review at this late date will only serve to placate the far right, rather than uncover new facts", emphasized FLEOA's National President. "The Randy Weaver and David Koresh incidents have been thoroughly investigated, trials have been concluded, Treasury, Justice and outside reports have criticized the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms and the FBI from operational, legal and organization perspectives, and disciplinary actions have been taken against federal officials who failed to perform their duties correctly. The matter is concluded or should be", said Oboyski.

According to Oboyski, the time for looking backward should end. Congress, the Administration, and the American people should be asking why the warning given by Federal agents in 1993 went unheeded.

Writing in June - July, 1993 issue of The 1811 - Journal of the Federal Law

Enforcement Officers Association, a copy of which went to every member of the US Senate, the House of Representatives, and 10,000 federal agents, Oboyski wrote.

".... I am requesting that the Clinton Administration and the US Congress, in their review of the investigative reports on WACO, also examine what precipitated the entire episode and asked some tough questions.

- *How hard was it for the Branch Davidians to purchase numerous assault weapons and convert them to fully automatic machine guns?*
- *How difficult was it for them to amass large amounts of ammunition and gun powder?*
- *Are there other para-military or cult type groups doing the same thing right now?*
- *How good is our intelligence on these groups and how do we prevent another Waco?*
- *Is federal law enforcement prepared to deal with heavily armed para-military or cult groups and the possibility of subsequent stand-offs.*

I hope the Administration and Congress are willing to tackle these tough questions regarding Waco and find real solutions to them. I do not believe that the Branch Davidian episode was a mere aberration, I believe it was a harbinger of things to come if we don't start paying attention to the undercurrents and direction of this country. Waco, the LA Riots, the World Trade Center Bombing and the killing of CIA employees in Virginia are the sounds of warning bells going off. Law enforcement had better be prepared, trained and funded to cope with the worst in a disciplined, systematic manner. For if we don't prepare now, we'll pay later."

"Later is now!", concludes Oboyski.

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FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

"A Professional Association for Federal Law Enforcement Officers"

Representing Members of the:

Dept. of Agriculture — OIG — Special Agents
US Forest Service — Special Agents
Dept. of Commerce — Office of Export Enforce. — S A
Office of Inspector General — Special Agents
National Marine & Fisheries Serv. Law Enf. — S A
Dept. of Defense
US Army — CID — Special Agents
Defense Investigative Service — Special Agents
Defense Criminal Investigative Service — S A
Naval Investigative Service — Special Agents
US Air Force — OSI — Special Agents
Dept. of Education — Investigation — S A
Dept. of Energy — OIG — Special Agents
Dept. of Health & Human Services — S A
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US Park Police — Park Police Officers
Bureau of Land Management — Special Agents & Rangers
Dept. of Justice — US Attorneys — C.T. & Attorneys
Drug Enforcement Administration — S A
Federal Bureau of Investigation — S A
INS — Special Agents & Border Patrol
US Marshals Service — Marshals & Dep. Marshals
Parole & Prob. Service — Parole & Prob. Officers
Dept. of Labor — OIG — Special Agents
Office of Labor Racketeering — S A
Dept. of State — Diplomatic Sec. Ser. — Special Agents
Investigation — Special Agents
Dept. of Trans. — Investigation — Special Agents
US Coast Guard — Inial. Officers & S A
Federal Aviation Admin. (FAA) — Investigators
Dept. of Treasury
B A T F — Special Agents
US Customs Service — Office of Enforcement — Special Agents
Customs Investigators
Internal Affairs — Special Agents
Internal Revenue Service
Criminal Investigation Division — S A
Inspection Service — Inspectors
US Secret Service — S A & Police
Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Criminal Investigations — Special Agents
Office of Inspector General — Special Agents
General Services Administration
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National Archives — Criminal Investigators
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US Postal Service — Inspectors & Postal Police
US Printing Office — Special Agents
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JULES BERNSTEIN

March 3, 1995

Editorial Page Editor
USA Today
1000 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22229

THE NRA IS NO FRIEND OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

By Victor G. Oboyski, National President
Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association

On March 2, 1995, two days after the first anniversary of the passage of the Brady Law, the National Rifle Association (NRA) ran its second full page advertisement, this one in *USA Today* smearing the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and misleading the American public. The first attack came in the *Washington Post*, March 1st.

Since the NRA could not prevent passage of the Brady Law, nor deny its success, it chose to spend \$53,565 in the *Post* and \$57,500 in *USA Today*, on a propaganda campaign to destroy the agency whose primary mission it is to go after armed violent felons.

Statistical data gathered from March 1994 to January 1995 shows the Brady Law prevented handguns from being sold to 4,365 convicted felons, 945 fugitives, 97 persons under indictment, 649 illegal drug users, two juveniles and 63 persons under restraining orders for alleged stalking, harassment, or other forms of domestic threat.

Not wanting to address the success of the Brady Law, the NRA countered by attacking the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) with an advertisement filled with misstatements, erroneous conclusions, and insults directed at the courageous men and women of ATF who risk their lives daily.

The NRA's advertisement asserts that Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms looks on all gun owners by class as suspected criminals. That untruth would not even warrant a response were it not for the fact that the gun lobby is certain its "big lie" will be fragment into political shrapnel and cause the demise of an agency they have been trying to kill since President Reagan's first election.

The truth is ATF is doing a terribly difficult job effectively and doing it with limited resources. The last thing the NRA wants is a technically sophisticated, even handed federal law enforcement agency effectively enforcing the nation's firearms laws.

On February 15, 1995, Undersecretary of the Treasury Ronald K. Noble told the House Appropriations Committee that a careful examination of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms showed that while ATF Special Agents are doing a difficult and often unpopular job, they are doing it extremely well.

Difficult is an understatement !

Most Americans have no idea that from 1979-1993, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms investigated 8,000 arsons involving 1000 deaths, and over \$5-billion in damage. Approximately 5,300 defendants were prosecuted for these arson crimes. The NRA will not tell you this.

The NRA has stated many times that gun control is not the answer, locking up armed criminals is the answer. Yet they fail to mention that: ATF's Achilles Program removed some 4,609 armed criminals and narcotics traffickers from America's communities; sent felons to prison for terms totaling 28,388 years; and ended the careers of over 1,600 career criminals who, on average, committed 160 crimes per year at an average cost per crime of \$2,600.

The NRA won't dare tell the American public that ATF's National Tracing Center completed 83,362 traces of firearms used in crimes, in 1994; and its Juvenile Firearms Violence Initiative helped keep handguns out of the hands of children as well as investigate the "death merchants" who peddle firearms to our kids.

The NRA won't tell the public that the ATF's explosive experts, internationally recognized for their work in bombing and arson investigations, helped solve the World Trade Center bombing and are leading the effort to solve bombing and arson incidents at abortion clinics. Nor will they tell you that ATF Special Agents identified the assailant responsible for the recent abortion clinic shootings in Massachusetts and Virginia..

Far from being an agency run amok, ATF is a federal law enforcement agency carefully allocating finite resources to the critical investigative needs of the nation.

The NRA wants the public to believe it is a friend of law enforcement. Believe me it is not. The NRA is the organization that, in 1986, lobbied against banning "cop killer bullets" — ammunition that rips through police officers protective vests. Today, like in 1986, the National Rifle Association cares not one iota about the lives or well being of law enforcement officers. They don't like law enforcement. And judging from the NRA's attack of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, they clearly hold law enforcement in complete disdain.

Contact: Vic O'Boyski
(212) 385-6938

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, April 25, 1995

**FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (FLEOA)
OUTRAGED AT NRA'S ANTI-LAW ENFORCEMENT, ANTI-GOVERNMENT
RHETORIC**

The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA) today expressed their outrage at the leadership of the National Rifle Association, whose rhetoric and organized anti-federal law enforcement campaigns indirectly contributed to the recent tragedy in Oklahoma City.

"I am not claiming the NRA was in any way directly connected to the bombing in Oklahoma City, or that they have formal ties to the growing militia movement," stated Vic O'Boyski, President of FLEOA, "but they must take responsibility for their words and actions.

By their enthusiastic endorsement and promotion of the idea that the Second Amendment allows disgruntled citizens to take up arms against government tyranny, and their public campaign to discredit specific federal law enforcement agencies, they have strongly contributed to the atmosphere of fear and paranoia that led to the Oklahoma City disaster.

The NRA, in an effort to reverse the enactment of reasonable gun control laws, has consistently claimed that such laws will ultimately lead to confiscation of weapons from law-abiding citizens by agents of an oppressive government. To support these claims they have publicly "demonized" agencies such as the FBI and the BATF by painting them as out-of-control bureaucrats, ready to break down the doors of innocent citizens. Such statements are false and irresponsible and those who make them should be held accountable.

To understand the seriousness of these attacks, one need only look at an NRA direct mail piece from April, 1995: 'In Clinton's administration, if you have a badge, you have the government's go-ahead to harass, intimidate, even murder law-abiding citizens. Randy Weaver at Ruby Ridge...Waco and the Branch Davidians...not too long ago it was unthinkable for Federal agents wearing nazi bucket helmets and black storm trooper uniforms to attack law abiding citizens.'

The NRA needs to understand that the "bureaucrats" they love to bash for their own political gain, are real people with families and loved ones. In the case of federal law enforcement, they are dedicated public servants who put their lives on the line day after day. My colleagues work to defend the Constitution, not abuse it, yet they have become the targets of smear campaigns by those with a political agenda. They deserve better.

FLEOA believes that the American people must see Oklahoma City as a wake-up call to the threats presented by these individuals and groups that operate on the fringes of our society. We should not wait until we are shocked by another Oklahoma City incident.

It is becoming clear that the recently enacted ban on assault weapons was particularly offensive to these so called militia groups. FLEOA joins with other law enforcement in calling upon the U.S. Congress to abandon its insane attempt to repeal a law that bans the very guns these groups claim they need to take up arms against the government."

FLEOA is a non-partisan association representing more than 10,000 federal criminal investigators from at least 51 different entities, including the FBI, DEA, BATF, Secret Service and the U.S. Marshals.

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FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

Facsimile Transmission Record

Transmitted To: JOSE CERDA

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This document consists of 2 pages excluding this cover sheet.

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Tuesday, April 25, 1995

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 19, 1995

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of POLICE ORGANIZATIONS SURVEY FINDS STRONG SUPPORT FOR LOCAL, FEDERAL POLICE

POLL SHOWS NEGATIVE OPINION of CITIZEN MILITIAS

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Berkeley, CA

The National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) today released the results of their 1995 Survey on Crime and Public Safety which found overwhelming support for federal law enforcement agencies such as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as local police. The survey also showed Americans have a very negative opinion of citizen militias in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. The survey asked respondents a series of questions affecting law enforcement from recent events like the Oklahoma City bombing and the O.J. Simpson trial to pending federal legislation.

"Earlier this week on National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Day, we honored our brothers and sisters in law enforcement slain in the line of duty. Today, the thousands of mourners have left Washington, DC, but the issues affecting law enforcement remain," said Robert T. Scully, Executive Director of the 180,000 member organization.

"Lately there has been far too much angry rhetoric against law enforcement. Vicious language has been used against our colleagues in federal law enforcement and the entire policing profession has been castigated as liars by a prominent attorney for O.J. Simpson," Scully continued. "Law enforcement officers on the front lines of crime each and every day deserve the respect of the American people and the help of the Congress in order to do our job. We do not deserve these unwarranted attacks upon our livelihood."

The results of the survey confirm that the American public overwhelmingly support federal and local law enforcement and are sympathetic to a broad array of law enforcement issues.

Key findings of those responding to the 1995 NAPO Survey are:

***79%** have a favorable opinion of federal law enforcement authorities such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF).

***84%** believe that law enforcement authorities should have more authority to infiltrate groups suspected of subversive activity.

***87%** have an unfavorable opinion of citizen militias.

***97%** disagree with the statement that the Oklahoma City bombing was committed by the federal government.

***76%** believe that special funds should be given to work on preventing future terrorist attacks in the United States.

While there are several pieces of legislation NAPO is tracking, our legislative priorities now under consideration by Congress include: upholding the 100,000 police officers program against the popular block grant movement in Congress; reforming the habeas corpus process for death row inmates; and keeping the assault weapons ban intact. Clearly, the American people support law enforcement's agenda and even when they think the crime problem in state to be worsening, they believe that their local police are doing a good job.

***72%** think the crime problem in their state is getting worse.

***84%** believe that the police in their community are doing a good job.

***66%** support streamlining the habeas corpus appeals process for death row inmates.

***73%** do not support repeal of the assault weapons ban.

***When presented with several crimefighting options, the majority of respondents chose putting more police on the streets as the best way to fight crime over any other option:**

***74%** chose more police over more prisons

***83%** chose more police over carrying concealed weapons

***56%** chose more police over stricter laws.

"Law enforcement has been the subject of several attacks by the defense attorneys for O.J. Simpson, but the American public isn't buying their attempts to shift the focus off Mr. Simpson, " Scully said.

***86%** do not believe that police departments and academies train their officers to lie.

***84%** do not believe it is proper for O.J. Simpson's attorneys to stereotype all police officers as liars and perjurers.

***67%** believe that O.J. Simpson's attorneys should be disciplined for their negative comments regarding police officers.

The nationwide telephone survey, conducted by Global Strategy Group, Inc., for the National Association of Police Organizations, randomly polled 800 registered voters from May 4 - 11, 1995 with a margin of error of +/- 3.5%.

THE 1995 NAPO SURVEY ON CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY



Global Strategy Group, Inc.

Tel: 212.260.8813 Fax: 212.260.9058

KEY FINDINGS: OKLAHOMA CITY

- 79% of Americans have a favorable opinion of the FBI and the ATF.
 - » 81% of Republicans have a favorable opinion.

- 84% of those surveyed feel that law enforcement authorities should have more authority to infiltrate groups suspected of subversive activity.
 - » This support is equal (84%) among Republicans and Democrats.

- 87% of those interviewed have an unfavorable opinion of citizen militias.



KEY FINDINGS: PUBLIC SAFETY

- 72% of those surveyed believe that the crime problem in their state is getting worse.
 - » 81% of those in the Pacific region feel that crime is getting worse.
- However, those surveyed do not feel police are to blame for the crime problem.
 - » 84% of those interviewed believe that police in their community are doing a good job.
 - » 56% of American voters personally worry about being a victim of crime.
 - 66% of women fear for their personal safety.
- 57% of those interviewed feel adequately protected from being a victim of crime.
 - » 65% of those 50 and over feel adequately protected.



KEY FINDINGS: GUN CONTROL

- Americans are in favor of restrictions on gun ownership.
 - » 73% of respondents oppose repealing the ban on assault weapons.
 - Both Democrats (74%) and Republicans (72%) oppose the repeal.
 - » 65% of voters oppose the repeal of the Brady law which provides a 5 day waiting period on handgun purchases and a background check.
 - Again, the majority of Democrats (61%) and Republicans (65%) oppose the repeal of the Brady law.
- Of those interviewed who do not feel adequately protected by the police, only 42% of these respondents would feel adequately protected if they were allowed to carry a concealed handgun.



KEY FINDINGS: BLOCK GRANTS

- Those interviewed believe that the best way to fight crime in their communities is to put more police on the streets.
 - » 56% of voters believe that the best way to fight crime is to put more police on the streets rather than passing stricter laws.
 - A majority of both Democrats (61%) and Republicans (55%) favor more police.
 - » 83% of those interviewed support more police over carrying a concealed weapon as a means of fighting crime.
 - 84% of Republicans
 - » 74% support more police over more prisons as a means of fighting crime.
 - 86% of those residing in the Atlantic Region.



KEY FINDINGS: SIMPSON TRIAL

- 70% of Americans feel that the press has treated the Los Angeles Police Department unfairly.
- 86% of those interviewed refute the notion being put forward by the Simpson defense team that Police Departments train their officers to lie.
- 84% of respondents feel that it is improper for O.J. Simpson's attorneys to stereotype police officers as liars and perjurers.
 - » 67% of those feel that the Simpson defense team has acted improperly are in favor of disciplinary actions against the attorneys who made those comments.



METHODOLOGY

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- The survey was conducted from May 4 to May 11, 1995
- The margin of error for this research is +/- 3.5%.





NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

750 First Street, N.E., Suite 1020 • Washington, D.C. 20002-4241

(202) 842-4420 • (800) 322-NAPO • (202) 842-4396 FAX

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 19, 1995

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LINDA LIPSETT

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of POLICE ORGANIZATIONS SURVEY FINDS STRONG SUPPORT FOR LOCAL, FEDERAL POLICE

POLL SHOWS NEGATIVE OPINION of CITIZEN MILITIAS

The National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) today released the results of their 1995 Survey on Crime and Public Safety which found overwhelming support for federal law enforcement agencies such as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as local police. The survey also showed Americans have a very negative opinion of citizen militias in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. The survey asked respondents a series of questions affecting law enforcement from recent events like the Oklahoma City bombing and the O.J. Simpson trial to pending federal legislation.

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"Lately there has been far too much angry rhetoric against law enforcement. Vicious language has been used against our colleagues in federal law enforcement and the entire policing profession has been castigated as liars by a prominent attorney for O.J. Simpson," Scully continued. "Law enforcement officers on the front lines of crime each and every day deserve the respect of the American people and the help of the Congress in order to do our job. We do not deserve these unwarranted attacks upon our livelihood."

The results of the survey confirm that the American public overwhelmingly support federal and local law enforcement and are sympathetic to a broad array of law enforcement issues.

Key findings of those responding to the 1995 NAPO Survey are:

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*87% have an unfavorable opinion of citizen militias.

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While there are several pieces of legislation NAPO is tracking, our legislative priorities now under consideration by Congress include: upholding the 100,000 police officers program against the popular block grant movement in Congress; reforming the habeas corpus process for death row inmates; and keeping the assault weapons ban intact. Clearly, the American people support law enforcement's agenda and even when they think the crime problem in state to be worsening, they believe that their local police are doing a good job.

*72% think the crime problem in their state is getting worse.

*84% believe that the police in their community are doing a good job.

*66% support streamlining the habeas corpus appeals process for death row inmates.

*73% do not support repeal of the assault weapons ban.

*When presented with several crimefighting options, the majority of respondents chose putting more police on the streets as the **best** way to fight crime over any other option:

*74% chose more police over more prisons

*83% chose more police over carrying concealed weapons

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"Law enforcement has been the subject of several attacks by the defense attorneys for O.J. Simpson, but the American public isn't buying their attempts to shift the focus off Mr. Simpson, " Scully said.

*86% do not believe that police departments and academies train their officers to lie.

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THE 1995 NAPO SURVEY ON CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY



Global Strategy Group, Inc.

Tel: 212.260.8813 Fax: 212.260.9058

KEY FINDINGS: OKLAHOMA CITY

- 79% of Americans have a favorable opinion of the FBI and the ATF.
 - » 81% of Republicans have a favorable opinion.

- 84% of those surveyed feel that law enforcement authorities should have more authority to infiltrate groups suspected of subversive activity.
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- However, those surveyed do not feel police are to blame for the crime problem.
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 - » 56% of American voters personally worry about being a victim of crime.
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- 57% of those interviewed feel adequately protected from being a victim of crime.
 - » 65% of those 50 and over feel adequately protected.



KEY FINDINGS: GUN CONTROL

- Americans are in favor of restrictions on gun ownership.
 - » 73% of respondents oppose repealing the ban on assault weapons.
 - Both Democrats (74%) and Republicans (72%) oppose the repeal.
 - » 65% of voters oppose the repeal of the Brady law which provides a 5 day waiting period on handgun purchases and a background check.
 - Again, the majority of Democrats (61%) and Republicans (65%) oppose the repeal of the Brady law.
- Of those interviewed who do not feel adequately protected by the police, only 42% of these respondents would feel adequately protected if they were allowed to carry a concealed handgun.



KEY FINDINGS: BLOCK GRANTS

- Those interviewed believe that the best way to fight crime in their communities is to put more police on the streets.
 - » 56% of voters believe that the best way to fight crime is to put more police on the streets rather than passing stricter laws.
 - A majority of both Democrats (61%) and Republicans (55%) favor more police.
 - » 83% of those interviewed support more police over carrying a concealed weapon as a means of fighting crime.
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- 70% of Americans feel that the press has treated the Los Angeles Police Department unfairly.
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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 19, 1995

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
DURING MEETING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

The Cabinet Room

10:25 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: I asked the heads of all of these major law enforcement organizations to come and meet with me in the White House today for two reasons. First, some of our work to enhance the safety of America's police officers and America's citizens, and to better protect the police officers, to help them protect us. A lot of that work is under attack.

Some in Congress want to undermine our efforts to put 100,000 police officers on the street. Some want to repeal the Brady Bill, even though it's stopped over 40,000 fugitives and felons from purchasing weapons last year alone. And some want to repeal the ban on deadly assault weapons, even though it is helping to protect the lives of innocent police officers and children on our streets.

I want to enlist these leaders' continued support in fighting these misguided attempts to roll back the clock in the fight against crime. And I want to make it clear that if Congress gives in to the political pressure to do this and repeals any of these measures, I will veto them in a heartbeat. In any fight between our country's law enforcement and the Washington gun lobby, I will side with law enforcement.

Secondly, I want to discuss the attempts by a vocal minority to run down our police officers for their own benefit. The people who tried to make police officers the enemy when we were having a lot of controversy in this country back in the 1960s were wrong, and the people who are trying to do it today are wrong.

I don't care if you want less government or more government, I don't care if you favor repeal or retention of the assault weapons ban. Whatever you believe, no one has a right to attack those who uphold the law. Police officers risk their lives to protect our lives; they're on our side. I hope anyone who thinks otherwise has learned a valuable lesson in the debate in this country in the last couple of weeks.

I hope the NRA knows by now that anyone who pretends that police officers are the enemy is only giving aid and comfort to criminals who are really the enemy. I am glad the NRA apologized for the cruel attack on law enforcement officers in their fundraising letter on Wednesday. However, I note today that yesterday they seemed to be bragging about how much money they made from the fundraising letter in which they attacked police officers as "jack-booted thugs."

Now, if the NRA's apology is sincere, what they ought to do is put their money where their mouth is. They ought to give up the ill-gotten gains from their bogus fundraising letter, for which they have already apologized and acknowledged as inappropriate. They ought to turn that money over to the organization that helps the families of police officers who died in the line of duty. They made the money by attacking the police, they admitted they did the wrong

MORE

thing, they ought to give the money up. That would show true good faith and would set the basis for an honest and open dialogue in this country about issues that ought not to divide us by party, by region, by ideology, or in any other way. They ought to give the money back.

Thank you.

Q Do you think they will?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. STOKES: I think they rescinded their statement the other day in the paper at home. One of the NRA members said in our local newspaper that they didn't mean that apology.

Q Have they said it to you? Have they said it formally at all, except in --

MR. STOKES: They said it in the newspaper the other day. They did not accept -- they did not think that apology reached out to law enforcement.

Q Well, are any of your people across the board resigning from the NRA?

MR. STOKES: I've had some calls from -- some of our members have resigned from the NRA -- yes -- in the last -- since their letter came out about a week ago.

Q Mr. President, do you have any words for the Senate as they're starting to debate the budget resolution today?

THE PRESIDENT: Just what I've said all along. First of all, let me say again, I hope very much that we can -- ultimately, we'll wind up agreeing on a rescission package to start cutting spending more right now. I want to cut spending by more than the House and Senate agreed in their committee to cut it, but I think it's cut in the wrong way. We shouldn't put pork back in the budget and cut education. I have said what I think about this. I think we have to continue to work for a balanced budget. I think we can achieve a balanced budget. I do not believe that the right way to do it is by making severe cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, the health care of our seniors and disabled population, and using that money to pay for tax cuts for upper-income people. I do not believe that it's right to make it more expensive to go on to college. I don't think we ought to raise taxes on our lowest-income working families with children. Those are the three things that I think are wrong.

I think there is a lot to commend the efforts that have been made by the Republicans in Congress. I think that, you know, they have shown that it is arithmetically possible to reach a balanced budget. And I believe that if we continue to work on a lot of the things that we're doing constructively in health care and other areas, we can achieve this. But I don't believe that we can do it with those three big, big problems out there. And I hope that we can work those out in the weeks and months ahead.

Q How do you think you're going to --

Q Senator Gramm just charged that you are committed to protecting the government that you know and love, and programs that have failed for the last 40 years.

THE PRESIDENT: -- Senator Gramm -- let me just say this -- I don't want to get in a fight with Senator Gramm, but look at the record. He was here during the Reagan years and the Bush years when they quadrupled the government deficit. And I would just point out that the administrations that he supported always sent budgets to Congress that were in excess of the ones Congress approved. I would point out that if it weren't for the interest run up before I ever

showed up here, if it weren't for the interest run up between 1981 and the end of 1992, we would have a budget that is in balance today. And I have already cut or eliminated some 300 programs, and we propose, in this new budget, to cut or eliminate some 400 more.

We have done more to challenge and change the status quo in two years than the previous administrations did in the last 12, perhaps the last 20. Furthermore, I don't see Senator Gramm out there campaigning for lobby reform, campaign finance reform. I don't even know what's happened to the line-item veto. If they're worried -- if they want me to show them how to end the status quo, send me the line-item veto. Where is it?

If I had the line-item veto, we wouldn't be having this argument about the rescission bill; I could just get rid of it. All the things that -- Senator Gramm is defending this rescission bill -- \$1 million for a city street? Nine highway projects in one congressional district? A hundred million dollars for a courthouse, when we're cutting education? It seems to me that he's on the side of the status quo. I want to cut spending, but I want to change the way the government works here. And I would urge him to stop protecting the Republican pork, just as I'm willing to scrap the Democratic pork, and let's put partisan politics behind us and get on with moving the country forward.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

10:33 A.M. EDT

Date: 05/19/95 Time: 14:40

Clinton to NRA: Give the Money Back

WASHINGTON (AP) An apology isn't enough, President Clinton said Friday, challenging the National Rifle Association to give up more than \$1 million reaped from a fund-raising letter calling law enforcement officers ``jack-booted thugs.'

``I hope the NRA knows by now that anyone who pretends that police officers are the enemy is only giving aid and comfort to criminals who are really the enemy,' said Clinton. He has battled the gun lobby throughout his presidency.

Leaders of major law enforcement organizations joined Clinton at the White House in denouncing the NRA and accusing it of putting police officers' lives in danger with inflammatory rhetoric.

``I think the NRA is just out to dishonor law enforcement,' said Bob Scully, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations.

The NRA, holding its annual convention in Phoenix, did not respond immediately to Clinton's challenge.

The group has been on the defensive since former President Bush resigned his lifetime NRA membership in protest of its accusations against police. After a week of growing criticism, the NRA apologized for any offense, particularly to law enforcement officials.

``If the NRA's apology is sincere,' Clinton said, ``what they ought to do is put their money where their mouth is. They ought to give up the ill-gotten gains from the bogus fund-raising letter. ... They ought to turn that money over to the organization that helps the families of police officers who died in the line of duty.'

``They made the money by attacking the police, they admitted they did the wrong thing, they ought to give the money up,' the president said, flanked by uniformed officers in the Cabinet Room.

Clinton used the occasion to pledge anew that he will oppose any effort to repeal either the Brady Bill, with its restrictions on handgun purchases, or the ban on assault weapons, or to scale back a commitment to put 100,000 new police officers on the streets.

``If Congress gives in to the political pressure to do this and repeals any of these measures, I will veto them in a heartbeat,' Clinton said.

The president said the NRA, despite its apology, was bragging about the success of the fund-raising letter.

Indeed, NRA officials said the letter has drawn more than 900,000 responses, most of them positive, making it one of the group's most successful ever. NRA executive vice president Wayne LaPierre said it would raise well over \$1 million.

Clinton's challenge to the NRA was echoed by leaders of police groups.

``If they raised that much money, then why don't they give it to law enforcement officers' widows and widowers ... and start their solicitation over again,' said Scully.

``Every law enforcement officer in this country that does wear a badge ought to be outraged at what the NRA is doing,' said Dewey Stokes, head of the Fraternal Order of Police.

Scully said, ``Crime against us is going up and we attribute that to the remarks that certain people are making in this country, like the NRA, like certain talk show hosts and like prestigious defense attorneys.'

APNP-05-19-95 1441EDT

Date: 05/19/95 Time: 11:51

Clinton Challenge NRA to Give Up Money From Fund-Raising Letter

WASHINGTON (AP) President Clinton today challenged the National Rifle Association to surrender the money it raised by a fund-raising letter that attacked law enforcement officers as "jack-booted thugs."

"They ought to give the money up," Clinton said, flanked by leaders of law enforcement organizations in the Cabinet Room.

Noting that the NRA has apologized for the letter, Clinton said, "What they ought to do is put the money where their mouth is. They ought to give up the ill-gotten gains from their bogus fund-raising letter. ..."

Specifically, he suggested that the NRA give the money to organizations that help families of officers slain in the line of duty.

Former President George Bush resigned from the NRA in protest over the letter. Nevertheless, the NRA says the fund-raising effort was a success.

Clinton vowed to fight NRA-led efforts to repeal the ban on assault weapons or roll back the Brady bill's handgun restrictions, as well as cut back on plans to hire 100,000 new police officers.

"I will veto them in a heartbeat," he pledged.

"I hope the NRA knows by now that anyone who pretends that police officers are the enemy is only giving aid and comfort to criminals who are really the enemy," Clinton said.

Although they declined to release specific dollar figures, NRA officials contend the letter has already drawn more than 900,000 responses most of them positive making it one of the group's most successful pitches.

"This is going to do very, very well, and will raise well over a million dollars," said Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the NRA. "There is a very real concern out there about the issues we raised in that letter."

Those concerns primarily over threats the group contends citizens face from government agents have been overshadowed by the letter's graphic language, which included references to law enforcement officials as "jack-booted thugs."

On Wednesday, after a week of growing criticism that began when Bush announced he had resigned in protest over the letter's tone, the NRA apologized for any offense, particularly to law enforcement officials.

LaPierre said the group had not intended be critical of all law enforcement officials.

LaPierre's statement drew cautious approval Thursday from the White House, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., and Attorney General Janet Reno.

White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry, who said he heard the NRA "was doing some backtracking," said the best form of apology would be for the organization to support the anti-terrorism legislation Clinton proposed after the Oklahoma City bombing.

"That would be a very apt testimonial to the law enforcement officials that the NRA has maligned and would be a good tribute to those law enforcement officials who died," McCurry said.

"I trust that the level of communication now will go forward in a thoughtful and respectful way," Reno said at her weekly news conference when asked about the apology. But later, discussing the group's allegations of abuse by federal officers, she said, "They like to call names rather than to pursue matters in a thoughtful and constructive way."

Dole, a longtime NRA member, said on the Senate floor, ``The NRA has done the right thing. They should not have used some of that language in the first place.''

If the NRA's fund-raising claims hold up, the take from the controversial letter could be more than double the money the group had previously received this year.

According to Federal Election Commission records, the NRA received \$423,205 in donations from January through March. In 1994, contributions totaled \$6.7 million, FEC records show.

While LaPierre said the NRA never reveals exact fund-raising totals, he did confirm that the letter went to nearly all of the group's 3.5 million members.

If the NRA did generate close to 900,000 contributions and letters of support, it would mean a success rate of about 35 percent a figure that political fund-raisers said would be extremely impressive.

``This is an extraordinary response, in the general sense of fund raising, where you're doing very well if you get 10 percent,''
said Robert Kaplan, a direct-mail fund-raiser from Los Angeles.
APNP-05-19-95 1152EDT

Date: 05/19/95 Time: 16:08

NRA Opens Annual Meeting Under Attack by Clinton Among Others

PHOENIX, Ariz. (AP) These should be the best of times for the National Rifle Association.

Its lobbyists are working with the most sympathetic Congress in years, if not decades. It has won some important battles in state legislatures. Its membership is at an all-time high.

But as it opened its annual meeting here Friday, the NRA found itself under attack both from without and within.

In Washington, President Clinton urged leaders of the organization to give up donations it received in response to a fund-raising letter that referred to federal agents as ``jack-booted government thugs.''

Clinton accused NRA leaders of ``giving aid and comfort to criminals who are really the enemy.''

Earlier in the week, former President Bush resigned from the NRA over the fund-raising letter.

At the annual meeting, splayed across two large hotels and the Phoenix Convention Center, renegade members of the organization made themselves visible to condemn the NRA's leadership for its financial management and militant politics.

``They're in deep trouble,''

said former NRA board member Dave Edmondson, who stood sentry outside the convention's press room, speaking to all who would listen. ``They can put a smiley face on it all they want to, but they're in deep trouble.''

It was a smiling face that Tanya Metaksa, the NRA's chief lobbyist, put forth as she discussed the group's status in its 124th year. Considered one of the NRA's hard-liners, Metaksa is among the leaders who are accused by moderates like Edmondson of hijacking a once-staid sporting organization and pushing it to the right-wing fringes.

She insisted that the NRA is both united and robust, enjoying its highest-ever membership of 3.5 million and remaining true to its mission of upholding a constitutional right to bear arms.

``There's no struggle for the soul of the NRA,''

she said. ``There's no schism. ... If anything, the leadership of this organization is more united than it's ever been in its history.''

As for Clinton's criticisms of the NRA both for distributing the fund-raising letter that criticized federal agents and for boasting that the letter was likely to bring in more than \$1 million in donations she was dismissive.

``We're not ashamed,''

she said. ``What we've been calling for for two years is a look at federal law enforcement agencies and reported abuses. We will continue to call for that, and we believe there will be an in-depth look.''

The NRA has called for congressional hearings to examine the actions of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, especially in the raids on white separatist Randy Weaver in Idaho and on the Branch Davidian cult in Texas.

But its attacks have drawn something of a backlash in the aftermath of the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City. Authorities say the bombing was the work of militants outraged over the deaths of Branch Davidians.

The fund-raising letter that has drawn so much heat was written before the bombing. In it, the NRA's executive vice president, Wayne LaPierre, spoke of the group's enemies in Congress, who helped pass a ban on some semi-automatic assault weapons.

``It doesn't matter to them that the semi-auto ban gives jack-booted government thugs more power to take away our Constitutional rights, break in our doors, seize our guns, destroy

our property, and even injure or kill us," he wrote.

LaPierre apologized earlier this week, saying he hadn't meant to cast aspersions on all federal law officers. But many in the NRA believe his language was accurate, if perhaps a little overheated. Metaksa dismissed the whole controversy as ``a huge media flap, fueled by those who would deny Americans their rights.''

She noted that the NRA has won battles in eight state legislatures over the past two years, pushing through laws that allow people to carry guns in public. ``We've had absolutely astounding successes in that arena," she said.

However, as Edmondson noted, that NRA has also lost battles over the assault weapon ban and the Brady Law, which restricted handgun sales.

Referring to the current leadership, he said, ``Since they've been in power, we've lost every major legislative battle. They have totally failed, and I see no way it can get better.''

APNP-05-19-95 1610EDT