

involving TV programming, like, say, gun violence?

The President. Well, first of all let me say, it is my understanding that what General McCaffrey was trying to do is to amplify the impact of the advertising program that we have been running—and keep in mind, a number of networks have agreed not only to take paid ads but have run a lot of our ads for free or reduced rates. And they are under an obligation to run public service announcements.

I think that General McCaffrey reached a conclusion, based on how many people see public service announcements that are on late at night as opposed to primetime programming that more people watch, that if the networks were willing to put a good antidrug message in heavily watched programs, particularly by the most vulnerable young people, that would be a good thing. And it's my understanding that there's nothing mandatory about this, that there was no attempt to regulate content or tell people what they had to put into it—of course, I wouldn't support that. But I think he's done a very good job at increasing the sort of public interest component of what young people hear on the media, and I think it's working; we see drug use dropping.

And let me say, I've talked to a lot of people in the entertainment community who liked the idea that without compromising the integrity of their programs, they might be involved in all kinds of public service efforts. So that's where I am on this. This was his initiative, and I hadn't given any thought to the question of whether it might be applied in other ways, frankly.

Q. Do you think it's a deceptive move? It could be used for other messages in the future.

The President. Well, it could be. If the Government were writing the content, it could be. And I don't think we should be doing that. I think that—however, I think what General McCaffrey tried to do—which was to say, look, if you will do this, this can count against your obligation to run public service announcements which, as you know, are very often run in off hours and times when not many people are watching—I think this guy's intense and passionate and committed. And we've got too many kids using drugs, still. So I think that's what he was trying to do. I don't think there was any attempt to try to undermine the content or the independence or the integrity of the networks and the programming.

Airline Safety

Q. Mr. President, on aviation safety, the Europeans have been very successful not doing what you're announcing today but downloading data from airplanes, analyzing hundreds of flights for patterns that could cause problems. We don't do that much in this country, because there's still a dispute between the airlines and the FAA over what would happen if this turned up some violations that could result in prosecutions. When are we going to get the kind of safety program they're using successfully in Europe to analyze data instead of pilot reports?

The President. Jane, you want to answer that?

FAA Administrator Jane F. Garvey. Thanks, Mr. President. Nice to see you, Matt. Well, first of all, as you know we're really looking at the whole issue of FOQA. We do have a policy in place which—the policy allows the information to be protected, which we think is very, very good. We've got a number of airlines who are working with us on that issue.

I think the real critical question is, when can we see that in an actual rule? And we are working that through the administration and working very hard to see it in a rulemaking. I think it's absolutely the right direction. And certainly the combination of the information we can get from the flight data recorders as well as the information we can get from the pilots or the mechanics makes a very powerful tool. So I'm glad we have the policy in place, and we're moving toward the rulemaking.

The President. I'd like to make a general comment about this, and then we've got to go. I'm obviously not an expert in how airlines work, but I know quite a bit about production processes and manufacturing. It's something I've spent a lot of time studying over nearly 20 years now. It was a big part of the job I used to have when I was a Governor. And I can tell you that the kind of teamwork approach that has been announced today, in making people feel they won't be punished when they say they think there's something wrong or a mistake was made, was, in my judgment, the most significant factor leading all kinds of American manufacturers to a zero-defect approach, which had a major role in the resurgence of the manufacturing sector over the last decade and a major role in the comeback of the American economy.

So I believe that what they're doing here is very important. It is not rational to believe that