

Foundation; Assistant to the President and Director of Personnel Bob Nash; and Special Assistant

to the President and Records Manager Janis F. Kearney.

The President's Radio Address *March 13, 1999*

Good morning. I'm joined here at the White House today by Members of Congress, Deputy Attorney General Holder, Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Bill Lann Lee, representatives from law enforcement and civil rights groups, all here to talk about what we must do to strengthen the bond of trust between police officers and the communities they serve, and make our streets safer than ever.

Six years ago I took office committed to lowering the crime rate and to raise the levels of trust and cooperation between police and the communities they serve. Working with law enforcement and community leaders, we put in place a comprehensive crime-fighting strategy with more police and better prevention, more positive activities for young people, and fewer guns in the hands of criminals. The strategy is working even beyond our expectation. Nationwide, crime is down to its lowest level in decades. In communities all across America, families feel safe again.

Community policing has been at the heart of our success, by giving police the chance to get to know the people on their beats and giving those people a chance to be part of law enforcement decisions that affect their lives. Community policing helps to prevent crime, to catch more criminals more quickly when crime does occur, and in the process, to build bonds of understanding and trust between police and citizens.

Our Nation's police officers every day put their lives on the line for the rest of us. I have done my best to support and to honor them. But I have been deeply disturbed by recent allegations of serious police misconduct and continued reports of racial profiling that have shaken some communities' faith in the police who are there to protect them.

While each specific allegation will have to be dealt with on its own merits, it is clear that we need a renewed determination as a nation to restore those bonds of trust that have been

absolutely critical to our success at lowering the crime rate. So today I am proposing five steps both to reduce crime and to increase the public's trust in law enforcement.

First, better training and better education lead to better policing. I'm asking the Justice Department to expand police integrity and ethics training to all 30 biregional community policing institutes and proposing a \$40 million increase in funding to improve police training nationwide and to help police officers raise their level of education and their level of understanding.

Second, communities and police must work as partners in the fight against crime. I am proposing to launch a new nationwide program to help more communities to establish citizen police academies that inform residents about police procedures and teach them new ways to make their own neighborhoods safer.

Third, police departments ought to reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. To help meet this challenge, I am proposing to increase funds for minority recruiting to build up the bond of trust where it is most needed.

Fourth, when police officers do break the law, they should be brought to justice. Our budget includes new funding to enforce our civil rights laws so that a few bad police officers do not undermine the progress and the support that hundreds of thousands of police officers have worked so hard to earn.

Finally, we must continue the revolution in community policing we began 6 years ago. Again I call on Congress to build on our progress by passing the \$1.3 billion 21st century policing initiative I have proposed, to put up to 50,000 more police on the street and give them the high-tech tools they need to do their job.

We know these efforts will work. Just to take one example: In Boston, a city that historically had had deep tensions between police and communities, law enforcement and community leaders came together to do something about it, establishing clear guidelines to involve residents

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in police decision-making and to hold police accountable for their actions. Today the crime rate in Boston has fallen to record lows, and reports of police misconduct are down as well.

Today I am asking Attorney General Reno to convene a series of meetings with law enforcement and community leaders to discuss how communities around the country can follow the example of Boston and other successful cities and ensure that our criminal justice system serves all Americans in a lawful, constitutional, sensitive way.

Together we will build safer communities and be one step closer to building our "One America in the 21st Century."

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:20 a.m. on March 12 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Attempted Bombing of a Family Planning Clinic in Asheville, North Carolina

March 13, 1999

I was deeply disturbed to learn of the attempted bombing of a family planning clinic in Asheville, North Carolina. We can all be grateful that no one was harmed and that the clinic suffered only minor damage. But whether or not a terrorist's bomb achieves its deadly purpose, such cowardly and criminal acts strike

at the heart of the constitutional freedoms and individual liberties all Americans hold dear. I strongly condemn this act of senseless violence. Federal agents are already in Asheville to assist local law enforcement officials. I am confident that the perpetrators of this terrible act will be brought to justice.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Former Senator Dale Bumpers in Little Rock, Arkansas

March 13, 1999

Thank you very much. Senator Lincoln, thank you very much. We're all very proud of you. Dale and I were looking up at you, listening to you speak, feeling a little bit better about his retirement and my imminent retirement in the next couple of years.

I'd like to thank Congressman Snyder and Congressman Berry for representing you fiercely and well and for being my friends and for doing our State proud. The three of them remind me of why I have always loved public life in Arkansas. And I'm always delighted to see people who have served others and worked for others and helped others and done others service be rewarded with higher positions. And all three of them deserve it richly, and I'm very pleased to see that.

I'd like to thank Rabbi Levy for being here tonight, and Bishop Walker, who is my longtime friend and whose vociferous and highly public defense of me may have won an election for me back in 1982, without which I wouldn't be here. Thank you, Bishop. I'm glad to see you.

I thank Rodney Slater for his remarks and for his extraordinary service. He has really done Arkansas proud. And there are a lot of other Arkansans who have been critical to the success our country has enjoyed in the last 6 years who are here tonight. I'll probably miss some of them, but I can't help mentioning Mack McLarty, Bob Nash, Janis Kearney, Bruce Lindsey, Nancy Harnreich, Carroll Willis, Kris Engskov; anybody else who is here from home in the administration, I apologize that I missed