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S	22	2	5	2

TROTTER GROUP TALKING POINTS

RACE COMMISSION

WELFARE REFORM (AND THE POVERTY REPORT)

REDISTRICTING/COURT ACTIONS

POWELL

RULE OF TWO

FARRAKHAN

MILLION MAN MARCH

SENTENCING COMMISSION GUIDELINES

URBAN POLICY (Sperling)

STAGNANT WAGE BENEFITS (Sperling)

RACE COMMISSION

Q: Are you considering appointing a race commission? Are the recommendations of the Kerner Commission still applicable?

A: The recommendations of the Kerner Commission are still very pertinent today. We are reviewing the recommendations of the Commission and I am very serious about what I said in my Austin speech. We are looking at the possibility of appointing a race commission but **want to move in a substantive and real way towards addressing these issues.** We are exploring whether this is best done through the appointment of a Race Commission.

WELFARE

I want a welfare reform bill that promotes work and responsibility and protects children. If Congress sends me a bill that does that, I'll sign it, and the country will be better for it. If they depart from this bipartisan common ground and send me an extremist bill that's weak on work and tough on children, I'll send it back until they get it right -- and continue to end welfare through the waiver process, one state at a time.

I've been very clear about what we need to do: Promoting work means providing child care, requiring states to maintain their own spending, rewarding states for putting people to work, and providing a contingency fund for economic downturn. Protecting children means not gutting school lunch or child welfare, and letting states decide for themselves what to do about issues like the family cap. Real welfare reform is about moving people from welfare to work, not cutting them off.

Q. The *New York Times* recently reported about an HHS study which found that the Senate welfare reform bill you support would put over 1 million children into poverty. Have you seen that study, and do you still support the Senate bill?

A. I've asked Alice Rivlin to study the final House and Senate bills and get me the facts. The preliminary review did not reflect the final Senate bill.

Q. Will you sign a welfare reform bill that, as the HHS study suggests, would put millions of children in poverty?

A. I've said all along that if Congress sends me a welfare reform bill that is tough on work and fair to children, I'll sign it, and if they don't, I'll send it back and make them try again. But make no mistake: this current welfare system desperately needs reform. Millions of children are trapped on welfare and stuck in poverty right now, and we can't afford to just maintain the current system and lose another generation.

Q. You came to Washington promising to "change welfare as we know it ." Have you done that? If not, do you still expect to do that?

A. We have made great progress in the area of welfare policy in the past 2 1/2 years. We expanded the EITC, which cut taxes for 15 million low-income working families and rewards work over welfare. We've collected a record level of child support, and I signed an executive order to make sure federal employees pay the child support they owe. We've given a record 35 states the freedom to experiment with dramatic changes to move people from welfare to work. Our economic policy is helping people leave welfare as well.

Last month, the Census Bureau reported that the number of Americans living below the poverty level significantly dropped between 1993-1994 after four straight years of increases.

- The number of poor African Americans dropped by 700,000 between 1993-1994.
- African American households were the only race or ethnic group to experience an increase (five percent) in real median income between 1993 and 1994.

We are helping change people's live for the better. We're giving people new hope and opportunity. We've created 7.5 million new jobs; unemployment is at its lowest levels in 20 years for African Americans. I'm going to continue to ensure that we keep doing better.

Status of Louisiana and Georgia Redistricting Cases

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court sent both redistricting cases back to the state courts. The Court held the plaintiffs in the Louisiana case lacked standing to bring the action. In the Georgia case, the Court held Georgia's 11th Congressional district was unconstitutional and sent the case back for the state court to develop a remedy.

In the Louisiana case, new plaintiff's were subsequently added to the case. The Georgia state court subsequently let a challenge to Georgia's Second Congressional district to be added to the case. The new trials were completed yesterday, except for post-trial motions by the parties in the Louisiana case.

Question: What is the status of the Department of Justice's involvement in these case?

Answer: We have continued to vigorously defend against the efforts to eliminate the majority minority districts that are being challenged, and await the court's decisions.

Question: What action will the Administration take if both courts find the majority minority districts unconstitutional.

Answer: We will focus on developing ways for black voters in both states to have the opportunity to rightly influence elections by voting for candidates of their choice.

COLIN POWELL

- Q. What do you think of Colin Powell's recent comments on the religious right and the Contract with America? Do you still believe he is a Democrat?
- A. I don't quite know what to make of those comments. They were fairly expansive. I think a lot of what he's saying parallels my appeal to the common sense and common ground that most of our people share.
- Q. In recent weeks, there has been a growing tide of conservative criticism against a Colin Powell run. What does this say about the Republican party? Should he run as a Democrat, Republican or an independent?
- A. I think certain members of the Republican Party want very defined positions explicitly supported. Certain conservatives are clearly not happy with some of his stances. I think we'll see an interesting debate within the Republican Party over the next month. Whether he decides to run and under what banner is really his decision to make.

I do find it interesting, though, that so many of his views -- on important issues such as protecting a woman's right to choose, on keeping guns off our streets, on affirmative action -- are in line with what I believe and what my Administration has been trying to do. I think most Americans share these views, yet he has drawn so much intense fire for his beliefs from the extremist element that is so strong within the Republican Party. I think it's a sign of just how extreme the Republican Party has become.

RULE OF TWO SUSPENSION

Q. Last Monday, DOD suspended the "rule of two," which requires it to set aside contracts for small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs) when 2 or more such firms are qualified and available to bid on the contract. If you support affirmative action, why did you do this?

A. I have said all along that we must mend affirmative action programs, not end them. The empirical data shows that there is still a need for such programs. In July, I instructed all agencies to work with the Justice Department to ensure that (1) federal programs are balanced, effective and fair and (2) that they were in compliance with the Supreme Court's guidelines as set out in Adarand. That review revealed the "rule of two" did not meet those standards and may be legally vulnerable. It operated as a rigid set-aside that was not narrowly tailored to address the problems that needed correcting. As a result, the program resulted in some areas (i.e., high tech) remaining all white, while others (i.e., janitorial services) became virtually all minority.

Q. Does this suspension mean that DOD will no longer be providing business opportunities for small disadvantaged businesses?

A. No. The "rule of two" accounts for about 12% (\$1 billion) of all contracting with SDBs (\$8.4 billion) and less than 1% of all contracting department-wide (\$122 billion). DOD will continue to use the 8(a) program, direct contracting, subcontracting, and other tools which account for nearly 90% of DoD awards to SDBs. In fact, DOD is aggressively taking steps to expand contracting opportunities for SDBs by breaking up large contracts and creating incentives for prime contractors to voluntarily increase subcontracting opportunities for SDBs.

Q. Will there be any more suspensions?

At this juncture, we do not know. The Justice Department is continuing with its review and will take what actions are necessary in light of my directive. However, I still see the need for these programs and will aggressively fight to see that minorities and all Americans are afforded the opportunity to fully participate in such activities.

MILLION MAN MARCH

- Q. What, in your opinion, did the Million Man March accomplish?
- A. It reaffirmed the importance of personal responsibility and respect. I believe the majority of the men who showed up that day already believed in the importance of those values. They work hard every day to provide for their families. I'm confident that those men of the march will go back to their homes and to their communities with a renewed commitment to lead by example -- whether it's helping to register voters, organizing local activities, or mentoring young people. We are already seeing the effects of the march. On Monday night in Detroit, which was Devil's Night, hundreds of African Americans walked around their neighborhoods and asked people to remember the spirit of the march. Their efforts contributed to a safe and peaceful night. Assuming personal and social responsibility is something all of us, not just African American men, need to do more of.

LOUIS FARRAKHAN

- Q. Should Louis Farrakhan be given credit for organizing the march? What did you think of his speech?
- A. I think the people who really deserve credit are the hundreds of thousands of men who showed up. I'm sure they were a great source of pride to their families. They were saying no to the crime, drugs, and violence which has hurt us so much. I believe many of those were sending a message to their communities: "Enough is enough."
- I found aspects of his speech troubling. I don't want to address specific passages because I don't think it contributes to a meaningful and thoughtful discourse. This country needs to focus on ways to bring us together, not what tears us apart. I think it's also important to recognize that the majority of the speakers had very constructive comments. It's clear that this event was not about Rev. Farrakhan, but about taking responsibility for ourselves and our loved ones. Those values transcend any one person or organization.

SENTENCING COMMISSION GUIDELINES

Statement

I signed my bill on Monday for two very compelling reasons.

First, I disagree with the Sentencing Commission's recommendation to reduce crack penalties and make them 1 to 1 with powder cocaine for 3 important reasons: I think there are the significant differences between the two; I am very concerned with the impact crack has had on our communities -- especially the way it has ripped apart our inner-cities; and I know that a drastic change in penalties would greatly impact our efforts to deter those who traffic in this poison.

Second, I also disagree with the Sentencing Commission's recommendation to reduce the penalties for money laundering. Money laundering is an essential law enforcement tool to nail high-level drug traffickers.

I recently spoke before the U.N. and stated that I was directing our government to identify and put on notice nations that tolerate money laundering. There is no way we should be reducing money laundering penalties at home while we are working to catch drug traffickers attempting to hide their ill-gotten gains overseas.

With regards to crack penalties, I believe that some adjustments are warranted. That is why in the bill I signed on Monday we direct the Sentencing Commission to undertake additional review of these issues -- including raising powder cocaine penalties to narrow the difference -- and to report back with new recommendations.

I have also directed my Attorney General to begin working with the Sentencing Commission immediately on these new recommendations -- and she already has begun that process.

Questions and Answers

Q. Recently, you spoke out about your concern that 1/3 of young African-Americans go through our criminal justice system. Yet, on Monday you sign a bill that would perpetuate that problem. Aren't you contradicting your speech on Race in this country by signing this bill -- isn't this a racist bill?

A. No. First of all, I am very concerned about the amount of African-American youths that are in our criminal justice system.

You and I might disagree but I strongly believe that crack penalties should be harsher than powder cocaine. I want to the Commission to review the disparity in our sentencing structure but considering the increase in powder cocaine penalties.

Just as important, the bill I signed Monday does not close the book on this issue. My Attorney General is already working with the Sentencing Commission to consider raising the penalties for distribution of powder cocaine.

I have also directed her to immediately develop enforcement strategies to ensure that those who distribute powder that is turned into crack are punished as severely as those who distribute the crack itself

Second, there are 2 facts that you need keep in mind, here:

One -- our U.S. Attorneys are not busting small time youthful offenders of crack under this law. We are nailing high-level pushers.

In 1994, of the 3,430 crack defendants convicted, the number of youthful, small-time crack offenders with no prior criminal history and no weapons involvement was just 51 --- that is less than 1.5% of the total crack convictions.

The median crack defendant was convicted of trafficking in 109 grams. Only 10% of crack defendants had trafficked in less than 2-3 grams of crack. We are busting traffickers of this stuff, not small-time peddlers or users. Are these young kids? No. Only 10% were under the age of 21. 63% are 26 and older.

And two -- I have already provided sentencing reform. In my Crime Bill, I had a provision added called the Safety Valve. What it did was say that if you are a first time drug offender, with no prior record, and did not use a gun in your crime, then we will give you relief from the mandatory minimums -- those sentences and those types of defendants are the core issues in this whole debate.

I took heat for that provision, but I did it because I knew it was right. That was not just rhetoric. Dramatically reducing the penalties for crack is not real sentencing reform. All it does is tell the pusher that the cost of business is going down; keep pushing your poison.

DRUG STRATEGY TALKING POINTS

- To work more closely with foreign governments to cut drugs off at the source.
- To boost community efforts to educate young people about the dangers and penalties of drug use.
- To break the cycle of crime and drugs providing treatment to hardcore drug users, who consume most of the drugs and cause much of the crime and health problems.
- And we will punish people who break the law.

DRUG STRATEGY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **DISMANTLING OF THE COLOMBIAN CALI DRUG CARTEL**
Despite Colombia's having been the original source of nearly all our cocaine for decades, President Clinton is the first President to decertify them, and only grant them a "national interest" waiver that will be removed if they do not bring down Cali cartel leaders. Under the pressure of the President's power to "decertify", Colombia can be banned from receiving international loans and U.S foreign aid if it does not cooperate.
- As a result of decertification, in the last six months Colombia has taken into custody six of the top seven leaders of the Cali Cartel.
- **WHITE COLLAR** - The U.S. indictments included several American lawyers representing the cartel, effectively "Benedict Arnolds" who crossed the line. The Clinton Justice Department is the first to tackle white collar criminals -- and they were former Justice Department colleagues.
- **INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS EFFORT** - the centerpiece of the UN Speech.

DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

- The President used his first veto to protect the Drug Free Schools Program from being eliminated. He saved \$482 million the Congress tried to cut in half for 1995, and to zero out for 1996 for the Safe and Drug Free School program. The President requested \$500 million for FY 96, which the House Republicans are now trying to cut by 60%.
- The Safe and Drug Free Schools program is the only federally funded drug education program in the nation's school districts, which reaches 97% or 39 million of our children in grades 7-12. It establishes innovative and successful anti-drug counseling, education, intervention, and conflict resolution programs that have reduced drug use as much as 25% in many schools.

CRIME AND DRUG TALKING POINTS

- Your Administration has made fighting drug use and combatting violence and crime a number one priority.
- Rather than just talk, you have a proven record. You proposed a comprehensive strategy in a Crime Bill and a Drug Policy that is both tough and smart. And you have abandoned the false choice of punishment vs. prevention -- the problem requires both.
- Your anti-crime and drug efforts have three centerpieces: police, punishment, and prevention.

CRIME ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

100,000 COPS PROGRAM - 25,000 additional police officers on the street already.

COMMUNITY POLICING - revolutionizing policing in this country by providing better trained officers.

ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN - took 19 weapons of war off the streets of America.

BRADY BILL - prevented 40,000 hand guns from being sold to felons.

DRUG COURTS - includes \$9 million to provide continuing judicial supervision for non-violent offenders with substance abuse problems.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN - every state received \$26 million in grants to help train prosecutors, police and service providers, and over \$173 million more is authorized by the VCCA for next year.

TOUGHER SENTENCES -- AND DRUG TREATMENT THAT WORKS:

- **SENTENCES** - The President's 1994 crime bill expanded death penalties to include drug kingpins and providing tougher sentences for cocaine dealers. Complimenting this approach is the President's expanded drug treatment for users.
- **TREATMENT** - The Clinton Administration has proposed the largest increases in treatment and prevention resources, and in the delivery of treatment services.
- Two years ago we proposed \$355 million to treat 74,000 hardcore users; coupled with our request for drug courts, we would have treated a total of 140,000 hardcore users. (The Congress cut the President's proposal for treatment from \$355 million to \$57 million)
- Last year we proposed the Substance Abuse Performance Partnership to give states more flexibility in how they provide treatment services and \$60 million more to treat hardcore users.