

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

YOUTH VIOLENCE

OCT 14, 1999

October 14, 1999

ANTI-YOUTH VIOLENCE NBC PSA CAMPAIGN ROLLOUT EVENT

event

DATE: October 15, 1999
LOCATION: Presidential Hall
BRIEFING TIME: 12:50pm – 1:00pm
EVENT TIME: 1:10pm – 1:55pm
FROM: Bruce Reed

I. PURPOSE

To unveil a NBC's new anti-violence public service advertising campaign; to announce the creation of a new White House Council on Youth Violence; and to call on the Congress to pass common-sense gun control measures.

II. BACKGROUND

In the aftermath of the tragedy in Littleton, you and the First Lady called on Americans from all sectors to help prevent youth violence. Today, you will announce two new initiatives in this effort. First, you will unveil a new anti-violence public service advertising campaign on NBC. Second, you will announce the creation of a new White House Council on Youth Violence to ensure that the federal government's many efforts in this area are well-coordinated and serve the public as effectively as possible. Finally, you will urge that Congress pass common-sense gun control measures.

SPURRING ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY TO HELP PREVENT YOUTH VIOLENCE

You will announce that on Monday, October 18, 1999, NBC will begin airing public service advertisements that focus on the interconnected issues of youth violence and intolerance. The advertisements, part of NBC's "More You Know" public service campaign, will send messages to parents and students about the importance of resolving conflicts without resorting to violence and that prejudice and hate are harmful and can lead to tragic ends. In this effort, NBC is partnering with national organizations including the Anti-Defamation League, the National Urban League, the National Council of La Raza, the Human Rights Campaign, and the Leadership Conference Education Fund. The campaign includes an Internet site, and 1-800 numbers to link the public to more information and tools to combat youth violence.

In August, you announced the formation of a non-profit, non-partisan National Campaign Against Youth Violence. Today, you will highlight the National Campaign's initial work to help communities across the nation stop youth violence

DIRECTING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO DO ITS PART

Noting that the federal government must do its part, you will also announce today that you are issuing an executive memorandum to create a White House Council on Youth Violence. The Council will work to coordinate programs throughout the federal government that address issues of youth violence. The Council will seek to make these programs more accessible to American families and examine best practices in addressing the problem. Members of the Council will include the Attorney General and the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Education, and Labor, as well as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

DEMANDING THAT CONGRESS ENACT COMMON SENSE GUN CONTROL LAWS

Finally, you will demand that Congress meet its responsibility to help reduce violence and improve public safety by passing common sense gun legislation. You will reiterate your call on the Congress to pass a balanced, bipartisan juvenile crime bill that includes the Senate-passed gun measures that would: close the gun show loophole; require child safety locks for handguns; bar the importation of large capacity ammunition clips; and ban violent juveniles from owning guns for life. Six months after the tragedy in Littleton, these life-saving measures are long overdue.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Attorney General Janet Reno
Secretary Donna Shalala
Loretta Ucelli
Eric Liu
Lowell Weiss

Stage Participants:

Students from Eastern High School, Washington, D.C.

Program Participants:

YOU

Attorney General Janet Reno
Secretary Donna Shalala
S. Epatha Merkerson, NBC's *Law & Order*

IV. PRESS PLAN

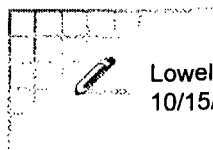
Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- You will be announced onto the stage, accompanied by Attorney General Reno, Secretary Shalala, and Epatha Merkeson.
- Attorney General Janet Reno will make brief remarks and introduce Secretary Donna Shalala.
- Secretary Donna Shalala will make brief remarks and introduce Epatha Merkeson.
- Epatha Merkeson will make brief remarks and introduce YOU.
- YOU will make remarks, unveil the NBC public service announcement, work a ropeline, and depart.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by speechwriting.



Lowell A. Weiss
10/15/99 10:03:33 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Anna Richter/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: YV PSA Spch

Basically, yes. Here's the most recent draft....

Draft 10/15/99 9am

Lowell Weiss

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS ON YOUTH VIOLENCE PSA CAMPAIGN
THE WHITE HOUSE
October 15, 1999**

Acknowledge: Epatha [eh-PAY-tha] Merkerson. Welcome back to the White House. Epatha joined us here back in February, when we unveiled a PSA to help get our children the health care they need. Epatha plays a great no-nonsense cop on TV; she's a great friend of America's children in real life. Atty. Gen. Reno; Sec. Shalala; ADL National Dir. Abraham Foxman; HRC Exec. Dir. Elizabeth Birch; NBC Executive Producer Dr. Rosalyn Weinman.

Six months ago next week, in a quiet suburb of Denver, two angry, troubled teenagers burst into their school with automatic weapons, intent on killing as many of their teachers and fellow students as they could. The sheer magnitude of the tragedy was unprecedented. It shook our entire nation. Six months later, our memories of that day have not even begun to fade.

But as we all know, Littleton was not an isolated incident. It was one in a string of horrific school shootings and hate crimes that have visited upon too many communities and taken too many lives. America should not – and cannot – tolerate this kind of violence. Young people should never, ever have to worry that they will be the target of violence because of the color of their skin, whom they worship, or whom they love. Children should never have to go to bed at night worried about whether it's safe to get on the school bus in the morning.

That is why we have called upon every sector of our society to get involved in the search for solutions to youth violence and youth hate. At home and at school, in Hollywood and in the heartland, in our state capitals and the nation's capital, each and every one of us has a role to play and a responsibility to meet.

In August, we helped to launch the National Campaign Against Youth Violence, to pull together commitments from people and organizations from all different fields and walks of life. Although this new campaign is not even two months old, it has already made a remarkable start. Over the coming months, it will roll out a major new media campaign; begin supporting in-school and afterschool programs, anti-violence concerts and town halls; and sponsor a city-by-city effort to shine a spotlight on the local initiatives that are producing the most promising results. Its executive director, Jeff Bleich, is here with us today. Jeff, thank you for all your tireless work.

Today, we are very pleased to see that NBC is making its own commitment to help protect children from youth violence. As part of its "The More You Know" campaign, NBC has created a series of ads that speak to parents and children, through some of America's most admired stars, about how families can help to stop violence and hate before it starts. And now I want to show one of these ads...

This ad and others like it will be seen by millions of viewers every day. In clear and powerful terms, they convey the message that stopping violence and intolerance begins at home. They say if you're a parent, you owe it to your children to sit down with them – to draw them out, to give them a comfortable opportunity to express their fears, to give you early warning when there's a problem you need to address. I think this is a wonderful example of what we can accomplish when we use the power of your medium to send out positive messages to children and parents alike. I thank NBC and all the fine actors who appear in this campaign. *and I hope we can help on this to do more.*

Today, I would also like to announce another important way we in the Federal government are going to do our part. Because youth violence has so many origins and so many facets, not just one but many of our Cabinet agencies are working to provide solutions. After all, stopping youth violence involves responses ranging from community policing to mental health, after-school programs to job opportunities. So I am creating a new Youth Violence Council to coordinate, accelerate, and amplify the many anti-violence efforts coming out of our Cabinet agencies. We know that youth violence is a problem that demands an uncommonly unified response.

Frankly, preventing youth violence requires Congress to do its part as well. In the six months since Littleton, Congress has had more than ample time to address one of the undeniable catalysts of this crisis – the appalling ease with which young people can gain access to guns. And yet, after a very encouraging vote in the Senate last May, the Republican leadership has done nothing but delay. So, once again, I say to the Republican leadership: Let's work together to restore reason to America's gun laws – by closing the gun-show loophole, requiring child-safety locks, barring violent juveniles from owning guns for life, and banning the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips. Don't wait until the next senseless tragedy to pass the sensible gun-safety measures our children need today. *LATE CAUS*

A month ago to this day, the fire marshal of Fort Worth was asked if he was shocked that gun violence had stolen the lives of teenagers singing and praying in a Baptist church.

His answer: "Nothing shocks me anymore." I'm sure the marshal didn't mean it this way, but we simply cannot become inured to violence and hate. We cannot accept as inevitable that children will get shot when they're studying in class or praying in church. If all Americans recognize their moral obligation to speak up, to reach out, to send positive messages, we can change the culture of violence in America. Together, we can make America the safest big nation – and give our children back their childhood. Thank you and God bless you.

#

Q&A on Youth Violence Announcements
October 15, 1999

Q: What did the President announce today?

A: Today, President Clinton announced two new initiatives in the national effort to prevent youth violence. First, he unveiled a new anti-violence public service advertising campaign on NBC. Second, the President announced that he is creating a new White House Council on Youth Violence to ensure that the federal government's many efforts in this area are well-coordinated and serve the public as effectively as possible. Finally, the President demanded that Congress pass common-sense gun control measures, noting that Congress has let six months pass since Littleton.

White House Council on Youth Violence

Q: What is the mission of this council?

A: The Council will work to more effectively coordinate and implement policies across the Federal government that address youth violence, including juvenile crime issues, public health issues, and school safety issues. The Council will be specifically tasked to: (1) develop an information hub for citizens so that the public can more easily access information about federal problems aimed at curbing youth violence; (2) produce reports on youth violence, and on best practices in combating the problem; (3) expand the Safe Schools/Healthy Students model of inter-agency collaboration; (4) provide tools for parents to deal with the issue of youth violence; (5) coordinate the federal research agenda; and (6) develop further policy responses as needed.

Q: Who will sit on the Council?

A: The Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy will convene the Council and members of the Council will include the Attorney General and the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Education, and Labor, as well as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. In addition, Chair of the Council may add other officials as needed, such as the Surgeon General or the Director of the National Drug Control Policy.

Q: Will the Council specifically deal with the issue of mental health as it relates to youth violence?

A: The Council will address a number of issues that are related to youth violence, including mental health. The Council will work to make the connections and build bridges between federal programs dealing with issues ranging from juvenile justice to mental health.

Q: What is the Administration currently doing to help prevent youth violence?

A: The Administration has a widerange of programs and supports that help to prevent youth violence. For example, the U.S. Department of Education awards 21st Century Community Learning Center grants to provide after-school learning opportunities and safe harbors for youth in the out-of-school hours. The President has proposed to triple the funding for this initiative to \$600 million to serve 1.1 million students in the year 2000. The U.S. Department of Labor is implementing new Youth Opportunity grants in high-poverty areas to address the needs of youth in the out-of-school hours. This year, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Education took leadership in developing a joint initiative – Safe Schools/Healthy Students – to help communities develop community-wide responses to school and youth violence. These agencies also worked together to develop a guide – *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools* – to help teachers and principals identify and respond to the early warning signs of troubled youth that can lead to school violence.

Q: How is the Council related to the National Campaign Against Youth Violence?

A: The White House Council on Youth Violence is the federal government's response to the need to more effectively address the problem of youth violence. The National Campaign is a private non-profit, non-partisan effort to engage all sectors of our community in a campaign to raise awareness of the problem and address the problem community-by-community. The Council and the National Campaign have no formal relationship, but each will learn from the other's efforts.

NBC Public Service Campaign

Q: Does this Campaign result from the President's White House strategy session after Littleton?

A: NBC developed this public service campaign in response to the recent national incidents of youth violence. It is an example of one sector of our society – the media – responding to the national need to help prevent youth violence. The campaign deals with an array of interconnected problems from preventing youth violence to combating prejudice, fighting hate crimes, and celebrating diversity. [Note: NBC did not participate in the May event strategy session, so we should not characterize today's PSA announcement as a response to the President's call to action at that session.]

Gun Legislation

Q: What do you think the prospects are for passing gun legislation before the Congress adjourns for the year?

A: It would be a grave mistake for the Congress to fail to act on such important life-saving legislation. In this year alone, we have watched as innocent people were gunned down while attending school, walking home from a church or synagogue, working in their offices, delivering the mail, and worshipping in their church. And just this week, three law enforcement officers were killed by gunfire in Pleasanton, Texas. Now is the time to pass common sense gun legislation.

Every day the Congress fails to finish its work on gun legislation, another 13 children are killed by gun violence. The President is committed to doing his part, by giving communities tools to keep their communities safe – by putting more police on the street, cracking down on illegal gun traffickers, and providing new school safety resources. But there is simply no reason why criminals should be able to buy guns without a background check at gun shows; why violent juveniles should be able to purchase a handgun on their 21st birthday; and why child safety locks cannot be provided with every handgun sold. The President will join the American people in continuing to urge the Congress to pass these common sense measures without further delay.

Q. What is the current status of your hate crimes legislation and what are the prospects that you can get Congress to move on it this year?

A. It has now been a year since the murder of Mathew Shepard. In addition to this terrible incident, hundreds of others have been injured or killed over the past two years, simply because of who they are. In response to this epidemic of violence, many people around the country, both Democrats and Republicans, have called on Congress to strengthen the federal hate crimes laws.

Earlier this year, the Senate passed legislation which if enacted would strengthen current law by making it easier to prosecute crimes based on race, color, religion and national origin and by expanding coverage to include crimes based on sexual orientation, gender and disability.

Congress now has the opportunity to complete work on that legislation and to send it to me for signature. I call on them to do so as quickly as possible. The nation cannot afford to wait.

Q. What is your reaction to the news that Senate Republicans will remove the Hate Crimes legislation from the pending appropriations bill?

A. I think that would be a very wrong and bad decision. In just the last year we've had a series of tragedies that have reminded us of the need to send a strong message to those who sow hate and try and divide us. This isn't a Democratic or Republican problem, it's a problem that America needs to solve together. There is broad support for this measure nationally, and we will not give up on this effort.

DRAFT - DRAFT

PREVENTING VIOLENCE IN OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS
Accomplishments and New Initiatives Proposed by President Clinton

We know the vast majority of our schools are safe, but we can't forget the communities in cities, suburbs and rural areas that have a serious problem with school violence. And we can't forget that even one incident of school violence is one too many.

-President Clinton, September 11, 1999

Goal: Getting Guns Out Of The Hands Of Juveniles And Away From Schools.

Signed into Law the Youth Handgun Safety Act. In 1994, President Clinton signed into law the Youth Handgun Safety Act, which generally banned the possession of handguns or handgun ammunition by juveniles under the age of 18, and made it a Federal offense for adults to transfer handguns to juveniles, with limited exceptions. In 1997, the President directed the Treasury Department to require that signs be posted on the premises of Federal firearms licensees and that written notification be issued with each handgun sold to non-licensees to help ensure compliance with the Youth Handgun Safety Act.

Enforcing Zero Tolerance for Guns and Other Weapons in Schools. In October 1994, President Clinton signed into law the Gun-Free Schools Act, requiring school districts to expel students who bring guns to school. The President issued a Presidential Directive later that month to enforce the "zero tolerance" policy for guns in schools, consistent with the Gun-Free Schools Act. In school year 1997-98, the U.S. Department of Education estimates that, under zero tolerance policies, nearly 4,000 students were expelled from public schools for bringing a firearm to school.

Introduced the Youth Gun Crime Enforcement Act. In April 1999, President Clinton unveiled his omnibus gun legislation to strengthen the Brady Law and the assault weapons ban, restrict access to guns by our youth and crack down on illegal gun traffickers. The President's proposed bill will: (1) raise the age of the youth handgun ban from 18 to 21 years of age; (2) ban youth possession of semi-automatic assault rifles; (3) prohibit violent juveniles from ever owning guns; (4) require child safety locking devices for guns; (5) reduce illegal gun running by limiting the purchase of handguns to no more than one per month per person; (6) halt the importation of large capacity ammunition magazines; (7) require Brady background checks for the purchase of explosives and at gun shows; and (8) help law enforcement trace more crime guns to their source.

Next Steps:

President Clinton Urges Congress to Act on Gun Legislation. In his September 11, 1999 radio address, the President urged Congress to complete work on the juvenile crime legislation and pass a final bill that includes common sense gun provisions proposed in his gun legislation and passed in the Senate, including measures to: closing the gun show loophole; requiring child safety locks for handguns; barring the importation of large capacity ammunition clips; and banning violent juveniles from owning guns for life.

Goal: Providing The Best Information To School Administrators, Teachers, Parents And Students On Preventing Youth Violence And Creating Safe, Disciplined, And Drug-Free Learning Environments.

Responding to the Early Warning Signs of Troubled Youth. President Clinton directed the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General to develop a guide to help teachers and principals identify and respond to the early warning signs of troubled youth that can lead to school violence. In August 1998, the Departments of Justice and Education released *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools*. This guide provides schools and communities with information on how to identify the early warning signs and take action steps to prevent and respond to school violence. More than 400,000 copies of the guide have been distributed to every school in the country and to youth organizations throughout, and additional copies may be obtained through the websites of the Departments of Education and Justice.

Helping Students Take a Stand Against Violence. In October 1998, the President kicked-off a partnership between the Federal government and MTV to engage youth in solutions. The MTV year-long media campaign -- "Fight For Your Rights: Take A Stand Against Youth Violence" -- is designed to give young adults a voice in the national debate on school and youth violence. In partnership with the Department of Justice and Education, and the National Endowment for the Arts, MTV created and is distributing a Youth Action Guide and CD-Rom that aim to engage youth in mentoring, conflict resolution, and other positive solutions to violence. The guide is available through a 1-800 number at the Justice Department and through MTV.

Goal: Helping Communities Coordinate Their Efforts To Identify Troubled Young People, Prevent Them From Acting Violently And Respond When Violence Does Occur.

Supporting a Community-Wide Response to School Safety and Youth Violence. To help communities throughout the country promote a coordinated, comprehensive response to school safety, last year at the White House Conference on School Safety, the President launched a Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative designed to help communities develop and implement community-wide responses to school and youth violence. It empowers parents, principals, police, and others to collaborate on local solutions. In September 1999, the President announced over \$100 million in Safe Schools/Healthy Student grants for 54 school districts. The grants will support coordinated and comprehensive school safety plans that include anti-truancy initiatives, mentoring, mental health services, conflict resolution programs, school resource officers, and more -- helping to promote healthy development and to prevent youth violence before it occurs.

Providing Safe After-School Opportunities for More than a Million Children a Year. Last year (FY99), the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program was expanded to \$200 million. This funding is already supporting hundreds of school-based after-school programs in rural and urban schools in 44 states and the District of Columbia, including weekend and summer programs. This year, the President proposed to triple this initiative -- to \$600 million -- to provide safe and educational after-school opportunities for up to 1.1 million school-age children in communities across the country. In addition, the Education Department released a report in June 1998, titled *Safe and Smart: Making the After-School Hours Work for Kid*. This report shows that after-school programs can lower juvenile crime and improve academic performance. *Safe and Smart* was sent to every school district in the country.

Forging School-Based Partnerships Between Schools and Law Enforcement. Under the School-Based Partnerships grant program, the Clinton Administration has provided \$30 million to 275 policing agencies to work with schools and community-based organizations to address crime at and around schools. This initiative emphasizes using principles of community policing and problem-solving methods to address the

causes of school-related crime. The grants will help forge or strengthen partnerships between local law enforcement and schools to focus on school crime, drug use and discipline problems.

Next Steps:

Creating a New Federal Response for Violent Deaths in Schools. President Clinton has proposed \$12 million in his FY 2000 budget for School Emergency Response to Violence -- or Project SERV -- to help schools and local communities respond to school-related violent deaths, such as those that occurred last school year in Jonesboro, Arkansas; Paducah, Kentucky; Pearl, Mississippi; and Springfield, Oregon. Developed with input from local officials and educators in these and other communities, Project SERV will enable the Federal government to assist local communities in much the same way that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assists in response to natural disasters.

Helping to Make All Schools Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free. In 1994, President Clinton expanded the Drug-Free Schools Act into the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act, making violence prevention a key part of this program. Safe and Drug-Free Schools currently provides support for violence and drug prevention programs to 97 percent of the nation's school districts. At the White House Conference on School Safety, President Clinton announced his plan for a significant overhaul of this nearly \$600 million Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program (SDFSC). Under the President's proposal to reauthorize the SDFSC Program, schools will be required to adopt rigorous, comprehensive school safety plans that include: tough, but fair, discipline policies; safe passage to and from schools; effective drug and violence policies and programs; annual school safety and drug use report cards; links to after school programs; efforts to involve parents; and crisis management plans.

Hiring School Resource Officers, Targeting Assistance to Schools with Serious Crime Problems. To help give schools with crime problems the tools they need to put the security of our children first, at the White House Conference on School Safety, the President announced an initiative to put more community police and School Resource Officers to work in schools -- and to train police, educators and other members of the community to help recognize the early warning signs of violence. Under the COPS in Schools initiative, the Justice Department has provided \$145 million for 649 communities to hire 1,350 officers to work in schools.

Goal: Creating A National Dialogue Around Preventing Youth Violence.

President Hosted a White House Conference on School Safety. In October 1998, President and Mrs. Clinton hosted the first-ever conference on school safety to provide an opportunity for Americans to learn more about how they can make their own schools and communities safer. Students, parents, teachers, principals, law enforcement, ministers, and other experts from across the country participated in the Conference, and hundreds of communities and schools were linked by satellite. At the conference, the President presented information from the First Annual Report on School Safety -- a report intended to give parents, principals and policy makers an accurate, yearly snapshot of school crime, as well as to provide information on what practical steps they can take to make their schools safer. The President also announced a number of new resources and partnerships to give communities new tools to prevent school and youth violence.

President and Mrs. Clinton Held a White House Strategy Session on Youth Violence after the Littleton Tragedy. In May 1999, President Clinton and the First Lady held a strategy meeting to discuss the problem of youth violence and develop a strategy for a national campaign to address this problem. The meeting included a broad cross section of Americans, including parents and children, teachers and religious leaders, law enforcement and government officials, gun manufacturers and sportsmen, and representatives of the entertainment industry. The President unveiled several initiatives to address the

problem of youth violence, including a Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence, gun industry support for gun legislation in five important areas, and public and private commitments to ensure the effective implementation of the V-Chip.

Next Steps:

Establishing a National Campaign Against Youth Violence. The President called for a National Campaign Against Youth Violence and recently announced its formation. The campaign will be an independent, national, non-partisan campaign that will address the problem of youth violence by: (1) serving as an information clearinghouse to share what programs work in one community with communities all over the country; (2) securing commitments from all sectors of society to do their part to help reduce violence; and (3) helping give parents more tools to protect their children from violence.

Network Anti-Violence Roadblock. At the White House Strategy Session on Youth Violence in May 1999, the President challenged the entertainment industry to do its part to combat youth violence. In August, the President announced that an extensive coalition of broadcast and cable networks have joined together in an unprecedented effort to air simultaneously the prime time debut of public service ads on the theme of "Talking with Kids About Violence." The ads, which feature children and the President talking about the need for parents to talk to their kids about violence, will air between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. on August 18. This first-ever Ad Council television "roadblock" will include ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, UPN, WB, A&E, Animal Planet, BET, CNN, CNN Airport, Comedy Central, Country Music Television, Discovery Channel, Discovery Digital Networks, FOX Family Channel, Headline News, the History Channel, the Learning Channel, Lifetime, MTV, the Nashville Network, Nickelodeon, TBS, TNT, Travel Channel, TV Land, Univision, VH-1, and FastTV.com, a website with video streaming capability, which will provide the spot online. The public service ads were sponsored by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the Advertising Council, and Children Now. A free booklet has been developed for parents on how to talk about violence and is available at www.talkingwithkids.org, or by calling 1-800-CHILD44.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 15, 1999

October 15, 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR
DOMESTIC POLICY

SUBJECT: White House Council on Youth Violence

Violence by youth and against youth is an issue that deeply concerns us all. Youth violence can be thought of as a juvenile crime issue, as a public health issue, and as a school safety issue. It affects every region and demographic group. As many recent incidents have made us aware, it is a problem that can strike with unexpected force -- and that now demands uncommonly unified responses. That is why I announced, on August 17, 1999, that a nonprofit, nonpartisan "National Campaign Against Youth Violence" had been established to bring together all segments of society to help prevent youth violence.

The Federal Government already addresses many aspects of youth violence through its programs. I am particularly proud of the joint efforts of the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Education in developing the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative. These agencies also worked well together to help us respond quickly to the Columbine High School incident. I have read with interest the report of the Attorney General's Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. I look forward to the report that the Surgeon General in response to my May request is preparing on the causes of youth violence. The Secretary of Labor's efforts to address the needs of youth are also about to bear fruit, as high-poverty communities implement our new Youth Opportunity Grants, and as the Secretary and the Attorney General finalize their agreement for cooperative work on those grants and on Labor's Youth Offender grant program.

With so many agencies and programs involved, and with the need for my Administration to work closely with different elements of State and local governments, tribes, schools, community groups, and families, it has become increasingly clear to me that the Federal Government needs a more effective policy coordination strategy for youth violence issues.

Therefore, today I direct the Assistant for Domestic Policy to form a White House Council on Youth Violence to provide this policy coordination, to provide flexible and timely responses to the challenge of youth violence, and to ensure that our Nation's citizens are able to benefit from the Federal Government's many antiviolence initiatives.

more

(OVER)

Structure of the Council

The Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy will chair the Council. The Office of the Vice President and the Office of Management and Budget will be regular participants. Four agency heads will be the regular program members of the Council:

- The Attorney General, responding to the juvenile crime aspects;
- The Secretary of Health and Human Services, responding to the public health aspects, including mental health aspects, and to family issues;
- The Secretary of Education, responding to the school safety issues; and
- The Secretary of Labor, responding to youth employment and out-of-school youth issues.

The Chair of the Council may add such other officials as he deems appropriate to further the purposes of this overall effort or to participate in specific aspects of it. For example, matters relating to public health aspects would involve the Surgeon General. Matters relating to firearms control or drug abuse would involve the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director of National Drug Control Policy, respectively. Implications for economic development policies would call for involvement of the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Secretary of Commerce. Comparable policies for Indian country would engage the Secretary of the Interior. Issues relating to community service opportunities for youth would involve the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Chair, after consultation with Council members, will appoint staff members to coordinate the Council's efforts. The Chair may call upon the participating agencies for logistical support to the Council, as necessary.

Duties of the Council

1. Develop a citizen's information hub. The Council will develop and maintain a coordinated inventory of relevant agency programs and provide analyses of their effectiveness. It will make this inventory widely available in summary form -- and upon request in more detail -- through the services of the appropriate Council member, to elected officials, community groups, police organizations, school systems, parents, and others working on local solutions to these issues. The inventory and full texts of program reports and evaluations should be available on an easily accessible website. The availability of this compilation will be widely publicized.
2. Produce reports on youth violence. The Council will prepare or have prepared reports on various aspects of the problem of youth violence, describing, for instance, best practices in combating the problem. In doing so, the Council should consult with nonprofits, foundations, and other organizations that have conducted research and/or developed resources on the prevention of youth violence. In addition, the Surgeon General is now carrying out a broad study of the potential causes of youth violence. I ask that the Surgeon General consult closely with the Council in the development of the study so that I may have the benefit of participation of all the involved agencies in its analysis and findings.

more

3. Expand the Safe Schools/Healthy Students model of collaboration. This initiative of the Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services has evolved into a highly effective collaboration among the agencies. The Council will oversee this effort and examine options for improving its operations and applying the model to other governmental efforts. The Secretary of Labor will begin participation in the initiative through establishing linkages to Youth Opportunities and Youth Offender grants.

4. Provide tools for parents to deal with the issue. Many Federal programs address issues relating to strengthening the family and helping parents raise children. The Council will explore the possibility of devising a cross-program strategy to help parents address youth violence. It will also report on new tools emerging in both the private and public sectors to assist parents.

5. Coordinate the Federal research agenda. The Council will oversee coordination of agency research agendas and the development of needed cross-agency research collaborations. I ask the Council to seek to have this structure in place to support the planning for FY 2001 research funds, and where feasible, to improve the planned use of funds available from prior years.

6. Develop further policy responses. The Council will meet at the call of the Chair to discuss new findings from analyses of the youth violence issue and to consider new or modified Administration responses to it, especially those that involve more than one agency. Recommendations for initiatives will be discussed in the Council for consistency with overall coordinated policy before being presented for formal decision in the budget process. From time to time, the Council will report to me directly on the results of its efforts.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

cc: The Vice President
 The Secretary of the Treasury
 The Secretary of the Interior
 The Secretary of Agriculture
 The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
 The Director of the Office of Management and Budget
 The Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy

#