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NEWS

FROM:

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TOUGH CRIME BILL NEEDS PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT

PRESIDENT SQUANDERING OPPORTUNITY TO ENDORSE TOUGH BILL PASSED BY SENATE

Washington -- Earlier today Republican Leader Bob Dole and Senator Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY) wrote to President Clinton urging him to publicly endorse the tough provisions contained in the anticrime bill recently passed by the United States Senate. Senator Dole released the following statement along with the attached Dole/D'Amato letter:

President Clinton is right when he says, "the American people are tired of hurting and tired of feeling insecure and tired of violence." That's why it is so important for him to use the White House bully pulpit to embrace the tough anticrime provisions that have already passed the U.S. Senate. These provisions include:

- * truth-in-sentencing, which would require violent criminals to serve at least 85% of their sentences;
- * the construction of ten new regional prisons to provide more cell space for the states to house their most violent criminals;
- * mandatory minimum penalties for those who commit crimes using guns;
- * a new anti-gang statute to crack down on violent gang activity;
- * the death penalty for drug kingpins;
- * a "three-time loser" provision which imposes life imprisonment without parole for those convicted in federal court of a third violent crime; and
- * a series of new measures to combat domestic and street violence against women and children, including three new Federal Rules of Evidence allowing for the admissibility of past sex offenses in sexual assault and child molestation cases.

Unfortunately, the President is squandering a golden opportunity with his recent public statements in support of new gun-control initiatives.

The President is putting the cart before the horse. He should be lending his public support to the solid anticrime initiatives now pending in Congress.

It's time the President stands up and voices his support for a bill that would really get tough on crime and criminals. The American people deserve the toughest crime bill possible, not a watered-down version or "Crime Bill Lite," as some Members of Congress would prefer. That's why President Clinton should re-focus his efforts and offer his public and unqualified support for the legislation that has already been endorsed by the United States Senate.

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