

Today the House Judiciary Committee will hold hearings on hate crimes. That is welcome news, but it must lead to the entire House's consideration and passage of strong, effective hate crimes legislation and ultimately to enactment of a hate crimes law.

Effective legislation must accomplish three objectives. First, it must remove serious jurisdictional limitations which require proof that victims were attacked because they were engaging in particular activities. Second, it must expand Federal coverage for violent hate crimes based on sexual orientation, gender, or disability. There is no question that innocent people have been targeted and attacked and in some cases even killed solely because of their sexual orientation, gender, or disability. Such hate crimes must be covered by any legislation passed by the Congress. Third, it must recognize that State and local authorities should continue to prosecute the great majority of hate crimes and that

Federal jurisdiction should be exercised only when it is necessary to achieve justice in a particular case. Any bill that does not include these three elements falls far short of what America needs in our battle against hate.

No American should have to suffer the violence of a hate crime. Unfortunately, many do, and therefore we must work together to ensure that all Americans receive greater protection. This should not be a partisan issue. It is a national concern requiring a national response in the form of strong hate crimes legislation. I call on the House of Representatives to meet its responsibility in combating violence that is fueled by hate and to complete what the Senate has begun. If we work together, we have it within our grasp to enact a bill that will take a very strong stand against those who perpetrate crimes based on prejudice and hate. We must not let this opportunity pass us by.

Statement on the Selection of the New NATO Secretary General

August 4, 1999

I am very pleased that our NATO Alliance has selected British Defense Secretary George Robertson to be NATO's next Secretary General.

George Robertson is an extremely talented and dedicated public servant. He has made a tremendous contribution to the United Kingdom's effort to modernize its military forces. He displayed extraordinary leadership during the Kosovo conflict and has continued to lead in the effort to restore stability there. I look forward

to working with him as he guides NATO into the new century.

Secretary General Solana has done a superb job, steering NATO through conflict in the Balkans, ushering in three new members of the Alliance, reaching out to our security partners across Europe, and meeting other vital challenges. I look forward to continuing to work with him in his new role at the European Union.

Memorandum on the Year 2000 Computer Problem

August 4, 1999

Memorandum for Members of the Cabinet

Subject: Year 2000 Computer Problem

The end of 1999 is less than 6 months away. Federal agencies have made significant progress

in meeting the challenges posed by the Year 2000 (Y2K) computer problem since the Vice President and I discussed this issue at the Cabinet meeting in January 1998. Virtually all of the major Federal agencies have completed, or

will soon complete, work on their mission-critical systems, and agencies are working aggressively to encourage compliance among their organizational partners for the delivery of key Federal services.

Our efforts to solve the Y2K problem provide an important example of the Government's ability to respond to difficult management challenges, and I appreciate your commitment to this critical issue. However, your ongoing support through 1999 is essential to the Nation's ability to achieve the ultimate goal of minimizing Y2K-related failures in the public and private sectors.

You should continue your outreach efforts to organizations domestically and internationally. We must encourage compliance efforts among our partners, such as State and local governments helping to deliver Federal services and private sector organizations supporting the Nation's critical infrastructure. Internationally, the continued exchanges of technical information

with other governments about Y2K experiences will help to limit potential Y2K problems in our trading relationships.

You also should maintain your focus on contingency and back-up plans. While many systems and processes have been tested multiple times, being prepared with alternate operating plans provides an important extra layer of insurance against unexpected difficulties and will enhance our ability to respond to any challenges associated with the date change.

I also encourage you to continue to work closely with my Council on Year 2000 Conversion, and with each other, as we approach January 1, 2000. If we continue our hard work on this important issue, I am confident that we will be able to oversee a successful transition to the new millennium.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 5.

Remarks at a Democratic Unity Event August 5, 1999

Thank you so much. First, let me thank Senator Daschle and Leader Gephardt for their outstanding, passionate eloquence today and their consistent leadership for the best interests of all the American people. And I think that all of us on this stage feel that way. And I just wish every American could know them as we do, could see how hard they've worked, how consistently they've worked, and how steadfast they have been. Nothing that I have been able to achieve as President would have been possible without their leadership and without the men and women on this platform today. And I thank them so much.

They have already spoken about what we need to do. What I want to say to you is that I want to echo something Mr. Gephardt said. We are here united as a party, but we want to work with the members of the Republican caucus to do things that are good for America.

Let's remember that in the past years, when we have done that, we have been successful. Last year, in the teeth of the election process, they eventually did join us to put a downpay-

ment on hiring 100,000 teachers, to do more to clean up toxic waste, to increase our investments in science and technology, to set aside a part of the surplus for Social Security, which they have continued to agree to do. And we made real progress with our agenda, even though we weren't the majority party.

Now, what was the result? Because we made real progress and because in 1998 we said, "Here's our future agenda: Save Social Security; keep the economy going; pass a Patients' Bill of Rights; continue to invest in our children's education," the public responded. And we moved closer to being a majority in that historic election in 1998. And now, thanks to Mr. Forbes, we're quite a bit closer still, and I want to thank him.

I would like to use him to illustrate the point I really wish to make today about our position. We are held together by unity of conviction, and we don't agree on everything. You ought to hear some of the arguments these folks have among each other. You don't have to agree on