

homes or resettle elsewhere. Circumstances permitting, it will be our objective to transfer responsibility for the refugees to other organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as soon as possible.

6. *Exit Strategy.* The duration of the requirement for a U.S. military presence in Albania and Macedonia for these purposes will depend on the course of events, and in particular, on Belgrade's conduct on the ground in Kosovo. So long as Belgrade forces the Kosovar refugees to remain dispossessed, and the enormity of the situation continues to overwhelm the ability of Albania, Macedonia, and the international relief community to deal with the situation, it is likely that U.S. forces deployed for these purposes will be required. Nevertheless, as stated above, it will be our objective to transfer responsibility for the refugees to other organizations as soon as the emergency has subsided. In addition, we are working with our European partners to provide temporary asylum to some of the refugees in third countries.

7. *Costs.* The costs of the deployment described in this notice will be paid initially from FY99 Defense appropriations, including the provision of defense commodities and services directed pursuant to Presidential Determination 99-20 of March 31, 1999. An estimate of likely costs for these deployments is being prepared, and I will ensure that it is provided to the Congress as soon as it is available.

8. *Effect on Morale, Retention and Readiness.* In the first instance, these deployments will have a positive effect on morale, retention and readiness because they will demonstrate the commitment of the necessary resources to those aspects of operations relating to response to the wors-

ening conditions brought by the refugee crisis in the area.

United States forces participating in these operations, as well as U.S. forces deployed for other purposes in the region are dedicated professionals serving with great pride and enthusiasm. Given the importance of these activities, particularly in humanitarian terms, we anticipate that U.S. forces would maintain the highest morale and effectiveness. It has been our experience that personnel serving in these types of operations manifest great pride and satisfaction in demonstrating America's capacity to ensure care and protection for people in need.

However, we recognize that even deployments for the best of reasons increase the periods of separation from family and add other burdens to military service.

The Department of Defense has underway extensive and effective programs to do what is necessary to manage personnel and other resources so as to reduce these problems. As with any operational deployment, the effects on readiness are mixed. In these operations, U.S. forces will be conducting one of the missions they have been trained to perform, which will provide an unparalleled opportunity to apply their skills in a unique environment. We believe that this will contribute significantly to a high state of morale and readiness.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 5.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Forces to Macedonia and Albania

April 4, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Further to my report to the Congress of March 25 and April 3, 1999, under section 8115 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-262), this report is to inform you of my decision to deploy addi-

tional U.S. forces to Albania in support of ongoing NATO air operations to reduce the capacity of the Serbian military and security forces to conduct offensive operations.

In particular, rotary wing, artillery, and tactical missile systems will be deployed to establish

a deep strike task force in Albania to enhance NATO's ability to conduct effective air operations in Kosovo as part of the current NATO mission. In regard to the elements of section 8115(a)(1)–(8), I am providing the following to supplement information provided on these elements in my reports of March 25 and April 3, 1999.

1 & 2. *National Security Interests.* I hereby certify that the deployment of additional forces to Albania as described above is necessary in the national security interests of the United States. This deployment will provide additional specialized forces to reduce the capacity of the Serbian military and security forces to continue repression and ethnic cleansing and to deter the threat to regional peace and security.

3. *Numbers.* I anticipate that a substantial deep strike task force, comprised of rotary wing, artillery, and tactical missile systems, together with supporting and security elements, will be deployed to Albania for these purposes. There is not at this time a definitive number of U.S. military personnel who will be deployed as part of this task force, but I anticipate that, at a minimum, approximately 2,000 will be required. I will ensure that the Congress is informed in a timely manner about the deployment described in this report when the information is available.

4. *Mission/Objectives.* The overall objective of our efforts with our allies in the region has been detailed in my previous reports of March 25 and April 3, 1999. The specific military mission of the strike task force deployed to Albania will be to support ongoing NATO air operations to reduce the capacity of the Serbian military and security forces to conduct offensive operations. The ground force component is for the

support and security of the deep strike elements. Their mission does not include any planned deployment of ground troops into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

5. *Schedule.* Although it is not possible at this time to determine how long NATO operations will need to continue, we are determined to sustain this effort along with our allies as long as necessary to meet our objectives.

6. *Exit Strategy.* The duration of the requirement for this strike task force deployment to Albania will depend on the course of events, and in particular, on Belgrade's reaction to NATO operations.

7. *Costs.* The costs of the deployment covered by this notice, like the costs of the U.S. contribution to NATO air operations, will be paid initially from FY99 Defense Operations and Maintenance appropriations. An estimate of likely costs for these deployments is being prepared, and I will ensure that it is provided to the Congress as soon as it is available.

8. *Effect on Morale, Retention and Readiness.* In addition to the specific points I made on these matters in my reports of March 25 and April 3, I would only underscore and express my deep gratitude for the great pride, courage, professionalism, and enthusiasm of the men and women of our Armed Forces who are carrying out this critical mission.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 5.

Remarks at the White House Easter Egg Roll

April 5, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. I want to welcome you to the White House today. And before I say anything else, I want to say in this season of peace for us I know all of us will send our thoughts and prayers to our men and women in uniform in Kosovo and our prayers and best wishes to the many thousands of

refugees that have been generated by that terrible conflict.

Now, let me first begin by thanking our sponsors who make this possible every year, and I thank the White House volunteers. I'd also like to thank the staff for preparing—listen to this—7,000 eggs for today's event. That's more