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7-25-98

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503



July 13, 1998



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MEMORANDUM FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT

FROM: KATHLEEN A. MCGINTY

NPW for Kam

SUBJECT: LUNCH WITH THE PRESIDENT

Environmental Issues on Appropriations Bills

Several of the appropriations bills now moving through Congress raise serious environmental issues, both through unrelated riders and underfunding of key programs. Of most serious concern at present are the Senate Interior and House VA/HUD Appropriations bills.

The Senate Interior bill is loaded with anti-environmental riders primarily related to natural resources issues, and underfunds land acquisition (including Everglades) and the Clean Water Action Plan. The House VA/HUD bill includes a very restrictive rider limiting EPA's and CEQ's activities related to climate change, and report language limiting toxic clean up and rulemaking related to visibility in the National Parks.

Both of these bills could come to the floor in the next two weeks. Some Democrats and the environmental community are planning to offer omnibus amendments to both Senate Interior and House VA/HUD to strip the bulk of the objectionable riders with one vote.

While both bills also have objectionable provisions unrelated to the environment, you should remind the President of the importance of a show of Administration strength on the environmental issues alone:

- Administration visibility on these omnibus amendments would be a means of reiterating our determination on these issues, and reinforcing the "no riders" message you delivered last month.
- The omnibus amendments may not be successful, but our activity in support would send an important message that should influence the ultimate outcome of this process.
- The Administration has not taken a public position on these omnibus amendments, and we need a quick internal process to finalize our strategy.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
7-25-98

cc: Josh Gottheimer

**DRAFT 7/25/98 MIDNIGHT
WALDMAN/BEGALA**

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
STATEMENT ON THE CAPITOL SHOOTING
ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE
July 25, 1998**

The shooting at the United States Capitol

yesterday was an attack on heroic officers of the peace

and defenseless citizens. ^{was} It was a moment of savagery

at the front door of the home of American civilization.

**^{Fed law enf. agencies and}
~~I know that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and~~**

the U.S. Attorney's office are working closely with the

**^{there.}
Capitol Police to make sure that justice is pursued.**

**^{I am an American to reflect for a moment}
~~on the terrible~~ human elements of yesterday's tragedy.**

→ [~~Scripture tells us, "greater love hath no man than~~
~~this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."~~ [John

~~15:13]~~ Officer Jacob "J.J." Chestnut and Detective

~~John Gibson lay down their lives for their friends,~~
~~their coworkers, and those whom they were sworn to~~

~~protect. With some 20,000 people visiting the Capitol~~

~~Today they saved many others from~~
~~exposure to lethal violence~~

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Officer Chestnut was a Vietnam veteran, a member of the Capitol Police for 18 years, just months away from retirement. Detective Gibson ~~was~~ ^{for} deeply religious, ^{man} beloved by his coworkers, ^{+ being a man,} devoted to the Red Sox and the Bruins. Both of them leave behind loving wives and children, the affection of neighbors ^{friend + coworker.} and coworkers, and the deep gratitude of those who are alive today because of their bravery.

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Every day, ^Q ~~this~~ special breed of men and women
 pin on their badges, put on their uniforms, and kiss
 their families goodbye, knowing full well they may be
 called to lay down their lives. This year, 79 other law
 enforcement officers have made the ultimate sacrifice.

~~Ask~~ ^{we be grateful to these officers} every American to ~~think about these police~~
^{for the freedom & security they} ~~officers, the freedom they guard with their lives, and~~ ^{and}
^{to sign up for} ~~our obligation to turn away from violence and hate.~~
 every American will stand up for them & be violent
 & hate.

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In this one heartless act, there were ^{many} ~~countless~~ acts of heroism: By strangers who shielded children with their bodies. By officers who fanned across the Capitol. By Dr. Bill Frist, a renowned heart surgeon before election to the Senate from Tennessee, who had just put down his gavel when he rushed to tend to the injured. ~~So often, only in crisis do we set aside the indulgence of dwelling on our differences, and unite around our common humanity. This was such a moment.~~ To all of these ~~heroes and more~~, we extend the thanks of a nation.

others who stood for our common humanity

To the families of Officer Chestnut and Detective

Gibson, nothing we say can bring them back or ease

*But all Americans pray that the power of a loving God &
your sorrow. Only God and the comfort you give to
the comfort of family & friends will w/ time see yr,
each other can do that. But know that you are in our
sorrow and swell your pride for yr. loved ones and the
prayers. All America is grateful.
sacrifice they made for ~~the~~ of their fellow citizens.*

**To Angela Dickerson, the young woman who was
injured in the shooting, we extend our prayers and our
hope for your speedy recovery.**

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And to every American who has been shaken by
this violent act, to the millions of parents who have
taken your children through those doors, I ask you to
think about what the Capitol means. All around the
world, this majestic marble building is the symbol of
our democracy, the embodiment of our nation. ^{We must} ~~It is a~~
^{Keep it a} place where the people can freely and proudly walk
the halls of their government, ~~I hope every American~~
~~takes a moment to reflect on this Capitol on a hill, and~~
^{We must} never take for granted the values for which it stands,
^{or the price of preserving them.}

Kris -

John Gibson - 42 yrs old
8 yr veteran

Wife: Evelyn Mary Gibson

3160 Harvard Street
Woodbridge, VA 22192
(703) 494-8192

18 yr veteran
58 yrs old

Jacob Joseph Chestnut (J.J.)

Wife: Wen Chestnut

403 Warburton Oaks Drive
Fort Washington, MD 20744
(301) 292-1250

Angela Dickerson

SHOOTING, From A1

forcement sources as Douglas B. McMillan—fired at Weston several times. Angela Dickerson, a 24-year-old employee of a Virginia furniture store, was wounded by stray gunfire. She was released yesterday from George Washington University Medical Center.

Meanwhile, official Washington paused yesterday to pay tribute to the pair of officers who died in service to their government, as the nation's leaders vowed that the domed symbol of American democracy would remain open and accessible to the public. The Capitol did reopen yesterday, with flags at half staff and the Capitol Police force guarding the doors as usual.

"I want to emphasize that this building is the keystone of freedom, that it is open to the people because it is the people's building," said House Speaker Newt Gingrich. "No terrorist, no deranged person, no act of violence will block us from preserving our freedom and keeping this building open to people from all over the world."

President Clinton yesterday praised the two men as heroes who "laid down their lives for their friends, their co-workers and their fellow citizens," and he reminded the country that 79 other law enforcement officers have been killed this year. "Every American should be grateful to them for the freedom and the security they guard with their lives," Clinton said.

Friday's incident has brought new attention to the tricky security balance between ensuring public access and protecting public officials, and several members of Congress said it demonstrated the need for a long-delayed \$125 million visitor's center that could help security officers control access to the Capitol complex.

But most observers agreed there was little the Capitol Police could have done to stop a determined and apparently deranged gunman like Weston, who had complained to neighbors in Rimini, Mont., that the government was using a satellite dish to spy on him. He once accused his frail 86-year-old landlady of assault and battery, and allegedly harassed several county and state officials when they refused to press charges against her.

Weston spent the last several years in the Montana backwoods, living on disability benefits in a cabin 40 miles from the tiny shack where the reclusive Theodore Kaczynski built his bombs. In early 1996, law enforcement sources said, he was interviewed by the Secret Service about unusual comments he had made about President Clinton and delusional letters he had written about the federal government.

Weston was entered into the Secret Service's computer files as a potential low-level threat, but the agency did not contact other law enforcement agencies about Weston and had no further contact

with him, the sources said. "The volume of people that the Secret Service checks out and never comes into contact with again is just unbelievable," one law enforcement official said.

In the fall of 1996, Montana officials said, a judge committed Weston to a state mental hospital for evaluation after he threatened a Helena resident. He was released after 52 days, when a medical team

concluded that he no longer posed a danger. But on Thursday, after he reportedly shot his father's cats, he allegedly stole his father's old Smith & Wesson revolver and pointed his red Chevrolet pickup truck toward Washington.

In Valmeyer, Ill., the riverside town where Weston grew up, the Rev. Robin Keating read a statement from Weston's family yesterday apologizing profusely for the deaths of the officers. "It is with great sorrow that we speak today—sorrow for the families that lost their loved ones, sorrow for the children that lost their daddies," the statement says. "Our apologies to the nation as a whole, for the trauma our son has caused."

An affidavit signed by FBI Special Agent Armin Showalter and filed in D.C. Superior Court yesterday recaps the horrifying moments after Weston allegedly walked into

"Chestnut was
executed, and
Gibson saved
everybody's lives in
that office."

— Law enforcement source

the Document Room Door on the House side of the Capitol at 3:40 p.m. Friday. Law enforcement sources said security videotapes that captured some of the incident provide vivid images of the grisly scene.

Chestnut was standing with his back toward a metal detector, writing some directions for a father and son who had just finished a tour of the Capitol, according to one law enforcement source who watched the videotape.

Weston allegedly walked through the detector, setting it off, then immediately pointed his gun at the back of Chestnut's head and shot before the officer had a chance to take action. Chestnut collapsed in front of the tourist and his 15-year-old son, who was soaked in the fallen officer's blood, according to the source.

"He was shot without warning," said Sgt. Dan Nichols, a Capitol Police spokesman.

As congressional aides and tourists scrambled for cover, Officer McMillan fired back at Weston, authorities said. Dickerson, a visitor who was standing nearby, was shot in the face and shoulder by a stray bullet, but officials said they have not determined who shot her.

"I don't really consider myself a

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hero," said McMillan, who was working near Chestnut's station Friday and said he witnessed his killing. He declined further comment.

Weston ran past them, following an unidentified female bystander who was running for cover toward a door that reads "Private Entrance" leading to the majority whip's suite. Inside, Gibson yelled for DeLay and his staff to take cover under desks and other furniture. DeLay yesterday said he and several staff members hid in his private bathroom and locked the door.

Before Gibson was able to draw his gun, the woman, with Weston behind her, appeared in the doorway. Gibson "pushed her away to safety," and Weston shot him once in the chest, Nichols said. Gibson then grabbed his own gun and shot Weston in the legs.

While the two men fired more shots at each other—one witness said there were at least eight or 10 rounds—the woman scrambled frantically in the hallway from closed door to closed door, pleading for someone to help her. Witnesses told police they heard her yelling, "Help! Help! Help!" but they were too afraid to open doors for her, sources said. Moments later, more Capitol Police officers arrived on the scene and arrested Weston, who had "additional ammunition" for his six-shot revolver in his pocket, according to the FBI affidavit.

"It was just a mess," one police source said. "Chestnut was executed, and Gibson saved everybody's lives in that office. If it wasn't for his fast thinking, I'd hate to think of what could have happened in that office."

A visibly moved DeLay met with reporters yesterday, recalling Chestnut as "a great man and a great patriot" and Gibson as "quite simply the finest man I've ever known." He said Chestnut, a father of five and a grandfather of five, was a Vietnam veteran who greeted everyone with a smile. He said Gibson, a Massachusetts native and Boston Bruins fan who worked as his personal security detail, had become a virtual member of his family.

"He tried to teach me hockey," DeLay said, his voice breaking. "I never did understand hockey."

Weston, who received CPR from Sen. Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) and a D.C. paramedic shortly after the incident, has undergone surgery twice for gunshot wounds to the torso, buttocks and legs, and his surgeon, Paul Oriafio, said he has a "50-50" chance of survival. Neither Weston nor the slain officers was wearing a bulletproof vest, law enforcement sources said.

Authorities charged Weston under a federal statute that covers

cases in which federal law enforcement officers are slain during performance of their official duties. The case will be moved on Monday from the local court to federal court, which was closed yesterday. Attorney General Janet Reno has the option of seeking the death penalty, but a Justice Department spokeswoman said discussions of the question have not yet begun.

The last federal execution took place in 1963, although more than a dozen federal prisoners are on death row, including Timothy J. McVeigh, who was convicted in the April 1995 bombing of a federal office building in Oklahoma City. Prosecutors have been especially reluctant to seek the death penalty for federal offenses in the District, where voters overwhelmingly rejected a local version of the law in a 1992 referendum.

The Capitol Police force has worked almost round-the-clock on the investigation, along with officers from the FBI, D.C. police and other law enforcement agencies. The arrest warrant for Weston was signed at 2 a.m. yesterday, and federal agents executed a search warrant for Weston's shack yesterday afternoon. Other agents have been interviewing neighbors and family members in Illinois and Montana and more than 80 witnesses in Washington.

It has been a horrible two days for the 1,295-member Capitol force, which had had only one other casualty in its 170-year history, an accidental shooting death during a 1984 training exercise. A visibly exhausted Nichols said yesterday at a news conference that officers are taking solace in the support they have received from the public, and in the fact that they succeeded in protecting the members of Congress.

"It's been a trying couple of days for us," Nichols said as he choked back tears. "It's a difficult time, and the officers are going to rely on each other. . . . But the gunman didn't get very far into the building, and that was our intention."

Funerals for the officers have not been scheduled, but DeLay said members of Congress hope to honor them with a joint resolution tomorrow and a memorial service on Tuesday. Congress also has created a memorial fund for the families of the slain officers, and donations can be sent to the U.S. Capitol Police Memorial Fund, Washington, D.C. 20510.

Nichols also said the Capitol Police had received many requests from visitors wanting to know if they could leave flowers on the House steps in honor of the fallen officers.

They certainly could, he said. And yesterday, they did.

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