

Statement on the 1997 National Crime Victimization Survey *December 27, 1998*

The 1997 National Crime Victimization Survey released by the Department of Justice today shows that violent crime fell 7 percent last year and 21 percent since I took office. With the violent crime rate now its lowest level since 1973, Americans are safer today than they have been in many years. These new figures again show that our strategy of more police, stricter gun laws, and better crime prevention is work-

ing. But we are not yet done. Working together, both in Washington and in communities across our Nation, we must redouble our efforts to make our streets, homes, and schools safer for all Americans.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release until 9 a.m.

Remarks Announcing Social Security System Compliance With Year 2000 Computer Problem Safeguards *December 28, 1998*

Good morning. Let me say, one of the things that she might have told you is that before she volunteered for the National Council of Senior Citizens for 20 years, she was an employee until 1972, when she retired, of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Therefore, she worked for the Treasury Department. And on New Year's Eve, she will be 90 years old. *[Applause]* So we thank her.

Situation in Iraq

Ladies and gentlemen, before I get into my remarks, because this is the only opportunity I will have to appear before the press today, I think I should say a few words about an incident early this morning over the skies of Iraq, where American and British aircrews were enforcing a no-fly zone in northern Iraq. They were fired on by Iraq's surface-to-air missiles. They took evasive action, returned fire on the missile site, and returned safely to their base in Turkey.

We enforce two no-fly zones in Iraq: one in the north, established in 1991; another in the south, established in 1992, which now stretches from the southern suburbs of Baghdad down to the Kuwaiti border. The no-fly zones have been and will remain an important part of our containment policy. Because we effectively control the skies over much of Iraq, Saddam has been unable to use air power to repress his own people or to lash out again

at his neighbors. Our pilots have the authority to protect themselves if they're threatened or attacked. They took appropriate action today in responding to Iraq's actions.

Once again, I want to tell you I am very proud of the work they do, the risks they take, the skill and the professionalism with which they do it. They attacked because they were attacked, and they did the appropriate thing. We will continue to enforce the no-fly zones.

Social Security and Year 2000 Computer Problem

Now, let me say, this is a very happy announcement today. And I want to thank Secretary Rubin, who most people associate with saving the economy, not saving Social Security, but that's an important part of his job, too. I want to thank Kathy Adams, who is one of those people in the Government that makes it go and never gets enough credit for it. So I'm delighted to see her up here and, through her, all the other people who work every day to make America work.

I've already told you about Pauline Johnson Jones. And I want to say, too, I have been very moved by how passionate Ken Apfel has been about making sure that this problem got solved. And today we saw that he has a vested interest in it: He doesn't want his father to