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FORCE PROTECTION IN MACEDONIA

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO SEND CERTAIN U.S. FORCES TO MACEDONIA TO ENHANCE FORCE PROTECTION FOR U.S. AND OTHER NATO FORCES IN THAT NATION, TO SUPPORT U.S. AND NATO MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION, TO DETER ATTACKS ON U.S. AND NATO FORCES ALREADY IN MACEDONIA, AND TO ASSIST IN PREPARING FOR A POSSIBLE NATO PEACE IMPLEMENTATION FORCE IN KOSOVO, PURSUANT TO PUB. L. 105–262

APRIL 12, 1999.—Referred jointly to the Committees on International Relations, Appropriations, and Armed Services and ordered to be printed

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THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, DC, March 25, 1999.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is a report under section 8115 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105–262), to inform you of my decision to send certain U.S. forces to Macedonia to enhance force protection for U.S. and other NATO forces in that nation, to support U.S. and NATO military activities in the region, to deter attacks on U.S. and NATO forces already in Macedonia, and to assist in preparing for a possible NATO peace implementation force in Kosovo. Over the past several weeks, non-U.S. NATO countries began a consensual deployment of national forces to Macedonia to prepare to implement a peace agreement in Kosovo, should one be signed. Approximately 10,000 non-U.S. NATO forces are now deployed to Macedonia and have been placed under NATO's operational control.

As you know, the mandate for the U.N. Preventive Deployment (UNPREDEP) expired on February 28, 1999. Approximately 400 U.S. personnel are currently stationed in Macedonia in Task Force Able Sentry (TFAS). We expect that some elements of these forces will redeploy out of the area and that others, together with certain of the enabling forces described below, will continue to maintain the current TFAS infrastructure and will begin to prepare Camp Able Sentry as a potential staging area in Macedonia for a U.S. contribution to a NATO-led implementation force in Kosovo, if it is decided to provide one. Operational control of these forces for force protection purposes only has been transferred to NATO, as has been the case for the forces of certain other nations whose forces are participating in UNPREDEP.

NATO, during the past month, decided to deploy elements of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps Headquarters (ARRC HQ) Rear Command Post to provide a command element in Macedonia and to ensure that there will be unity of command and a single NATO commander on the ground who will be in a position to allocate infrastructure, coordinate training facilities, and provide a single point of contact for liaison with the Macedonian authorities. In addition, the ARRC commander has been designated as the NATO commander responsible for protection of forces and reaction to possible threats in Macedonia. The ARRC HQ's Rear Command Post element includes approximately 30 U.S. personnel who occupy key positions on the staff, but who have not yet deployed to Macedonia to assume their roles there. Having those officers serving in their regular positions will enhance the safety of U.S. and other friendly military personnel and increase the effectiveness of the NATO presence.

Sound military planning may also call for sending a limited number of additional U.S. military personnel to Macedonia in support of ongoing operations including Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), intelligence support, surveillance and reconnaissance, command and control, and logistical support, and selected forces and equipment to deter Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) attacks on NATO personnel in Macedonia. In addition, it may become advisable to send U.S. military personnel to Macedonia as part of an enabling force in anticipation of the possible signing of a peace agreement, which remains our ultimate objective. These forces could include (besides those U.S. forces attached to the ARRC HQ), logistical support and survey elements and liaison officers, CSAR, intelligence support, surveillance and reconnaissance, command and control, as well as U.S. forces conducting rotational training at facilities in Macedonia. Their presence would not commit the United States to participating in a possible NATO-led peace implementation force; but prudent and limited preparatory activities in Macedonia would enhance the effectiveness of such a force, should we decide to participate, as well as enhance the effectiveness of NATO's air campaign and protection of the U.S. forces in TFAS that are already there. In regard to the elements of section 8115(a)(1)–(8), I am providing the following information:

1 & 2. *National Security Interests.* I hereby certify that the deployment of additional personnel to Macedonia as described above is necessary in the national security interests of the United States. These actions will preserve and protect critical infrastructure and Camp Able Sentry facilities, and will enhance the effectiveness of NATO's air campaign by ensuring U.S. forces are fully integrated into the ARRC HQ command and control structure; improving CSAR, reconnaissance and surveillance, and other capabilities to support the air operations by enhancing force protection from U.S. and other NATO personnel in Macedonia by helping deter attacks on Macedonia and NATO forces there, and by strengthening U.S. leadership in NATO.

3. *Numbers.* The number of U.S. personnel who will assume their functions in the ARRC HQ is approximately 30. At this point, no decisions have been made on numbers of personnel who would be deployed for other functions. I will ensure that the Congress is informed in a timely manner about such additional deployments described in this report if these prove necessary. If U.S. personnel were sent as part of an enabling force, the number would likely not exceed 2,000.

4. *Mission/Objectives.* The overall objective of our efforts with our allies is to maintain stability in the region and prevent a humanitarian disaster resulting from the ongoing FRY offensive against the people of Kosovo. The specific military mission of the forces to be deployed would be to enhance force protection both for NATO (including U.S. former UNPREDEP) military personnel in Macedonia and for allied fliers participating in the air operations, to contribute to the effectiveness of those operations, and to help deter FRY attacks on Macedonia and on NATO (including U.S.) forces in Macedonia. In addition, these forces will likely assist in preparations necessary for a NATO-led implementation force to be

effective, if a decision were made to deploy one, after an agreement was reached.

5. *Schedule.* At this point, it is not possible to determine how long NATO air operations will need to continue, and therefore how long the support and deterrence functions will need to be maintained. However, it is important to be clear that it is the U.S. position, shared by our allies, that NATO will continue air operations as long as necessary to meet the military objectives to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose so that the Serbian leaders understand the imperative of reversing course; to deter an even bloodier offensive against innocent civilians in Kosovo; and, if necessary, to seriously damage the Serbian military's capacity to harm the people of Kosovo.

6. *Exit Strategy.* The duration of the requirement for U.S. military presence in Macedonia will depend on the course of events, and in particular, on Belgrade's reaction to the air operations. So long as air operations continue, force protection, support for those operations, and deterrence from possible FRY acts of violence will continue to be required.

7. *Costs.* The costs of the deployments covered by this notice like other costs of the air operations will be paid initially from FY99 Defense O&M appropriations. An estimate of likely costs for these limited 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 maximize force protection for our personnel engaged in the air operations. United States forces participating in Task Force Able Sentry, as well as U.S. forces deployed to other locations in the region, are dedicated professionals serving with great pride and enthusiasm. Given the importance of the mission in Macedonia, we anticipate that U.S. forces would maintain the highest morale and effectiveness, just as they have in respect to other missions in the Balkans. Indeed, it has been our experience that personnel serving in these important and demanding positions experience higher retention rates than in other, less challenging assignments. However, we recognize that even deployments for the best of reasons increase the period 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 for other operations are mixed. On the one hand, the personnel involved gain invaluable real world experience. On the other hand, normal training programs are interrupted. The numbers of personnel covered by this report are sufficiently limited, however, that any effect on the overall readiness of our U.S. Armed Services to meet other requirements, including major theater war contingencies, will be marginal.

Finally, in accordance with sections 8115(b)(2) and (c), I have determined that it is necessary to order a Marine FAST team to Skopje, Macedonia, to protect our Embassy and U.S. persons at the

Embassy. This team will remain deployed for as long as is necessary to protect our Embassy and U.S. persons.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

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