

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 27, 2000

### GUN BUYBACK EVENT

**DATE:** April 28, 2000  
**LOCATION:** Maurice T. Turner, Jr. Institute of Police Science  
Washington, D.C.  
**BRIEFING TIME:** 2:40pm – 2:50pm  
**EVENT TIME:** 3:15pm – 4:00pm  
**FROM:** Bruce Reed  
Eric Liu

#### I. PURPOSE

To announce a new gun buyback partnership between the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Washington, D.C. to fund the largest ever gun buyback in the city, and to keep the pressure on Congress to enact common sense gun legislation.

#### II. BACKGROUND

Today you will be joined by Secretary Andrew Cuomo, Mayor Anthony Williams, and Police Chief Charles Ramsey at the Maurice T. Turner Jr. Institute of Police Science, the MPD police academy. The audience will include Metropolitan Police Department recruit class, MPD command staff and officers, Washington, D.C. community members, and gun control advocates. You will announce a new gun buyback partnership between Washington, D.C. and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Under the initiative – the largest ever in D.C. and one of the largest ever in the country – a total of \$350,000 will be made available to purchase an estimated 7,000 guns through a local gun buyback program jointly administered by the Washington public housing authority and the Metropolitan Police Department. In addition, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms will trace all guns recovered in the buyback.

**Taking Thousands of Guns Out of Circulation in Washington.** Under today's partnership, HUD's BuyBack America program will provide \$100,000 and the Metropolitan Police Department will provide \$250,000 to fund the buyback. The District of Columbia public housing authority will partner with the Metropolitan Police Department to conduct the buyback, which will fund the purchase of an estimated 7,000 guns and take them off the street and out of circulation permanently. Last August, the Metropolitan Police Department conducted two successful buybacks. The first, funded in part by HUD, yielded 600 guns; the second, 2,300 guns. According to an ATF report on the buybacks, the vast majority of firearms recovered (2,200) were handguns, and far

exceeded the District's average annual recovery rate of 2,105 crime guns. Among the firearms frequently recovered were guns used and recovered in crimes and illegally trafficked by unlicensed dealers.

**Providing Resources to Fund Buybacks Across the Country.** A recent study released by HUD shows that people living in public housing are more than twice as likely to suffer from gun-related victimization as the general population. And while gun crime is down by 35 percent since 1992, nearly 12 children are still killed every day by gunfire. Last September you unveiled a \$15 million HUD gun buyback initiative – the largest gun buyback program in history. Under the first round of the BuyBack America Initiative, HUD is providing funding to a total of 85 communities to enable public housing authorities (PHAs) to partner with local law enforcement agencies to conduct local gun buyback programs. By reducing the number of firearms in circulation, buyback programs can help prevent accidental shootings, gun suicides, and unauthorized gun use. The HUD buyback program encourages a cap of \$50 for each working gun, and encourages PHAs to provide the awards in the form of gift certificates for goods or services rather than cash. Every HUD-sponsored buyback must be run by a local police department – with no amnesty given for any crimes committed with returned firearms. And to ensure permanent removal from circulation, all guns are destroyed unless there is an ongoing law enforcement investigation.

**Working with D.C. Law Enforcement to Combat Gun Crime.** Today's initiative is another example of efforts by the federal government and the District of Columbia to work together to combat gun crime. Under innovative programs such as Operation Ceasefire, which has received nearly \$1 million in federal funding since 1995, local police are partnering with the U.S. Attorney and the ATF to increase gun enforcement and gun crime prevention programs. Also, through the Administration's Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative, local police are working with the ATF to trace all crime guns recovered in the District to crack down on illegal gun traffickers that supply guns to juveniles and criminals.

### III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Karen Tramontano

Eric Liu

Loretta Ucelli

Mickey Ibarra

Leanne Shimabukuro

Paul Glastris

Stage Participants:

**YOU**

Secretary Andrew Cuomo

Mayor Anthony Williams

Police Chief Charles Ramsey

20 Metropolitan Police Department officers and new recruits

Program Participants:

**YOU**

Mayor Anthony Williams

Police Chief Charles Ramsey, Metropolitan Police Department

**IV. PRESS PLAN**

Open Press.

**V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

- **YOU** will be announced onto the stage, accompanied by Mayor Anthony Williams and Police Chief Charles Ramsey.
- Mayor Anthony Williams will make remarks and introduce Police Chief Charles Ramsey.
- Police Chief Charles Ramsey will make remarks and introduce **YOU**.
- **YOU** will make remarks, work a ropeline, and depart.

**VI. REMARKS**

To be provided by speechwriting.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES GUN BUYBACK PARTNERSHIP  
WITH THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

April 28, 2000

Today, President Clinton, joined by District of Columbia Mayor Williams, Metropolitan Police Chief Ramsey, and Housing Secretary Cuomo, will announce a new gun buyback partnership between the District of Columbia and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Under the initiative – the largest ever in D.C. and one of the largest ever in the country – a total of \$350,000 will be made available to purchase an estimated 7,000 guns through a local gun buyback program jointly administered by the Washington Public Housing Authority and the Metropolitan Police Department. In addition, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms will trace all guns recovered in the buyback. A total of 85 communities across the country are now participating in the first round of HUD's BuyBack America program to launch similar local gun buyback programs and to take tens of thousands of unwanted guns out of circulation. Today's initiative is part of a comprehensive effort by the Clinton Administration to provide more tools for communities to reduce gun violence, and to advance common sense gun safety legislation to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

**TAKING THOUSANDS OF GUNS OUT OF CIRCULATION IN WASHINGTON.** In the wake of the recent shooting at the National Zoo, President Clinton today will announce a major partnership between the federal government and the District of Columbia to fund the largest gun buyback in the city's history. Under today's partnership, HUD's BuyBack America program will provide \$100,000 and the Metropolitan Police Department will provide \$250,000 to fund the buyback, which will be held June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. The District of Columbia Public Housing Authority will partner with the Metropolitan Police Department to conduct the buyback, which will fund the purchase of an estimated 7,000 guns and take them off the street and out of circulation permanently. Last August, the Metropolitan Police Department conducted two successful buybacks. The first, funded in part by HUD, yielded 600 guns; the second, 2,300 guns. According to an ATF report on the buybacks, the vast majority of firearms recovered (2,200) were handguns, and far exceeded the District's average annual recovery rate of 2,105 crime guns. Among the firearms frequently recovered were the types of guns often used in crimes and illegally trafficked by unlicensed dealers.

**PROVIDING RESOURCES TO FUND BUYBACKS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.** A recent study released by HUD shows that people living in public housing are more than twice as likely to suffer from gun-related victimization as the general population. And while gun crime is down by 35 percent since 1992, nearly 12 children are still killed every day by gunfire. To help reduce the toll of gun violence, President Clinton last September unveiled a \$15 million HUD gun buyback initiative – the largest gun buyback program in history. Under the first round of the BuyBack America Initiative, HUD is providing funding to a total of 85 communities to enable Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to partner with local law enforcement agencies to conduct local gun buyback programs. By reducing the number of firearms in circulation, buyback programs can help prevent accidental shootings, gun suicides, gun crime and unauthorized gun use. The HUD buyback program encourages a cap of \$50 for each working gun, and encourages PHAs to provide the awards in the form of gift certificates for goods or services rather than cash. Every HUD-sponsored buyback must be run by a local police department – with no amnesty

given for any crimes committed with returned firearms. And to ensure permanent removal from circulation, all guns are destroyed unless they are relevant to an ongoing law enforcement investigation, or they have been stolen from their lawful owner.

**WORKING WITH D.C. LAW ENFORCEMENT TO COMBAT GUN CRIME.** Today's initiative is another example of efforts by the federal government and the District of Columbia to work together to combat gun crime. Under innovative programs such as Operation Ceasefire, which has received nearly \$1 million in federal funding since 1995, local police are partnering with the U.S. Attorney and the ATF to increase gun enforcement and gun crime prevention programs. Also, through the Administration's Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative, local police are working with the ATF to trace all crime guns recovered in the District to crack down on illegal gun traffickers that supply guns to juveniles and criminals.

**KEEPING UP PRESSURE TO ENACT COMMON SENSE GUN LEGISLATION.** In addition to announcing these new tools to combat gun violence, the President will again emphasize the importance of common sense gun measures that can reduce gun violence by keeping guns out of the wrong hands. Noting that the Congress missed an opportunity to pass gun safety legislation by the April 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Columbine shootings, the President will urge Congress to complete work on juvenile crime legislation and pass a final bill that closes the gun show loophole, requires child safety locks for handguns, bars the importation of large capacity ammunition clips, and bans violent juveniles from owning guns for life.

Office of the General Counsel  
451 7<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20410  
(t) 202-708-1781  
(f) 202-401-8655

**MAX STIER  
DEPUTY GENERAL  
COUNSEL FOR  
LITIGATION**

# Fax

To: BRUCE REED	From: Max Stier
Fax: 456-5542	Pages: 2
Phone: 456-5595	Date: 4/20/2000
Re:	CC:

Urgent    
 For Review    
 Please Comment    
 Please Reply    
 Please Recycle

• Comments:

**PLEASE NOTE:** The information contained in this facsimile message may be privileged and confidential and is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above and others who have been specifically authorized to receive it. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, or if you have questions or problems with this transmission, please call the above phone number. Thank you.

# Gun buyback plan shoots blanks

**Page Six** TM

By RICHARD JOHNSON  
with Paula Freulich  
and Chris Wilson

ANDREW Cuomo, the Housing & Urban Development secretary expected to run for governor of New York some day, has initiated a program which some experts say will encourage gun owners to trade in their old weapons for new, more powerful firearms.

BuyBack America was launched Tuesday as "an unprecedented nationwide effort to buy back unwanted guns" at a press conference attended by Tom Mauer, whose son was killed in the Columbine HS massacre, and Martin Luther King III, whose father was also a gunfire victim.

But such programs have been tried before, and they have not had any success. In fact, some experts say gun buying programs act as a rebate to buyers, giving gun-owners a discount as they upgrade their arsenals.

"The irony is, it could increase gun sales.

There is no doubt this is a publicity stunt," said John Lott, a senior research scholar at Yale University. "These types of programs are not directly linked to any facts, it's all feel-good politics."

Cuomo capitalized on the anniversary of the Columbine shootings to announce that 84 cities, including upstate Schenectady, would participate in the buyback.

HUD spokesman Dave Egner said the agency has earmarked \$2.8 million already, but expects to spend \$15 million on the program as it develops.

Egner said the buyback program is being done through its "drug elimination" program. "We have a legal responsibility to provide safe, sanitary public housing, and if you have a gun in the house, the chances for suicide and crimes of anger [involving guns] are

greater," Egner said.

He scoffed at the idea that gun owners might use buyback money to purchase new weapons; HUD suggests that participating municipalities pay not more than \$50 for each turned-in firearm.

But experts are skeptical. "You get a nice photo op of people turning in their guns, but reports show half of these things aren't even operable. It's been tried, and I can't say if it's ever had an impact," said Fordham University law Prof. Nicholas Johnson.

New York tried two gun swaps in 1993 and 1994. The second, "Toys for Guns II," was initiated by Cuomo's father, then-Gov. Mario Cuomo. Both programs collected a variety of guns, the majority of which were described as "antiques" — not the high-powered, semi-automatics actually used by criminals.

Department of Housing & Urban Development  
Office of the General Counsel  
451 7<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20410

**Max Stier**  
**Deputy General**  
**Counsel**

*Gun-  
Buybacks*

# Fax

<b>To:</b> Bruce Reed	<b>From:</b> Max
<b>Fax:</b> 202-456-5542	<b>Pages:</b> 6
<b>Phone:</b> 202-456-5595	<b>Date:</b> March 8, 2000
<b>Re:</b> HUD's Gun Buyback Information	<b>CC:</b>

Urgent     For Review     Please Comment     Please Reply     Please Recycle

● **Comments:**

---

**30,000 lethal shootings.  
100,000 gunshot wounds.  
Every year.**



**Stop the violence.  
Turn in the guns.**



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**For More Information**

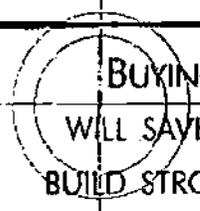
HUD Public and Indian Housing  
Information and Resource Center  
Drug Information & Strategy Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 8577  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Phone: 1-800-955-2232  
E-mail: [disc@jbs1.com](mailto:disc@jbs1.com)

Cedric Brown, Program Analyst  
HUD Community Safety and Conservation Division  
451 Seventh Street SW, Room 4206  
Washington, DC 20410  
Phone: 202-708-1197, ext. 4057  
[www.hud.gov/pih/programs/ph/de/cscd.html](http://www.hud.gov/pih/programs/ph/de/cscd.html)

Center photo on reverse side:  
©1999, The Washington Post. Reprinted with  
permission. Photo by James A. Parcell.



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Office of Public and Indian Housing  
Office of Public and Assisted Housing Delivery  
Community Safety and Conservation Division



**BUYING BACK GUNS  
WILL SAVE LIVES AND HELP  
BUILD STRONG PARTNERSHIPS  
BETWEEN POLICE AND  
PEOPLE IN COMMUNITIES  
TO WORK TOGETHER TO  
REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE.**

**ANDREW CUOMO, SECRETARY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**



## The Price of Gun Violence

Choose any 2 years in the last decade: guns in the U.S. killed more people than in all the long years of the Vietnam War. Each week more than 600 people in the U.S. die in gun-related incidents. Many of them are children. Every 6 hours, a young person between 10 and 19 years old commits suicide with a gun.

Easy access to weapons is the single most important factor contributing to the high rate of gun deaths and injuries in this country.

GUNS IN OUR INNER CITIES ARE EXACTING AN AWFUL TOLL. FAMILIES ARE BEING TORN APART, YOUNG LIVES ARE BEING STOLEN, AND COMMUNITIES ARE LIVING IN A STATE OF CONSTANT FEAR. HUD'S GUN BUYBACK PROGRAM IS THE SORT OF AGGRESSIVE, INNOVATIVE PROGRAM THAT WE NEED TO HELP PUT A STOP TO GUN VIOLENCE.  
SENATOR FRANK LAUTENBERG, NEW JERSEY

Communities across the nation—including New York, Chicago, and Washington, DC—have conducted gun buybacks to curtail the hazards of accidental shootings, suicides, and domestic violence. Communities gain from gun reduction efforts when:

- Young people and adults feel safer going to school or work and then home again.
- Participation in community safety and crime control efforts grow.
- Police presence and trust in officers increases.

## HUD's New Gun Buyback and Violence Reduction Initiative

When President Clinton announced the gun buyback program on September 9, 1999, he asked HUD to distribute \$15 million in funds for gun buyback and violence reduction efforts. "Every gun turned in through a buyback program means potentially one less tragedy," said President Clinton.

HUD is authorizing Public Housing Authorities, working with local police departments, to reprogram a portion of their FY 1999 Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) funding for use in the gun buyback and violence reduction initiative. HUD will provide an extra 43% of the reprogrammed amounts on a first-come, first-served basis, to provide additional funding for buybacks and related costs,

IN CONCERT WITH SIMILAR EFFORTS IN OTHER CITIES, GUN BUYBACK INITIATIVES GIVE STAFF AND RESIDENTS ADDED COURAGE AND SUPPORT TO GO OVER THE TOP IN CONTINUING TO ADDRESS THESE SERIOUS PROBLEMS.  
MICHAEL KELLY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF NEW ORLEANS

such as training, implementation, outreach, and monitoring/evaluation of this program. HUD encourages police departments and Public Housing Authorities to involve local government and/or private sector organizations in obtaining support from other sources.

## Participation

Police departments and Public Housing Authorities must work together to be eligible for this program. Only Public Housing Authorities that received 1999

PHDEP funding and intend to devote a portion of their funding to gun reduction initiatives are eligible for participation. Gun buyback activities must be conducted by a local law enforcement agency. Public Housing Authorities must execute a Memorandum of Understanding with their local law enforcement agency for the additional law enforcement services before funds can be drawn.

## Guidelines

Amount of value per gun: HUD suggests a value equivalent of \$50 for each gun exchanged.

THE MURDER, MAYHEM, THE SENSELESS DEATHS OF OUR CHILDREN AND THE RIDICULOUS PROLIFERATION OF FIREARMS ON THE STREETS OF AMERICAN CITIES NEEDS STOP. GUN BUYBACKS ARE AN IMPORTANT STEP, COMBINED WITH TOUGHER GUN LAWS, TO MAKE OUR CITIES SAFER.  
WELLINGTON WEBB, MAYOR OF DENVER AND  
PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Value equivalent: Gift certificates, food voucher or other incentives of value for those who turn in guns, in addition to, or in place of, cash payment.

Site of gun buyback activities: Gun buyback activities need not be conducted on Public Housing Authority premises, although it is anticipated that the gun reduction effort will have a noticeable impact on reducing the number of guns in public housing communities.

Disposal of guns: All purchased guns must be destroyed, unless police determine that a gun was stolen or is needed for an ongoing law enforcement investigation. Police must return stolen weapons to their lawful owners. Under no circumstance may a Public Housing Authority or police department resell or exchange guns for value.



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING  
DRUG ELIMINATION GRANTS FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSING  
(INCLUDING RESCISSION)

Of the amounts provided for technical assistance under this heading in Public Law 106-74 and prior Appropriations Acts, \$718,184 are rescinded: *Provided*, That none of the funds made available in Public Law 106-74 or in any prior Appropriations Acts for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, shall be available for any firearm buy-back program conducted by the Department, by any public housing authority, or by any other entity.

**TITLE V**

**GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS ACT**

Sec. 5101. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year unless expressly so provided herein.

Sec. 5102. Sections 305 and 306 of H.R. 3425 of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, as enacted into law by section 1000(a)(5) of Public Law 106-113, are hereby repealed.

☆ = Appropriations/VA HUD agencies

### Public Housing Authorities Conducting Gun Buybacks

McNulty → Watervliet HA -- Watervliet, NY  
 Kingston → HA of Savannah -- Savannah, GA  
 Visclosky → HA of City of Hammond -- Hammond, IN  
 Hayward → HA of City of Flagstaff -- Flagstaff, AZ  
 Manzella → Rockford HA -- Rockford, IL  
 Fletcher → Lexington-Fayette HA -- Lexington, KY  
 Pata/Landa → San Francisco HA -- San Francisco, CA  
 Cable → HA of High Point -- High Point, NC  
 Duncan → Knoxville Community Development Corporation -- Knoxville, TN  
 Meek → Metro Dade Housing Agency -- Miami, FL ☆  
 Whitfield → HA of Princeton -- Princeton, KY  
 Rivers → Inkster Housing Commission -- Inkster, MI  
 Neal → Springfield HA -- Springfield, MA  
 McIntyre → HA of City of Wilmington, NC -- Wilmington, NC  
 Monardes → HA of Union City -- Union City, NJ  
 Papa/Monardes → HA City of Bayonne -- Bayonne, NJ  
 McHugh → Plattsburgh HA -- Plattsburgh, NY  
 Kuper → Lucas Metropolitan HA -- Toledo, OH ☆  
 Pascall → Patterson HA -- Paterson, NJ  
 Whitfield → HA of Columbia -- Columbia, KY  
 Blinn/Dani → Tampa HA -- Tampa, FL  
 Ortiz → Corpus Christi HA -- Corpus Christi, TX  
 Papa/Monardes → Newark HA -- Newark, NJ  
 Visclosky → HA of City of Gary, Indiana -- Gary, IN  
 Cannon → HA of Provo -- Provo, UT  
 Collins → HA of Columbus, Georgia -- Columbus, GA  
 Johnson → The New Britain HA -- New Britain, CT  
 McNulty → Albany HA -- Albany, NY  
 LaBianco → HA of the City of Millville -- Millville, NJ  
 Costello → Randolph County HA -- Chester, IL  
 Callahan → HA of the City of Foley -- Foley, AL  
 McNulty → Amsterdam HA -- Amsterdam, NY  
 Spratt → HA of the City of Fort Mill -- Fort Mill, SC  
 Whitkof → HA of the City of Hannibal -- Hannibal, MO  
 Regula → Stark Metropolitan HA -- Canton, OH  
 Toomey → Easton HA -- Easton, PA  
 Woolsey → HA of the County of Marin -- San Rafael, CA  
 Barcia → Saginaw Housing Commission -- Saginaw, MI  
 Abernethy/Mia → Hawaii Housing & Community Development Corporation -- Honolulu, HI  
 Ford → Memphis HA -- Memphis, TN  
 Woodford/Kyle → HA City of San Antonio -- San Antonio, TX  
 McHugh/Boyer → Roanoke Redevelopment HA -- Roanoke, VA  
 McNulty → Schenectady Municipal HA -- Schenectady, NY

MOORE → Kansas City, Kansas HA -- Kansas City, KS  
 Shays → HA of the City of Stamford -- Stamford, CT  
 Kennedy → Woonsocket HA -- Woonsocket, RI  
 Payne → HA of East Orange -- East Orange, NJ  
 Reyes & Bonilla → HA of the City of El Paso -- El Paso, TX  
 \* Norbop → HA of Louisville -- Louisville, KY ———★  
 Bonilla → HA of the City of Monahans -- Monahans, TX  
 Payne → HA of the City of Orange -- Orange, NJ  
 Callahan → Prichard HA -- Prichard, AL  
 J. Maloney → HA of the City of Meriden -- Meriden, CT  
 Inpel/Lowery/Galbraith → The Municipal HA City of Yonkers -- Yonkers, NY  
 Merkley → Malden HA -- Malden, MA  
 Lammiman/Kortis → HA of Baltimore City -- Baltimore, MD  
 Gilchrist  
 McGovern → HA of Worcester -- Worcester, MA  
 Skeen → HA of City of Las Cruces -- Las Cruces, NM  
 Norwood → HA of the City of Augusta -- Augusta, GA  
 Dickey → HA of the City of Camden -- Camden, AR  
 Bonilla → HA of the City of Laredo -- Laredo, TX  
 Shays → HA of the City of Norwalk -- S. Norwalk, CT  
 Kennedy → HA of the City of Pawtucket -- Pawtucket, RI  
 Gilchrist → HA of the City of Annapolis -- Annapolis, MD  
 Barr → HA of the City of Rome -- Rome, GA  
 Kildee/Johnson → Flint Housing Commission -- Flint, MI  
 \* Price → HA of the City of Durham -- Durham, NC ———★  
 Rogers & Kilpatrick → City of Detroit Housing Department -- Detroit, MI  
 Bishop → HA of the City of Cordele -- Cordele, GA  
 Kilpatrick → River Rouge Housing Commission -- River Rouge, MI  
 \* DeLay → HA City of Houston -- Houston, TX ———★  
 Lewis → HA City of Atlanta -- Atlanta, GA  
 Mauerer → HA of Hoboken -- Hoboken, NJ  
 Sweeney → Catskill HA -- Catskill, NY  
 Speare → Beaufort HA -- Beaufort, SC



NEWS STYLE SPORTS CLASSIFIEDS MARKETPLACE

PRINT EDITION TOP NEWS WORLD NATION POLITICS METRO BUSINESS & TECH HEALTH OPINION WEATHER

## House Challenging Gun Buyback Plan

Partner Sites:

- [Newsweek.com](http://Newsweek.com)
- [Britannica Internet Guide](#)

By Paul Shepard

Associated Press Writer

Thursday, March 9, 2000; 3:41 a.m. EST

WASHINGTON — A national gun buyback program championed by President Clinton is at risk of losing its funding as lawmakers begin work on an emergency bill to pay for U.S. troops in Kosovo and combatting drugs in Colombia.

As part of the \$9 billion bill, Republicans on the House Appropriations Committee want to rescind \$700,000 that the Department of Housing and Urban Development is using to purchase guns turned in at public housing projects.

Money for the purchases, averaging about \$50 a gun, now flows through HUD's Drug Elimination Program. Elizabeth Morra, a spokeswoman for the House Appropriations Committee, said Wednesday that congressional auditors earlier this week concluded that HUD doesn't have the authority to divert the anti-drug funding for gun buybacks.

"Nowhere in the grant does it authorize using the funding for a gun buyback program," Morra said. "HUD would have to prove that the gun buyback will directly eliminate drugs and they haven't provided us any proof of that."

"This isn't about the efficacy of the program; it is a question of whether HUD has the legal authority for it," she said.

But David Egner, a HUD spokesman, said the department's attorneys reached an opposite conclusion: that the money can be used for gun buybacks.

"Its unfortunate that some members of Congress want to stop public housing authorities and police departments from carrying out local programs to buy back guns, reduce violence and save lives," Egner said.

Thus far, housing authorities in 80 cities have signed up to participate in the gun buyback program, Egner said. Louisville is the only city to begin buying back guns under this program to this point. Egner said 179 guns were purchased Tuesday.

With much fanfare, President Clinton announced last September what was billed as the nation's largest gun buyback program with the goal of removing 300,000 weapons.

The buyback plan is modeled on local programs in Washington and

New York.

The District of Columbia bought 2,306 guns during an experimental two-day offer in August. That no-questions-asked program took in guns from across the city, not only from neighborhoods near housing projects.

As with the Washington program, the national buyback offer would not include amnesty for any crimes committed with the guns. District of Columbia police are now running ballistics tests on the purchased guns in trying match them with crimes or suspected criminals.

© Copyright 2000 The Associated Press

[Back to the top](#)

washingtonpost NEWS STYLE SPORTS CLASSIFIEDS MARKETPLACE  
PRINT EDITION TOP NEWS WORLD NATION POLITICS METRO BUSINESS & TECH HEALTH OPINION WEATHER

Yellow Pages

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7th Street, S. W., Room 10122  
Washington, DC 20410-4000



456-5542

Crime - Gun Buybacks

**DATE:**

**TO:** Bruce Reed

**FROM:** GINNY TERZANO, ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY,  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

**PHONE:** (202)708-0980

**FAX:** (202)619-8153

**NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER:**

**REMARKS:**

Thanks for your help -

GT

217

**PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES VIOLENCE-PREVENTION  
INITIATIVE TO BUY BACK 200,000 GUNS**

September 9, 1999

- President Clinton today announced a \$15 million violence-prevention initiative to launch the largest gun buyback program in American history, enabling police departments to purchase about 200,000 guns from people in at least 20 cities.
- This national buyback initiative is designed to reduce gun violence and protect families from senseless gun tragedies. Each gun we buy back is one less gun on the nation's streets.

**Hud Initiative/How It Works**

- Under the HUD initiative announced today, \$10 million in HUD funds will go to police departments and be used to buy back guns for a suggested price of \$50 each – either in cash or in the form of gift certificates for food, toys, or other goods. At \$50 apiece, police could buy 200,000 guns with the HUD funds.
- Each police department participating in the initiative will be eligible to get up to \$500,000 in HUD funds – enough to purchase up to 10,000 guns in a city. This would enable 20 police departments to participate if each gets maximum funding, and more to participate if some get less than the maximum. More funds could be provided in the future if the pilot initiative is expanded.
- To reduce the availability of guns, all guns purchased with HUD funds will destroyed, unless it is determined that a gun was stolen or is needed for an ongoing law enforcement investigation. Stolen weapons will be returned to their lawful owners.
- The initiative will begin distributing funds to police departments in late November, in time to enable families to replace guns with cash and gift certificates during the holiday season.
- HUD will also encourage police departments to work with local retailers to provide further incentives, such as special discounts on items purchased with a gun buyback gift certificate.
- In addition, HUD will provide public housing authorities working with the police departments with an extra \$4 million – \$4 for each \$10 the police departments get – to help develop and implement the gun buybacks and to carry out other initiatives to reduce gun violence in communities. This works out to a maximum of \$200,000 in extra funding per housing authority.

- Another \$1 million in HUD funds will go to a national organization with expertise in law enforcement to study what works most effectively in gun buyback programs and to find ways to improve their performance.
- The basic premise of the gun buybacks is to give people the opportunity, for a limited period of time, to exchange their guns for something of value with no questions asked. There are variations on the inducements offered, but the most successful programs offer money, some type of vouchers or tickets, or food coupons in exchange for weapons.
- HUD will use funding from its Drug Elimination Grant Program for the gun buyback initiative. Drug Elimination Grants are used to combat crime in and around public housing developments around the nation.
- Police Departments will work in partnership with housing authorities to participate in the gun buyback initiative. Housing authorities will distribute the HUD funds to local police departments to conduct the buybacks.

**Other Buyback Programs**

- Several cities around the country have conducted gun buyback programs in recent years, but none have even come close to purchasing 200,000 guns. These local buyback programs collected anywhere from a few dozen to a few thousand guns each.
- In 1991, St. Louis collected more than 8,000 guns, which were then melted down and converted into a statue of a 9-year-old shooting victim. Baltimore collected 13,000 guns in three months in 1974, and Washington, DC, recently collected 2,800 guns after two days of buybacks. Buybacks have also worked in Norfolk, VA; Dayton, OH; San Francisco; Philadelphia and Atlanta.

The gun buyback initiative was one of several steps President Clinton announced at a White House event today with mayors and police chiefs from around the nation. Cuomo, Attorney General Janet Reno, and Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers also attended the event, in which the President urged Congress to pass a bipartisan juvenile crime bill that would offer greater protection against gun violence. The legislation, which has been passed by the Senate, would close the gun show loophole by mandating a background check for anyone buying a firearm at a gun show, require child safety locks for guns, and bar the importation of large capacity ammunition clips.

##

4/7

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

**COMMENTS ON THE NEW GUN BUYBACK INITIATIVE**

**Sarah Brady, Chair of Handgun Control, Inc.:** "We support every effort to reduce the number of guns on the streets of our communities. This program demonstrates that HUD understands that easily accessible guns are one of the biggest problems facing the residents of public housing across America. HUD is making an important national commitment to keeping guns out of the wrong hands, especially kids and criminals."

**Bob Chase, President of the National Education Association:** "There is no single answer to preventing gun violence and keeping our children safe. Voluntary gun buyback programs that provide a means to get some of the weapons off the streets and out of children's homes are a step toward providing our young people with a safe and healthy environment in which to grow and learn."

**Arinn Dixon, Associate Director of Policy for Violence Prevention, Physicians for Social Responsibility:** "Reducing the number of guns on the street is essential to curbing the epidemic of gun violence in the country. Each gun turned in to a buyback program is one that won't be used to commit a crime, attempt a suicide, or kill unintentionally - it's a gun that won't ever fall into the wrong hands."

**Joshua Horwitz, Executive Director of the Educational Fund to End Handgun Violence:** "Gun buybacks provide an excellent way for communities to draw attention to the problem of gun violence, which is fueled by the widespread, easy availability of firearms. Gun buybacks are also a catalyst for local communities and neighborhood organizations to work with law enforcement in a collaborative manner. These collaborations can lead to long-term reductions in gun violence."

**Dr. Mohammad N. Akhter, Executive Director of the American Public Health Association:** "Removing guns from our streets is long overdue; it's a big step toward reducing the level of violence in our communities. HUD is pioneering a new approach. In addition to improving housing opportunities for our citizens, the agency is now taking steps to ensure that both the homes and communities in which we live are safe."

**Kevin E. Marchman, President of the National Organization of African-Americans in Housing:** "The tragedies in public and private housing that can be traced to the use of firearms show that carefully conducted gun buyback programs can protect the lives of innocent victims of gun accidents and crimes."

**Michael Kelly, Executive Director of the Housing Authority of New Orleans:**

5/7

"At the New Orleans Housing Authority, we are beginning to turn the corner on crime and violence in public housing. In concert with similar efforts in other cities, gun buyback initiatives give staff and residents added courage and support to go over the top in continuing to address these serious problems."

**Daniel P. Henson III, Commissioner of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City:**

"The anecdotal evidence from Baltimore shows that gun buybacks have been very helpful in reducing crime. There is no doubt that when the number of weapons in a community decreases, there is a corresponding reduction in the use of weapons to commit acts of violence. This is particularly true in domestic situations. However, in the past we have had limited funds to maximize the potential of gun buyback initiatives. I look forward to the opportunity to explore more fully the relationship between the availability of guns and gun violence."

##

6/7

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

**GUN BUYBACK PROGRAMS IN 1999**

Here are summaries, taken from news accounts, of some gun buyback programs around the country conducted earlier this year.

**CALIFORNIA**

**LOS ANGELES** – July 1 – Some 100 students at El Sereno Middle School in East Los Angeles went door-to-door selling candy and raised \$4,000 for a gun buy-back program in the area, where gun violence is a serious problem.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**WASHINGTON** – August 26 – Two recently-concluded gun buyback programs in the District of Columbia have led to calls for a national buyback program. The first focused on public housing complexes in the city's sixth district and collected 602 guns. The second was a two-day, citywide program that netted 2,306 firearms.

**FLORIDA**

**LEESBURG** – July 31-- Beginning August 7<sup>th</sup>, the City will pay \$25 for any gun handed-over by Leesburg residents. "This program is to allow the citizens of our community the opportunity to get rid of any unwanted guns they may have in their home," said Police Corporal Pernel Mitchell. "A lot of accidents with kids and guns have happened inside the home."

**GEORGIA**

**ATLANTA** – May 29 – The Southern Christian Leadership Conference is reviving its gun buyback program after a two- year hiatus. Since the buybacks began in 1993, the SCLC has spent \$480,000 to purchase 10,000 guns. Some people refused money, saying they just wanted to get the guns off the street or out of their homes

**INDIANA**

**SOUTH BEND** – August 8 – "People do kill people," concluded an editorial in The South Bend Tribune. "But guns, with an efficiency that robs victims of any chance of self-preservation, give remorseless or demented people the power to terrorize society. Thanks to the St. Joseph Regional Health Center's gun buyback" – which collected 177 weapons – "there is a little less of that power on the streets of South Bend."

7/7

**NEW YORK**

**BROOKLYN** - June - District Attorney Charles J. Hynes has launched a guns-for-cash program called "Turn it In for a Benjamin," referring to Benjamin Franklin, whose portrait appears on the \$100 bill. After quickly collecting more than 650 guns, the program was expanded citywide. "659 guns off the street reduces the opportunity for a lot of death and injury," said Hynes.

**OHIO**

**DAYTON** - June 1 - The parents of a student gunned down at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado in April shook the hands of Dayton residents standing in line to sell guns back to the police. Police collected about 150 guns in four hours. "If we can keep getting these kinds of crowds, we just might be able to make a change," said the father, Michael Shoels.

**RHODE ISLAND**

**NORTH PROVIDENCE** - August 1 - Just one day after the first murder in North Providence in five years, the town's first gun buyback netted 105 guns, purchased at \$25 each.

**WISCONSIN**

**KENOSHA** - May 11 - Some 174 firearms were surrendered to Kenosha law enforcement officials in return for gift certificates and cash, the most successful buyback in the City's history.

**RACINE** - June 13 - The Racine Interfaith Coalition collected 107 guns in return for \$50 and \$100 gift certificates at a local mall. Seven of the weapons collected were illegal. Last December, the Coalition bought back 132 guns.

##

Cons-  
Buyback

# Clinton pledges \$15 million for nationwide gun buyback

## Police officers' association says idea is a 'waste of time'

By Sean Scully  
and Ellen Sorokin  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Clinton yesterday pledged \$15 million for a nationwide gun buyback program — similar to one executed last month in the District — as gun-control forces on Capitol Hill attempted to pressure Congress to pass new gun laws.

"Every gun turned in through a buyback program means potentially one less tragedy," Mr. Clinton said.

Critics were quick to attack Mr. Clinton's move, saying it is politically motivated.

"I believe gun buybacks are a waste of time," said Jim Fotis, executive director of the Law Enforcement Alliance of America, a 65,000-member association of police officers. "They do nothing except give criminals a little bit more money to get a better gun."

The money will come from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which will offer grants of up to \$500,000 to local police departments to carry out buyback programs around public housing complexes. He also promised \$147 million through the Justice Department for grants to help local departments hire a total of 1,600 officers.

"I just want the federal government to lend a hand to do more," to fund local programs, Mr. Clinton said. "We know that too many neighborhoods still are awash in guns."

Gun-rights organizations vigorously oppose the programs, saying they do little to encourage criminals to give up weapons.

"This is so typical of the Clinton administration," said Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the National Rifle Association. "It's a show. It's all about public relations. It's all about headlines in newspapers."

Over a two-day period last month, D.C. police collected 2,908 guns from residents as part of the department's Operation Gun Tip program. The city paid nearly \$280,000 for the weapons that were turned in.

In having the police buy the

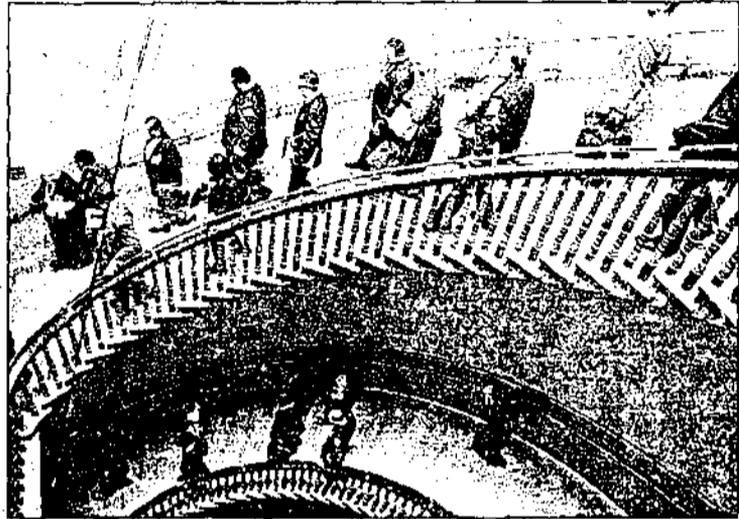


Photo by Mary F. Calvert/The Washington Times

Mayors and police chiefs leave Presidential Hall at the Old Executive Office Building after an address on gun violence by President Clinton.

weapons, "the nation's capitol has successfully demonstrated a faster and easier way to get guns where criminals cannot use them and children and adults cannot misuse them," D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, a Democrat, said in a written statement.

Officials of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, on a lobbying tour accompanied by their police chiefs, applauded Mr. Clinton's move and urged Congress to pass new gun laws, including banning large capacity ammunition clips and magazines, requiring the sale of trigger locks or similar devices with all handguns, and imposing background checks on all purchases at gun shows.

The Senate passed such a package in May as part of a larger juvenile justice bill. The House did not pass any new restrictions and the issue is locked in a conference committee trying to work out a compromise version of the juvenile justice bill.

"This is not about getting rid of the Second Amendment, this is not a slippery slope to taking away people's guns," said Paul Helmke, mayor of Fort Wayne, Ind., at a pro-gun-control rally on the Capitol steps.

Pro-gun-rights legislators, how-

ever, say the restrictions passed by the Senate are a direct attack on gun ownership. The gun-show restrictions in the Senate version, they say, give the federal government too much power to regulate private sales of guns.

House members of the conference committee said yesterday they were working on a proposed compromise that would include most of the Senate restrictions, but include a milder gun-show provision. They plan to present that compromise to Senate negotiators as early as today.

It is far from certain, however, that Congress will ever agree to new gun-show restrictions. The House debated the gun laws for two days and agreed to most of them individually. It defeated the entire package, however, because of a split between Democratic leaders, who insist on tough new laws, and pro-gun-rights Democrats, who oppose any new laws.

The pressure from both sides may kill the entire legislation, one GOP leadership staffer said yesterday. Neither side appears willing to give any ground — Democratic leaders want a political issue rather than a compromise while gun-rights forces fear any compromise will lead to stronger gun control.

The Washington Times

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1999

# Clinton to discuss China ties, East Timor in New Zealand

## Taiwan, WTO to dominate talks with Jiang

By Andrew Cain  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Clinton arrives tomorrow in New Zealand for an Asia-Pacific economic conference that will provide a forum for tense discussions about Chinese trade, the Russian money laundering scandal and violence in East Timor.

"The will of the people of East Timor must not be thwarted," Mr. Clinton said yesterday, after he suspended military contacts between Indonesia and the United States.

"They have a right to live in peace and security, and they have earned and voted for their freedom. This issue obviously will be an important part of our discussions in New Zealand."

The trip's key talks may occur this weekend, before Monday's one-day conference attended by leaders of 21 nations that account for 45 percent of the world's trade.

On Saturday Mr. Clinton and Chinese President Jiang Zemin will try to jumpstart negotiations about China joining the World Trade Organization.

"We will seek in that meeting to restore momentum to our relationship, to urge an easing of tensions between China and Taiwan, and to resume discussion of China's accession" to the WTO, said Samuel R. Berger, Mr. Clinton's national security adviser.

Mr. Clinton and the Chinese president will meet for the first time since Mr. Clinton's trip to China in 1998. The relationship between the United States and China has become more tense in recent months.

On May 8, NATO jets mistakenly struck the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, setting the two-story building on fire and killing three persons.

In late May, a committee headed by Rep. Christopher Cox, California Republican, charged that China stole secrets about every deployed weapon in the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

This summer, China threatened Taiwan to punish President Lee Teng-hui for moving toward independence by calling for a "state-to-state" dialogue.

On Wednesday Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican and chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, wrote to Mr. Clinton to register his "great apprehension" about the president's meeting with Mr. Jiang.

Later that day, Mr. Clinton will meet with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi to discuss security on the Korean peninsula, including efforts to deter another missile test by North Korea.

On Tuesday, the day after the conference, Mr. Clinton will travel to a mountain resort in Queenstown on New Zealand's South Island.

On Wednesday, Mr. Clinton moves on to Christchurch, where he will deliver a speech on global environmental strategy. The president also will meet with New Zealand's Prime Minister Jenny Shipley and attend a state dinner.

He urged Mr. Clinton "to make clear to President Jiang" that any Chinese use of force against Taiwan or its offshore islands "will trigger a U.S. intervention in defense of Taiwan."

On Sunday Mr. Clinton will meet with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to discuss arms control and to stress the importance of "a united front against crime and corruption," Mr. Berger said.

During Monday's economic conference, U.S. officials will urge a further expansion of trade to ease recovery from the Asian economic crisis.

"A primary goal is to get support for a broad-based yet manageable round" of trade talks, said Gene Sperling, Mr. Clinton's chief economic adviser.

The United States will seek further talks to expand market access and trade in agriculture, services and high-technology sectors, and a reduction of industrial tariffs.

Mr. Sperling said a second major goal at the conference is to continue global pressure for economic reforms like those that helped Korea and Thailand stabilize their currencies following the Asian economic crisis.

The assembled leaders also likely will discuss the violence in East Timor, proof that the annual conference allows "for things that are not on the agenda to be addressed in a serious way," Mr. Sperling said.

Mr. Sperling declined to predict the pace of trade talks with China.

"Obviously, this was slowed down by the unfortunate accident concerning the bombing, and we've been looking forward to resumption," he said.

The Washington Times

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1999

Guns - buybacks

# Buying Back Safer Streets?

## Researchers Say Repurchase Programs Have Little Impact on Crime

By PETER SLEVIN  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Sell a rifle to a law officer, stop a crime. Trade a pistol for a McDonald's voucher, prevent a shooting.

Atlanta bought 837 guns from residents last month, and Houston collected 779 earlier this month. Citizens sold 282 guns to authorities in Las Cruces, N.M., 754 in Baltimore, eight in Prichard, Ala., and 2,192 in the District.

"What's the value of a life saved?" said Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell. "We are going to do this again and again and again. When we run out of money, we are going to raise more."

Across the country, gun buybacks are a multi-million-dollar phenomenon and, supporters predict, a sure path to safer communities. The results in money paid and firearms melted are easily measured, but analysts who have studied the programs warn that buybacks are unlikely to make a dramatic difference in violent crime.

The reasons are many, including the sheer volume of guns available in the United States and the successful tactics criminals use to acquire them. Studies also show that lawbreakers rarely surrender their weapons to buyback programs and that many people who do sell their guns have other firearms at home, or soon buy new ones.

"Buybacks remove generally no more than 1 or 2 percent of the guns estimated to be in the community," said Garen Wintemute, director of the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California at Davis. "The guns that are removed from the community do not resemble the guns used in crimes in that community. There has never been any effect on crime results seen."

Inspired by the Million Mom March, Mayor Anthony A. Williams this week abruptly moved up a D.C. gun purchase scheduled for June. Through a drive that began yesterday, the District hopes to buy nearly 7,000 guns in three days, spending \$100,000 in federal funds and \$250,000 from the city treasury, including money seized from drug dealers.

Buybacks are also getting a serious boost from the Clinton administration, which is channeling \$15 million to local housing authorities to buy and destroy firearms—including the \$100,000 received by the District.

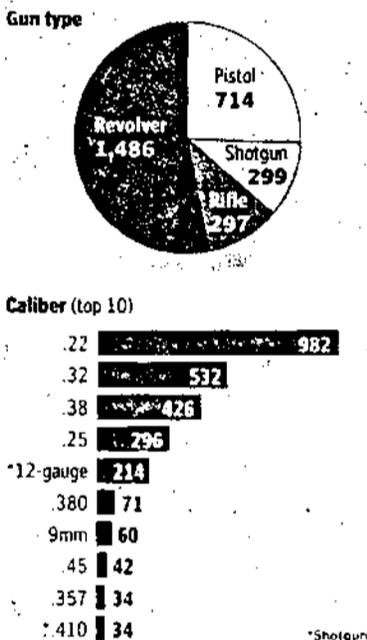
The federal program has harvested more than 10,000 guns from 43 cities in recent weeks, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew M. Cuomo announced May 9.

President Clinton talked of yet grander ambitions April 28 in announcing HUD's grant to the District. He cited crime and violence statistics and recalled last month's shootings at the National Zoo, where a 16-year-old is accused of shooting seven youngsters.

"Look, we can buy millions of guns out there. Just think about it. Fifty bucks a pop on the average to get millions of guns off the street," Clinton said. "I don't know about you, but based on the evidence, I'd say it's worth it. Every one of the guns

### Cash for Guns

Critics of buyback programs say the kinds of guns being turned in aren't the ones popular with young criminals, such as the light, rapid-fire .9mm or .380 automatic pistols. A breakdown of firearms turned in during a 1999 D.C. buyback program:



SOURCE: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

THE WASHINGTON POST

taken out of circulation could mean one less crime, one less tragedy, one more child's life saved."

Roughly 200 million guns are in circulation in the United States, specialists estimate, including at least one firearm in about 45 percent of American households. Nearly 5 million new guns are manufactured for U.S. sale each year.

Academics who have analyzed buyback projects credit the efforts for raising public awareness about gun safety and for removing neglected guns from homes where they might be found by a child or fired in a moment of unbridled anger. But they question the price tag and the argument that buybacks will lower crime.

"Even if you accept that you might reduce household risk factors, no one has really looked at the cost-effectiveness," said Jon Vernick, associate director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research.

Vernick and Wintemute studied a Sacramento buyback program, questioning 92 people who

traded guns for basketball tickets. Among their findings: 43 percent kept at least one other gun at home.

In a St. Louis study, 62 percent of people who took part in a buyback said they owned another gun. Fourteen percent said they would buy another firearm within a year. Thirteen percent more said they might.

The age and style of the guns delivered to buyback programs are significant to analysts, who say many guns traded for cash or vouchers are often virtual antiques. For example, more than half the 2,912 weapons bought by District police for \$100 apiece last year were 15 years old.

Yet more than one-third, and perhaps as many as one-half, of all guns seized from young adults nationwide were new guns purchased legally within the previous three years, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The guns of choice for young criminals—particularly fast-firing 9mm or .380-caliber semiautomatic pistols—show up less often in buyback bins than in crime records.

In a Boston study, 17 percent of buyback guns were semiautomatics, compared with 52 percent of guns confiscated from suspects younger than 22. In Sacramento, 35 percent of buyback guns were semiautomatics, compared with 57 percent of handguns seized by police in 1995.

"A large majority of young adult defendants have 9-millimeter guns. It has this glamour about it. It shoots fast, it shoots often," explained Abby Stavitsky, a D.C. gang prosecutor who interviews suspects after arrest and believes in buybacks.

Buyback advocates see two primary benefits. One is the idea that the fewer the guns in circulation, the fewer the accidents, thefts and gun crimes of passion. The second is the sense that communities are mobilizing for a worthy purpose and making clear the riskiness of unattended firearms.

"It raises awareness of gun violence. It brings the community together to do something about it," Cuomo said in a telephone interview. "It does reduce the number of guns and therefore will reduce the number of guns available to criminals, but I believe the most direct contribution is to gun safety."

Newark Mayor Sharpe James, whose city received a \$700,000 HUD grant, said the city hopes to buy 5,000 guns: "We're forming attitudes against weapons being treated as recreation or just another toy. They should be viewed as weapons of destruction."

In Baltimore, criminal defense lawyer Warren A. Brown is such a believer in buybacks that he spent \$75,000 to purchase nearly 1,300 firearms, almost exclusively handguns because they are so often used in street crime. He said he had "an epiphany, truly. I was awakened in my spirit to do it one morning."

After funding a buyback for five years, Brown has no regrets—and no illusions.

"Guns are easy to find on the street," said Brown, who represents all manner of suspected felons. "Those who want one, they can still easily get one."

# S.C. Legislature Approves Moving Rebel Flag From Capitol Dome

By JIM DAVENPORT  
Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C., May 8—The South Carolina legislature today approved removing the Confederate battle flag from the Capitol dome, ending months of bitter debate by lawmakers in the only state that flies the banner above its statehouse.

"I hope this represents the last battle of the Civil War," said state

Sen. Dick Elliott (D). But the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has said it will continue its boycott of the state under the plan, which would move the flag to a monument on statehouse grounds.

The bill goes to Gov. Jim Hodges (D), who has said he would sign any agreement reached by the House and Senate. If he approves, the flag would be moved July 1.

The House approved the final version 66 to 43; the Senate followed minutes later, 35 to 8.

Final agreement came after months of debate, marches and demonstrations that attracted thousands of flag supporters and opponents to the statehouse.

The deal struck by a legislative committee moves the banner to a 30-foot flagpole at the monument to Confederate war dead. The NAACP and many black

lawmakers say the site in front of the statehouse still would be too prominent. Earlier this week, Kweisi Mfume, president of the civil rights group, promised to expand its five-month-old tourism boycott if the flag is moved to the monument.

Mfume also said he would ask organized labor to support the boycott and urge executives of the motion picture and entertainment industries not to film or conduct any

activities in South Carolina. "I wonder if we've really come that far as a state. But the reality is, here we are," said state Rep. Joe Neal (D), chairman of the House Black Caucus.

The flag has flown above the statehouse since 1962, when it was raised to commemorate the Civil War centennial. Critics say it also was raised in defiance of the modern civil rights movement.

Supporters say the flag is an im-

portant part of the state's heritage; opponents say it represents slavery and racism.

The flag that would be flown at the monument is a square version of the rectangular flag that flies above the dome. Both have the familiar blue cross with white stars on a red background.

Earlier today, the House rejected a Senate plan for a 25-foot flagpole at the monument and insisted on a 30-foot pole.

# Ex-D.C. Official Says She Reported Abuses

## Testimony Comes in Probe of Group Homes

By YOLANDA WOODLEE  
Washington Post Staff Writer

D.C. Mayor Anthony A. Williams and city administrator Norman S. Dong knew about abuse and neglect at the District's group homes for mentally retarded adults, the former director of the Department of Human Services said yesterday.

Jearline F. Williams, testifying at a D.C. Council special investigative committee hearing into deaths at the homes, said Dong's office did not respond to her requests for help in solving care problems for group home residents with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

Yesterday's appearance was the first time the former human services director, who retired in January for health reasons, has placed the blame for the poor oversight squarely in the mayor's office.

"I have never misled the mayor or anyone else about the problems in the developmental disabilities services delivery system," she said. "My position has been very public. The system is broken, and it needs to be fixed."

She said she never told anyone, including the mayor's office, that service delivery issues "were all under control," as mayoral aides have claimed. She said she requested help from the city administrator, the D.C. inspector general, the police department, the D.C. corporation counsel and other agencies.

"The mayor needs to quell, properly and definitively, any attempts by his executive office to divert attention from anyone's accountability, including members of the executive office of the mayor," she said.

Her testimony came five months after a Washington Post article revealed the deaths of 116 residents in the city's group homes since 1993. An earlier Post article described the abuse and neglect of some of the city's most vulnerable residents.

The mayor's office released documents yesterday that aides said show that his staff did not learn the extent of the group home problems until The Post exposed it.

"We should have acted quicker," Williams (D) said this week. The mayor added, "I did not have any information I was trying to withhold nor did I have any information telling me there was an alarming situation

over there."

Dong said in an interview that Jearline Williams came to his office in February 1999 to tell him The Post was doing a story about group home problems. "My first question to her was: What have you done to get on top of the problem? She said she had stabilized the situation. . . . The director clearly did not convey all the information that we needed to know. She left out the most important part—the fact that people were dying or at serious risk. . . . Never was there an indication that there were 136 deaths," Dong said.

He cited a Dec. 1 letter in which Jearline Williams wrote that "many changes have been made to improve the services for this population. . . . At long last, we are being proactive rather than reacting!"

But at yesterday's hearing, she disputed assertions by mayoral aides that she and Jesse Goode, a human services attorney, never told city officials that conditions in the group homes were unsafe and life-threatening. Goode testified that it was "wildly inaccurate" for Dong and other mayoral staff members to suggest that human services officials "misled them or didn't tell them enough."

Jearline Williams, Goode said, gave the mayor's staff briefings outlining the problems. He accused the mayor's office of "hiding from the truth and delaying effective reform and corrective action to remedy the serious public health issues."

Council member Sharon Ambrose (D-Ward 6) asked Jearline Williams whether she knew how many clients had died since she took over the agency in August 1997. Williams said she did not have any figures; she said she knew some deaths had occurred but did not know they occurred under suspicious circumstances.

"Are you telling me the District does not know how many people have died, where they died or why?" Ambrose asked.

"That's my understanding," Williams answered.

Carol Schwartz (R-AI Large) criticized the hearing as "the blame game" and said she and her council colleagues "should be ashamed of ourselves, truly ashamed. . . . We just have to make sure that this never happens again—that no one loses a life and no one suffers."

# Unloading Old Police Guns: More Cities Ban Trade-Ins and Resales

## Manufacturers Offer Discounts For Used Pistols, but Some End Up in Criminal Hands

By VANESSA O'CONNELL  
AND PAUL M. BARRETT

Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

A growing number of states and cities say they plan to stop pouring old police guns into the consumer market, citing concerns that the guns might wind up in criminal hands.

They are responding, in part, to calls from the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the International Association of Chiefs of Police to ban the two-decade-old practice of having police agencies trade in old police guns for price breaks on new weapons.

"It's just bad public policy for governments to be suppliers of guns," says Denver Mayor Wellington Webb, who also serves as president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. "We are calling on cities around the country to stop selling police guns, because they are only adding to the problem" of gun violence in America.

Mayor Webb says he began pushing for a ban after reading a page one article in The Wall Street Journal in August that revealed that thousands of old police guns turn up in crimes each year. Though there isn't a complete count of the old police guns used in murders and other violent crimes, the article said federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms data showed that at least 1,100 former police guns were among the 193,203

**S&W**  
Model 5906

9mm Luger  
Adjustable Sights  
Stainless Steel  
1-15rd Mag

**PRE OWNED** \$329.00

**A wholesaler's pitch:** Peddling pistols once owned by police officers to gun dealers at bargain prices

crime guns traced in 1998. Because of inconsistencies in compiling the gun-trace data, such counts probably represent only the tip of the iceberg.

The article followed the August killing of a Los Angeles postal worker with a Glock pistol that was once owned by the Cosmopolis, Wash., police. Other news reports seized on the issue, too.

Now several states and cities, including Illinois and New Jersey, Fairfax County, Va., Lakewood, Colo., and Modesto, Calif., say they are abandon-

ing or reconsidering the practice. Their ranks also include New Orleans, Miami, St. Louis and Bridgeport, Conn.—four of the 28 municipalities that have sued the gun industry, accusing it of negligently flooding the market with handguns, many of which end up in criminal hands.

Those cities are under even more intense pressure to change their policies because the gun industry is likely to argue in court that there is incongruity in their position. The municipalities are, in effect, gun suppliers—and could be accused of a degree of carelessness in how they unload used police weapons and confiscated firearms. Paul Jannuzzo, vice president of the U.S. unit of Austrian handgun maker Glock GmbH, says seeking to portray the cities as hypocritical "is something we haven't ruled out."

Still, kicking the habit can be costly, since gun makers offer steep discounts for trade-ins, which they then sell to wholesalers.

For example, the U.S. unit of Italy's Beretta SpA offered to sell the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department a brand-new 9mm pistol for each of its 1,611 officers for a total of \$178,000, if it traded in its 10-year-old models. Destroying the old pistols and buying new Berettas outright would cost the department \$678,000.

The St. Louis police had planned on the trade-in, but after learning that many such guns wind up in the hands of criminals, it put the plan on hold. Now it is searching for other ways to finance the acquisition of new guns. "The concern is spending money," says St. Louis Mayor Clarence Harmon.

Denver's Mayor Webb, who banned trade-ins in his city and is calling for Colorado state law-

makers to ban them throughout the state, says he plans to push for some sort of nationwide police gun swap program. In theory, he says, such a program would reduce the number of old police guns recycled into the consumer market because it would enable police forces in small towns and cities to buy guns no longer wanted by police in larger cities.

Gun makers have also encouraged cash-strapped municipalities to throw in guns seized from crime scenes, in addition to the old police "service" guns, when trading to pay for weapon upgrades. But now, some cities are banning trade-ins of seized weapons, too.

For instance, the board of supervisors of Fairfax County in September banned its police department from trading both seized guns and service weapons. The 1,000-member county police department had traded 555 seized guns between 1996 and 1999 for a savings of about \$50,000.

Board Chairman Kate Hanley spearheaded the move after seeing reports that neo-Nazi Buford Furrow used a former police gun in his murder rampage in Los Angeles. "Citizens wanted to know that when guns are confiscated or surrendered by citizens, they are destroyed," Ms. Hanley says.

Old police guns have been recycled into the consumer market ever since the 1980s. At the time, Smith & Wesson, now a unit of Britain's Tomkins PLC, was a leader in law enforcement sales, and was looking to sell a new revolver. To entice departments to upgrade their guns, it arranged for wholesalers to bid on the arsenal of old police guns in an informal auction. The price paid by the top

Criminal  
Gun Buybacks

# Food Versus Drugs?

Undoubtedly it was a mistake to turn on the evening news. There was a reporter beginning and ending her coverage of the fight over drug prices with an elderly woman complaining that her medications cost more than her food.

You might expect reporters to hesitate before uncritically embracing Clintonian gospel, but this complaint has been reprised over and over in the news since the president pounded the pharmaceutical companies for opposing his Medicare expansion plans. This is lower brainstem journalism. Let's make some obvious points for the record:

Food is a commodity, and the trend for a

---

## Business World

By Holman W. Jenkins Jr.

---

century has been for food to become a shrinking portion of any household's budget, unless the budgeter has acquired a taste for truffles and caviar and endangered species.

Medicine, on the other hand, is a technology, embodying intellectual property obtained at great expense in research and clinical trials. It's not unusual for the products of technology to assume a relatively larger portion of the household budget compared to food: Cable TV, the automobile, and plumbing have all done so.

Yes, technology has also been applied to food—to expand the quantity. But the function of food remains unchanged, to fill the tummy and provide nutrition and give people something to do.

By contrast, medicine has assumed a bigger place in the family budget as medicines are invented to do things medicine was never able to do before.

Since the invention and marketing of Zantac, ulcers have been cured for all prac-

tical purposes. A mainstay of the surgical profession, the vagotomy, or the removal of ulcers, has disappeared from the medical repertoire. The several billion dollars a year Americans once spent on vagotomies has been redeployed to their medicine budgets. Under the home-economics calculus of the newsroom, these people are victims because their drug expenditures have risen.

Drugs are treating diseases that were previously untreated—or treatable by means that were ineffectual or unpleasant. New products necessarily must fit into the household budget somewhere, taking up a position relative to the things already in the budget.

A key focus of research has been obesity, delivering drugs like Xenical and Meridia. All things being equal, anyone taking these drugs will see a rise in his drug expenditures and a decline in his food expenditures. No doubt this will be presented on the news as an outrage.

As people age, their consumption of calories tends to wane. As they age, their consumption of medicines tends to rise.

One way to halt this horror would be to clamp down on the development of new medicines for old people. Merck launched Fosamax a few years ago for the previously untreated condition of osteoporosis, bane of old ladies. Unless a stop is put to this progress, women will inevitably be devoting a larger share of their incomes to such medicines.

If we're not careful, seniors may soon start spending money on drugs for Alzheimer's, arthritis and Parkinson's. Michael J. Fox, the actor and Parkinson's sufferer, told Congress recently he expects the disease to be cured within his lifetime. He probably won't mind if it costs more than dinner.

What has seniors upset is that they are used to seeing medical care as a free good, thanks to Medicare. Medicare doesn't

cover prescriptions, so as new drugs come along, seniors are having to pay out of pocket. If we're going to have health insurance for seniors, it makes sense to cover drugs to encourage cheaper and effective drug therapy over surgery or silent suffering.

You won't find the drug companies arguing with this. But having seen how Medicare's price-control approach has worked in the market for doctors and hospitals, they naturally are looking for a better way. Doctors and hospitals and HMOs are already refusing to accept Medicare

---

*All things considered, anyone taking the new obesity drugs will see a rise in his drug expenditures and a decline in his food expenditures.*

---

patients, because the reimbursements don't cover the costs.

Tom Allen, the House Democrat who sponsored a bill to rope the drug companies under this system, claims the "pharmaceutical industry has embarked on a campaign of disinformation fueled by the enormous profits they make at the expense of America's seniors."

This is a lower brainstem approach to legislation. You can't reduce profits without reducing the willingness of investors to supply the industry with capital to develop new drugs. To pretend otherwise is a fraud and a lie. What's being done at the "expense of seniors" is a monumental search for ways to cure the diseases of seniors.

What about Canada? Mr. Clinton has noted old folks filling their prescriptions across the border, where prices can be 50% lower. The same anecdote has been all

over the media, minus the elementary business economics that would make it intelligible.

When a company has invested \$300 million or more to develop a new drug, it costs next to nothing to run off a larger batch of pills. If you can sell some in Canada at a price that covers the marginal costs and contributes even a small fraction of the R&D costs, it's worth doing.

Canada is a dinky nation whose national health system rides for free on the R&D paid for by American consumers. These drugs, though, would not exist if the entire world were like Canada, because there would be nobody left to shoulder the full cost of developing them.

If Americans want something to worry about, this is it. Price regulation has become nearly universal outside the United States. Germany was the last free market in drugs. Now it's gone, having adopted a "reference price system" in the early 1990s.

These national health systems try to save pennies by denying access to the latest therapies, even when it would be cheaper in the long run. They ban consumer drug advertising, because advertising has been shown to accelerate the acceptance (and therefore the payback) of developing new pharmaceuticals.

Their citizens are denied the latest, best drugs; we're denied their contribution to the cost of developing these drugs. Increasingly, there is no medical progress unless Americans pay for it. Of 35 new molecules introduced last year, 27 were launched here.

Glaxo practically gives away its AIDS drugs to expectant women in Africa, but not even Mr. Clinton would argue that the African health care system is better than ours. U.S. consumers don't mind subsidizing the truly needy, but Canadians don't fit that category. Shame on them (and Europeans) for not paying their own way.

2/2  
bidder was used to offset the cost of the new revolvers.

The practice gained popularity in the early 1990s, after Glock and Beretta began aggressively marketing 9mm semiautomatic pistols to police departments. Since then, Glock and other gun companies have used the tactic to sell newer, more powerful versions of its pistols to police departments eager for more firepower.

In the next few years, more states and cities will likely face the problem of what to do with old police guns, because many agencies acquired new arsenals during the late 1980s or early 1990s. A general rule of thumb for law enforcement agencies is that pistols have a 10-year life span before they need to be refurbished or replaced.

State police in New Jersey are planning to replace their 13-year-old guns and are thinking hard about whether a trade-in would be appropriate in light of the recent controversy, says spokesman Roger Shatzkin. One possibility under consideration: requiring that traded guns be resold only overseas.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police recently urged that old police guns be destroyed and is debating ways to get the word out to its more than 16,000 police chief members. Larry Todd, chief of the Los Gatos, Calif., police department, says many chiefs still aren't aware that unloading old police guns can be controversial.

And the potential for falling into criminal hands isn't the only problem. The 240-member Modesto, Calif., police force was rocked by a 1996-97 resale policy. Officers were allowed to buy surplus guns, and some acquired multiple weapons, which they then resold to the public at a profit.

As a result, the department has decided that "in the future, we will destroy any guns," says Lt. Dave Young. "We will not trade or sell them."

# UnitedHealth Move on Reviews Is Seen as Industry Watershed

By CAROL GENTRY

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL  
UnitedHealth Group's move away from restrictive "mother-may-I medicine" is being seen as a watershed event in the history of managed care that may well spur similar action from other managed-care plans.

Doctors and patients around the country reacted enthusiastically to UnitedHealth's decision to let physicians have the last word in determining what services to provide or recommend for their patient. Jeannine Rivet, chief executive of UnitedHealthcare, the health-plan division of the Minnetonka, Minn., company, said yesterday that phone calls were coming in from members all over the country who heard the news and wanted to thank her. She said it is a new experience for her because plan members usually call only to complain.

The move is expected to give UnitedHealth a competitive advantage in the increasingly difficult business of making money in providing managed care. Ms. Rivet said. "If we can do what we went into this business to do—focus on good care, prevention and treatment of illness at the right time with the right service—I think we can win," she said.

Both consumer groups and economists agree. "Consumers would be thrilled not to have to wait the extra time, and doctors would be thrilled not to be second-guessed by clerks," said Judy Waxman, director of government affairs at the consumer group Families USA. "Why wouldn't other plans jump on the bandwagon? If it saves money and makes people happier, it's a no-brainer."

Princeton health economist Uwe Reinhardt said other industries know that micromanaging and interfering with their work force results in unmotivated workers who "take a certain glee out of wrecking the company." Doctors' goodwill is vital to managed-care plans, he said, and added, "Why did it take these guys 10 years to figure this out?"

President Clinton, who supports federal legislation allowing patients to sue their HMOs, complimented UnitedHealth. "Good for them. I applaud them," he said. "And they're large enough that they might really be able to do it and have an impact on this."

## Caution Among Some Experts

Some medical experts, while supportive of UnitedHealth's action, were cautious. "This sounds like such a positive change, we only hope it works as well as they say," said David Blumenthal, director of the Institute of Health Policy at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. "But we have to keep a healthy dose of skepticism."

Some health-policy officials said they are worried that the new ruling will encourage doctors gradually to loosen up their self-restraint, thereby leading to a rise in unnecessary services and spending.

"We have managed care in this country for a reason," said Margaret E. O'Kane, president of the National Committee for Quality Assurance in Washington, D.C., which accredits health plans. "Costs were out of control."

UnitedHealth's Ms. Rivet said the company believes that as a result of managed-care policies over the years, doctors now better understand the economic impact of their decisions. Because the company was already approving 99.1% of doctors' decisions, Ms. Rivet said, the company began to wonder, "Are we just creating hassles?" That question led UnitedHealth to re-examine its practices.

"We want to make sure members get the right services at the right time, and we want the physicians to practice medicine," Ms. Rivet said.

Over the past year or so, UnitedHealth conducted pilot studies in which the company eliminated the system of requiring permission prior to treatment and the staffers who manned it. Instead, the company decided to assign employees to help patients weave their way through the health-care system and manage chronic illnesses, such as diabetes. As a result, UnitedHealth reduced hospital days and medical costs, improved care and raised patient satisfaction, according to Ms. Rivet.

## A Time of Industry Changes

Change is already afoot throughout the managed-care industry. Surveys by the American Association of Health Plans, the industry's trade group, show that many plans have already canceled the permission requirement on most tests and treatments, said Karen Ignani, executive director. They tend to retain them only for a handful of procedures that are misused, she said, and they often exempt doctors from the requirements once they have shown they are good stewards of care. After all, she said, national studies suggest 97% of patient decisions are approved at the health-plan level anyway.

Robert Blendon, a health-policy professor at Harvard who surveys the public's attitudes about health care, says the United move will have enormous implications for the company's image, and if other companies follow suit, they might pull the industry's image out of the cellar. If he were a consultant to the industry, he said, he would quickly compromise on patient-protection legislation in Washington, D.C., to "get it off the front page." Then he said, "They have to do what United's done. They have to say they're not in the business of denying care."

Ms. Ignani said yesterday that plans understand that now. While the public's image of the industry may often be wrong, she said, people make decisions based on those perceptions. "This represents an opportunity for us to connect directly with consumers and physicians again," she said. "We have to provide evidence that we're worth their confidence and trust."

One reason health plans can be more flexible now is that technology is improving enough to let them track decisions by medical groups better than in the past and identify unusual patterns more quickly. Now that they can spot questionable trends faster and more accurately, they are under less pressure to intervene in individual doctor-patient cases.

For its part, United has developed a don't-ask-but-please-tell system that allows it to do what it calls "care coordination." It works this way: Doctors let the company know when a patient is to undergo certain tests, treatments and hospitalization. United employees double-check to make sure patients are covered and talk with the patients to make sure they have a ride on the day of a hospital discharge, know which exercises to do to promote healing, and have the proper equipment at home to get around.

How much money does it save to eliminate the permission apparatus? United's pilot program in Tennessee has been in full operation only since April, and even so, the year-to-date savings are 9%, says Chief Medical Officer Archelle Georgiou. In several pilots for Medicare patients, the company found it reduced the number of hospital bed days by 9%, even as the readmission rate fell—an indication that patients were getting better follow-through after discharge. "This isn't just what we stopped doing," Dr. Georgiou said. "We've redesigned and re-engineered what we are doing."

It is possible that the doctors in Minnetonka may question why a doctor is taking a certain action and make suggestions. But the decision is left in the hands of the doctor in the field. Of course, any doctor who makes decisions that are wildly different from the norm will be evaluated later to see if there is a good reason. But that is in line with what well-managed companies do, Dr. Reinhardt says. "You don't annoy them with constant intrusions."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1993

Crime - Gun Buybacks

ANGELES TIMES

(Edition) Page 1 for Thursday, Sept. 9, 1999:

of page:

Col 1: Standing at the high school where he first tasted stardom, Bill Bradley formally launches his underdog bid for president with a promise of "new leadership" and "deeper prosperity ... that makes us feel rich inside as well as out." (BRADLEY-TIMES, moved.)

Cols 2-4: Six months after leading NATO on a 78-day air campaign to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and serving notice it would not let such human-rights atrocities go unchallenged again, the Clinton administration decides to limit its military role in halting yet another convulsion of organized killing, this time in East Timor. (with art) (TIMOR-POLICY-TIMES, moved.)

Cols 5-6: Opening a new front in the debate over gun violence, the Clinton administration will announce the federal government's largest effort to buy firearms now in private hands. (GUNS-TIMES, moved.)

Above the fold:

Cols 2-3: Local feature.

Below the fold:

Col 3: Like new recruits in a 12-step recovery program, college presidents are taking a crucial first step: admitting that their campuses have a binge drinking problem. (BINGE, moved.)

Cols 5-6: Long after the furor over clemency for Puerto Rican nationalists dies down, the contretemps that enveloped President Clinton and clouded Hillary Rodham Clinton's U.S. Senate campaign will stand as a textbook example of the nuances and pitfalls of modern ethnic politics in New York. (CAMPAIGN-ETHNIC, moved.)

Bottom of the page:

Cols 1-2: Among American Indians, there is no honor higher than receiving an eagle feather; so California Gov. Gray Davis' aides used reverential tones to announce that an eagle feather had been bestowed upon their boss at a meeting with Indians; but in the non-Indian world, possession of an eagle feather is a misdemeanor. (EAGLE, moved.)

Cols 5-6: Local feature.

Federal Government to Launch Gun Buy-Back Effort

By Ronald Brownstein

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON Opening a new front in the debate over gun violence, the Clinton administration will announce Thursday the federal government's largest effort to buy firearms now in private hands, the Los Angeles Times has learned.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development will provide \$14 million in grants to police departments and public housing authorities in at least 20 cities, enabling local officials to buy back and destroy as many as 280,000 guns.

"While you are working on reducing the sale of guns to people who shouldn't have them, you also have to do something about reducing the number of guns that are currently in circulation," HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo said Wednesday.

Since some cities have drawn criticism for reselling guns purchased in buy-back programs, the HUD initiative will require municipalities to agree to destroy any weapons they buy, officials said. Only stolen guns which will be returned to their legal owners or guns needed for police investigations will be exempted.

Gun buy-back programs have become increasingly popular with mayors and police chiefs in recent years though there is little decisive evidence of their effectiveness. Hoping to provide firmer answers, HUD plans to spend \$1 million on a study of buy-backs, including its own new program.

President Clinton is scheduled to announce the gun initiative in a ceremony at the White House. At the session, he will be joined by mayors and police chiefs from around the country.

The local officials also are expected to lobby lawmakers in support of gun control measures that the administration wants passed, including a controversial proposal to impose strict new background check requirements on all firearm transactions at gun shows and pawnshops. The proposals have remained stalled in Congress since the Senate approved them in May, responding in part to the public outcry that followed the shootings that took 15 lives at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., a month earlier.

The new buy-back plan will use existing federal funds and congressional approval will not be required. Cities and public housing authorities that want to participate must apply to HUD, which then will provide grants based on an evaluation of the proposals. HUD officials said that they intend to disburse the first money by November.

The program drew cautious applause from law enforcement and gun control groups but was greeted with skepticism from the National Rifle Association.

"This is certainly not the answer to our problem but it does help and we have to use and adapt any reasonable method we can to reduce the level of violence in these communities," said Hubert Williams, president of the Police Foundation here.

Wayne LaPierre, the NRA's executive vice president, said that the group is "not opposed" to buy-back programs but considers them mostly "sound bites and photo ops" that have no "impact on a criminal ... or a violent juvenile that wants a gun." Rather than investing in buy-back programs, LaPierre said, the administration could do more to discourage gun violence by increasing funding for prosecuting violations of existing gun laws.

Supporters view buy-back programs as a way to reduce the number of guns in circulation and in particular an opportunity to reduce the risk of accidental shootings by removing guns from homes. Critics consider the programs a largely cosmetic effort unlikely to have much impact in a nation where more than 200 million guns are in-circulation. "You can't make a dent," LaPierre said. "What you can make is a headline."

Critics and supporters alike agree that buybacks tend to attract weapons from law-abiding citizens, rather than criminals. But program proponents maintain that, even removing old family guns buried in the attic, can reduce the risk of shootings.

"It probably has less effect on people with criminal intentions," said Naomi Paisse, communications director for Handgun Control, Inc., a leading gun control advocacy group. "But, if we save even 20 kids a year from an accidental shooting because an old gun has gotten out of a home, that's certainly worth doing."

This year alone, buy-back programs have been launched in New York City, Washington and Atlanta, as well as smaller cities such as Dayton, Ohio, and South Bend, Ind.

Cuomo said that conversations with municipal officials made clear that more cities would pursue gun buy-back programs if they had the funds for them. "Funding is a barrier to communities who want to do this," he said.

HUD will encourage, but not require, the cities participating to pay no more than \$50 per gun which could stretch the \$14 million to cover as many as 280,000 guns.

Under the program, no city can receive more than \$500,000 which means that at least 20 communities, and probably more, will receive funding. Cities will be required to establish the collection points for the purchases near public housing projects, many of which are located in high-crime areas. HUD hopes that will lead "to clearing out more guns in the immediate area of the housing authority than anywhere else," one department official said.

---

### Multi-Faceted Fallout Over Clemency for Hillary Clinton

By Josh Getlin

Los Angeles Times

NEW YORK Long after the furor over clemency for Puerto Rican nationalists dies down, the contretemps that enveloped President Clinton and clouded Hillary Rodham Clinton's U.S. Senate campaign will stand as a textbook example of the nuances and pitfalls of modern ethnic politics in New York.

What may have started out as a bid to win support in the Latino community quickly boomeranged this week, and when the first lady abandoned her tacit support for the clemency offered by her husband to members of the FALN organization a group whose members carried out bombings and other acts between 1974 and 1983 she got heat from activists on both sides.

Mrs. Clinton reiterated her opposition to their release Wednesday in a news conference, saying: "I stand by that statement (on clemency) yet I understand the depth of feeling in the Puerto Rican community, and I look forward to working with them on other issues that we can make a difference on." Earlier, her likely opponent in the Senate race, New York's Republican Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, had expressed his strong opposition to the President's offer of clemency.

Asked if there had been a communications mix-up last weekend, which had her calling for the clemency deal to be rescinded while the Puerto Rican prisoners themselves were debating whether to accept it, Mrs. Clinton said only that she had not been told in advance of their decision. Her spokesman, Howard Wolfson, added there was no indication even that the White House knew on Saturday that an agreement was close. The first lady said there are bound to be occasions during the campaign when she will disagree with her husband. "I will express that disagreement," she said. "That is what I intend to do."

Clearly, Mrs. Clinton hoped to clear the air with her comments. But now, as 12 jailed Puerto Ricans prepare to walk free, political operatives wonder whether she has learned enough about the Empire State's ethnic minefields to avoid similar flaps in the future. Indeed, these professionals say there are key lessons to be learned from the controversy:

First, politicians err in viewing any ethnic group as a homogenous bloc. Second, candidates who court votes in one community may inadvertently risk losing support in another. And courtesy counts politicians who seek support from an ethnic group should sit down with key representatives, something Mrs. Clinton failed to do with Puerto Rican leaders when it came to her views on the clemency issue.

"Both she and the president showed remarkably poor judgment on the Puerto Rican issue," said former New York Mayor Edward I. Koch, who continues to support her candidacy. "People told her this granting of clemency would endear her to the Hispanic population, but the issue is more complex. That's not how things work here."

Even her advisers concede that it takes more than a staff briefing paper to understand the fine art of ethnic political campaigning in New York. Mrs. Clinton, they suggest, needs more of a learning curve than a listening tour as she continues her exploratory campaign for the Senate race 14 months away. And it takes a fine tuned political ear to know the difference between courting and pandering.

"You get the feeling that neither the President nor Mrs. Clinton knew that much about the Puerto Rican issue when they got into this," said Fred Siegel, professor of urban history at Cooper Union College in New York. "This is a city that went through the World Trade Center bombings and trials of people who wanted to blow up the subways. ... How could people here just quietly accept the fact that terrorists would go free?"

Some observers have speculated that Mrs. Clinton reversed herself on the clemency issue as opposition to the deal grew among leading New York politicians, including Giuliani and Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, along with law enforcement groups. But the

memory of her earlier acquiescence in the clemency deal with the sense that she may have been trying to have it both ways could ultimately cost her support with other ethnic voters.

"She could pay a long-term price with Italian-Americans, a larger group of ethnic voters she can't afford to antagonize," said veteran political consultant Joseph Mercurio, who was worked with both Democratic and Republican candidates. Several New York police officers who were victims of FALN violence in the 1980s are Italian-Americans, Mercurio explained, and they have received a great deal of TV publicity in recent weeks.

In New York, potential pitfalls are everywhere, and even the most veteran political players can make fatal mistakes. Just ask former Sen. Al D'Amato, a master of political gamesmanship, who overplayed his hand in the Jewish community last year in a losing bid for a fourth Senate term. He lost fifty percent of his earlier support in that crucial group by calling his Jewish opponent, then-Rep. Charles Schumer, a "putzhead" and also by airing TV spots where Holocaust survivors criticized Schumer.

D'Amato's fierce attacks struck many as ethnic pandering, and Hillary Clinton was hit with similar complaints two months ago when she abruptly broke with administration policy and endorsed Jerusalem as Israel's "eternal" capitol. "If she thought this would bring in a lot of Jewish votes, she was mistaken," noted Mercurio, "because no community in this state is going to be galvanized around one single issue."

---

### United States Hopes to Limit Military Involvement in Timor

By Tyler Marshall

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON Six months after leading NATO on a 78-day air campaign to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and serving notice it would not let such human-rights atrocities go unchallenged again, the Clinton administration has decided to limit its military role in halting yet another convulsion of organized killing, this time in East Timor.

"The United States is not planning on any insertion of peacekeeping forces" in the Indonesian province, Defense Secretary William S. Cohen stated Wednesday. "The United States cannot be and should not be viewed as the policeman of the world."

Cohen's comments followed a series of consultations over the past two days among President Clinton's senior foreign policy advisers. The administration officials decided that the United States would provide air transports, communications and intelligence to support any United Nations peacekeeping mission organized if Indonesian authorities are unable to restore order in East Timor, but would not provide combat troops.

The decision came despite pressure applied by the government of Australia for a more central U.S. role. Australia has agreed to lead a U.N.-sanctioned mission in East Timor.

Roving gangs and militias have been rampaging through the province, killing pro-independence supporters and driving by some estimates 200,000 people from the homes, since the province voted overwhelmingly Aug. 30 to break away from Indonesia.

While the administration has rejected contributing ground troops to a peacekeeping force, the United States is wielding threats of economic pressure in an effort to force Indonesian President B.J. Habibie to either halt the chaotic attacks on East Timorese civilians or allow U.N. peacekeepers to do the job for him.

A senior State Department official said U.S. aid to Indonesia is under review as a result of the crisis. "There is nothing imminent, but certainly people are reviewing what levers we have to use," the official said.

The administration's tactic seemed part of a larger international attempt to marshal economic pressure on a nation already struggling to recover from Asia's economic crisis two years ago and the bumpy transition to democracy following last year's fall of President Suharto, who ruled the Indonesia for 32 years.

"Indonesia's relations with the international community, including the United States, are at risk here," State Department spokesman James P. Rubin told reporters Wednesday. "A country in chaos does not attract foreign investment, foreign visitors or foreign capital."

Indonesia would certainly appear to be vulnerable to such pressure.

In addition to about \$75 million in direct assistance provided by the United States this year, Indonesia receives substantial foreign aid from Japan and the European Union. The International Monetary Fund also has yet to disperse more than \$2 billion of a current \$12.2 billion loan to Indonesia. The World Bank has approved a \$600 million budget support loan, though it has been