

ministration work with the Congress, if we decide that there's some policy that's so important for other reasons, for our other foreign policy concerns, our human rights concerns, you name it, that we want to root that in our legal policy, then no one can accuse us of being arbitrary, because we will have gone through a deliberative process. The Congress will have made a judgment; we will all be on public record.

But I do think it's very important that immigrants from the world looking at us and governments from the world looking at us, not believe that the President will wake up someday and decide that for some arbitrary reason we will enforce the immigration laws of the country in one way or another. Perhaps the Vice President and the Attorney General would like to make a comment about that, also.

The Vice President. I'd like to add one brief point. This proposal does take the partisanship and the politics out of it. This is a bipartisan initiative. Republicans as well as Democrats are here from both the Senate and the House. And if I could summarize the basic tone of this initiative, I would use the words of Doris Meissner, who is the designee to head up INS, when she said not long ago, we want to stop illegal immigration so that we can continue opening our country to legal immigration. The two go together, and that's what this proposal is designed to do.

The President. I think we've answered about all the questions we can. I'd like to close by reemphasizing that point. When I ran for President, I think in some ways the most rewarding part of the experience was having the opportunity to see just how many different countries and how many different ethnic groups have contributed to making America what it is today. We don't want to do anything to interrupt that. But we cannot continue to progress as a country unless we have a more vigorous response to this problem, and we don't want to cloud the two. This has nothing to do with our support for keeping the rainbow and the melting pot of America going and growing and enriching and strengthening this country.

But the kinds of practices that are manifest in who can get into this country on an air-

plane, what kind of illegal smuggling can go on, and the fact that our borders leak like a sieve, those things cannot be permitted to continue in good conscience. It's not good for the American immigrants who are here legally in this country, for the American economy, for the cohesion of our society, or for the rule of law worldwide. And we're going to try to do better. This is a very good first step.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Legislation on Illegal Immigration

July 27, 1993

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit today for your immediate consideration and enactment the "Expedited Exclusion and Alien Smuggling Enhanced Penalties Act of 1993." This legislative proposal is designed to address the growing abuse of our legal immigration and political asylum systems by illegal aliens holding fraudulent documents and by alien smugglers. Also transmitted is a section-by-section analysis. The proposal is part of a larger Administration initiative that I announced on June 18, 1993, to combat the illegal entry and smuggling of aliens into the United States.

The use of fraudulent documents by aliens seeking to enter the United States has increased dramatically. This proposal would expedite the exclusion and return of certain undocumented and fraudulently documented aliens who clearly are ineligible for admission to the United States, while ensuring that persons who have legitimate asylum claims receive full and fair hearings. In addition, the bill would increase the ability of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to prosecute alien smugglers and enhance the penalties for alien smuggling.

The expedited exclusion procedures would apply to an alien who, for example: (1) attempted to use a fraudulent passport to enter

the United States; (2) came to the United States by commercial airplane and did not present a visa upon arrival; or (3) was encountered by the Coast Guard on the high seas and brought to the United States. To apply for asylum, these aliens first would have to establish that they had a credible fear either of persecution in the country from which they had departed or of return to persecution. If an asylum officer determined that the alien had such a credible fear, the alien then could apply for asylum. If the alien did not have the requisite fear of persecution, the alien would be subject to an immediate order of exclusion barring him or her from entering the United States. The bill would limit judicial review of such an exclusion order.

Alien smuggling has become an increasingly pervasive problem, as seen in the current wave of Chinese aliens being brought to the shores of this country by unscrupulous criminal organizations. These organizations seek to profit both from transporting these aliens and from their labors once in this country. The number of alien smugglers arrested in the past 3 years has tripled, and the number of smugglers convicted has doubled.

Alien smuggling not only violates our criminal and immigration laws, but it also takes a terrible toll on the lives of the aliens illegally brought into this country. Many of these individuals transfer their entire life savings and pledge thousands of additional dollars to smugglers. These aliens are often placed in deplorable conditions amounting to indentured servitude until they can pay the debts incurred for their passage to America. Moreover, organized criminal syndicates are becoming more frequently associated with this highly profitable traffic in human cargo.

The bill's criminal provisions are vital to help apprehend offenders and deter future criminal activity in this area. Under this proposal, the maximum penalty imposed against certain smugglers would be increased from 5 to 10 years in prison for each individual smuggled. Since clandestine means of investigation are often needed to build cases against alien smuggling rings, the bill would authorize INS to conduct wiretaps for alien smuggling investigations.

Finally, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations statute would be amended so its penalty and forfeiture provisions could be used against alien smuggling organizations. The proposal also would expand the ability of law enforcement personnel to forfeit the proceeds of illegal alien smuggling, such as cash and bank accounts.

In addition to this bill, our efforts to combat alien smuggling include strengthening law enforcement efforts and attacking smuggling operations at the source. The Federal Government already has begun interdicting and redirecting smuggling ships, where feasible, in transit to the United States. INS is detaining aliens who enter the United States in conjunction with criminal smuggling activities. The Department of Justice, consistent with due process and existing laws, is expediting the adjudication of entry claims raised by migrants who are the victims of organized criminal smuggling schemes.

All of these actions, taken together, signal the United States abhorrence of the trafficking in human beings for profit and our determination to combat this illegal activity. At the same time, they reaffirm our Nation's commitment to safeguarding the protection of bona fide refugees.

I urge the prompt and favorable consideration of this legislative proposal by the Congress.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
July 27, 1993.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Midwestern Governors

July 27, 1993

Q. Mr. President, do you have any problem with Senator Boren's idea for a budget summit?

The President. Let me make a statement, first of all, about what we're here for.

I want to welcome the Governors from the States afflicted by the floods to Washington,