

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a withdrawal which was referred to the Committee on Finance.

(The withdrawal received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT OF THE COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 1997—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 37

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 13, Public Law 806, 80th Congress (15 U.S.C. 714k), I transmit herewith the report of the Commodity Credit Corporation for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON,

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 15, 1999.

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE EXCHANGE STABILIZATION FUND—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 38

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; referred jointly, pursuant to 31 United States Code 5302, to the Committee on Appropriations, to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

To the Congress of the United States:

On November 9, 1998, I approved the use of the Exchange Stabilization Fund (ESF) to provide up to \$5 billion for the U.S. part of a multilateral guarantee of a credit facility for up to \$13.28 billion from the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) to the Banco Central do Brazil (Banco Central). Eighteen other central banks and monetary authorities are guaranteeing portions of the BIS credit facility. In addition, through the Bank of Japan, the Government of Japan is providing a swap facility of up to \$1.25 billion to Brazil under terms consistent with the terms of the BIS credit facility. Pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C. 5302(b), I am hereby notifying the Congress that I have determined that unique or emer-

gency circumstances require the ESF financing to be available for more than 6 months.

The BIS credit facility is part of a multilateral effort to support an International Monetary Fund (IMF) stand-by arrangement with Brazil that itself totals approximately \$18.1 billion, which is designed to help restore financial market confidence in Brazil and its currency, and to reestablish conditions for long-term sustainable growth. The IMF is providing this package through normal credit tranches and the Supplemental Reserve Facility (SRF), which provides short-term financing at significantly higher interest rates than those for credit tranche financing. Also, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank are providing up to \$9 billion in support of the international financial package for Brazil.

Since December 1998, international assistance from the IMF, the BIS credit facility, and the Bank of Japan's swap facility has provided key support for Brazil's efforts to reform its economy and resolve its financial crisis. From the IMF arrangement, Brazil has purchased approximately \$4.6 billion in December 1998 and approximately \$4.9 billion in April 1999. On December 18, 1998, the Banco Central made a first drawing of \$4.15 billion from the BIS credit facility and also drew \$390 million from the Bank of Japan's swap facility. The Banco Central made a second drawing of \$4.5 billion from the BIS credit facility and \$423.5 million from the Bank of Japan's swap facility on April 9, 1999. The ESF's "guarantee" share of each of these BIS credit facility drawings is approximately 38 percent.

Each drawing from the BIS credit facility or the Bank of Japan's swap facility matures in 6 months, with an option for additional 6-month renewals. The Banco Central must therefore repay its first drawing from the BIS and Bank of Japan facilities by June 18, 1999, unless the parties agree to the roll-over. The Banco Central has informed the BIS and the Bank of Japan that it plans to request, in early June, a roll-over of 70 percent of the first drawing from each facility, and will repay 30 percent of the first drawing from each facility.

The BIS's agreement with the Banco Central contains conditions that minimize risks to the ESF. For example, the participating central banks or the BIS may accelerate repayment if the Banco Central has failed to meet any conditions of the agreement or Brazil has failed to meet any material obligation to the IMF. The Banco Central must repay the BIS no slower than, and at least in proportion to Brazil's repayments to the IMF's SRF and to the Bank of Japan's swap facility. The Government of Brazil is guaranteeing the performance of the Banco Central's

obligations under its agreement with the BIS, and, pursuant to the agreement, Brazil must maintain its gross international reserves at a level no less than the sum of the principal amount outstanding under the BIS facility, the principal amount outstanding under Japan's swap facility, and a suitable margin. Also, the participating central banks and the BIS must approve any Banco Central request for a drawing or roll-over from the BIS credit facility.

Before the financial crisis that hit Brazil last fall, Brazil had made remarkable progress toward reforming its economy, including reducing inflation from more than 2000 percent 5 years ago to less than 3 percent in 1998, and successfully implementing an extensive privatization program. Nonetheless, its large fiscal deficit left it vulnerable during the recent period of global financial turbulence. Fiscal adjustment to address that deficit therefore formed the core of the stand-by arrangement that Brazil reached with the IMF last December.

Despite Brazil's initial success in implementing the fiscal reforms required by this stand-by arrangement, there were some setbacks in passing key legislation, and doubts emerged about the willingness of some key Brazilian states to adjust their finances. Ultimately, the government secured passage of virtually all the fiscal measures, or else took offsetting actions. However, the initial setbacks and delays eroded market confidence in December 1998 and January 1999, and pressure on Brazil's foreign exchange reserves intensified. Rather than further deplete its reserves, Brazil in mid-January first devalued and then floated its currency, the real, causing a steep decline of the real's value against the dollar. As a consequence, Brazil needed to prevent a spiral of depreciation and inflation that could have led to deep financial instability.

After the decision to float the real, and in close consultation with the IMF, Brazil developed a revised economic program for 1999–2001, which included deeper fiscal adjustments and transparent and prudent monetary policy designed to contain inflationary pressures. These adjustments will take some time to restore confidence fully. In the meantime, the strong support of the international community has been and will continue to be helpful in reassuring the markets that Brazil can restore sustainable financial stability.

Brazil's experience to date under its revised program with the IMF has been very encouraging. The exchange rate has strengthened from its lows of early March and has been relatively stable in recent weeks; inflation is significantly lower than expected and declining; inflows of private capital are resuming; and most analysts now believe that the economic downturn will be less severe than initially feared.

Brazil's success to date will make it possible for it to repay a 30 percent portion of its first (December) drawing from the BIS credit facility and the Bank of Japan swap facility. With continued economic improvement, Brazil is likely to be in a position to repay the remainder of its BIS and Bank of Japan obligations relatively soon. However, Brazil has indicated that it would be inadvisable to repay 100 percent of the first BIS and Bank of Japan disbursements at this point, given the persistence of risks and uncertainties in the global economy. The timing of this repayment must take into account the risk that using Brazilian reserves to repay both first drawings in their entirety could harm market confidence in Brazil's financial condition. This could undermine the purpose of our support: protecting financial stability in Brazil and in other emerging markets, which ultimately benefits U.S. exports and jobs. Given that the BIS and Bank of Japan facilities charge a substantial premium over the 6-month Eurodollar interest rate, the Banco Central has an incentive to repay them as soon as is prudent.

The IMF stand-by arrangement and the BIS and Bank of Japan facilities constitute a vital international response to Brazil's financial crisis, which threatens the economic welfare of Brazil's 160 million people and of other countries in the region and elsewhere in the world. Brazil's size and importance as the largest economy in Latin America mean that its financial and economic stability are matters of national interest to the United States. Brazil's industrial output is the largest in Latin America; it accounts for 45 percent of the region's gross domestic product, and its work force numbers approximately 85 million people. A failure to help Brazil deal with its financial crisis would increase the risk of financial instability in other Latin American countries and other emerging market economies. Such instability could damage U.S. exports, with serious repercussions for our workforce and our economy as a whole.

Therefore, the BIS credit facility is providing a crucial supplement to Brazil's IMF-supported program of economic and financial reform. I believe that strong and continued support from the United States, other governments, and multilateral institutions are crucial to enable Brazil to carry out its economic reform program. In these unique and emergency circumstances, it is both appropriate and necessary to continue to make ESF financing available as needed for more than 6 months to guarantee this BIS credit facility, including any other rollover or drawing that might be necessary in the future.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 15, 1999.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 1 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1400. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to improve collection and dissemination of information concerning bond prices and to improve price competition in bond markets, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 91. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for a clinic to be conducted by the United States Luge Association.

H. Con. Res. 105. Concurrent resolution authorizing the Law Enforcement Torch Run for the 1999 Special Olympics World Games to be run through the Capitol Grounds.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1400. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to improve collection and dissemination of information concerning bond prices and to improve price competition in bond markets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

The following concurrent resolution was read and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 91. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for a clinic to be conducted by the United States Luge Association; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. THOMAS (for himself and Mr. ENZI):

S. 1221. A bill for the relief of Ashley Ross Fuller; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. DASCHLE, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 1222. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to provide trade adjustment assistance to farmers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 1223. A bill to provide for public library construction and technology enhancement; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. DASCHLE:

S. Res. 123. A resolution to authorize representation of Members of the Senate in the

case of Candis Ray v. John Edwards, et al; considered and agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. DASCHLE, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 1222. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to provide trade adjustment assistance to farmers; to the Committee on Finance.

THE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE FOR FARMERS ACT

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a bill that would amend the Trade Act of 1974 to make farmers eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) similar to that provided to workers in other industries who suffer when there is an increase in imported products. This bill would provide equitable treatment for farmers when imports affect the prices of the commodities they grow.

When imports cause layoffs in manufacturing industries, workers are eligible for TAA. However, when imports cause agricultural commodity prices to drop, farmers lose income but they don't lose their jobs. That means they generally don't get benefits from TAA. Let me explain why.

Farmers typically do not earn a salary check. Farmers get paid for the crops or livestock that they grow. When commodity prices are low, they check the farmers get for all the hard work of growing crops or livestock for a whole year may be so low that they cannot cover family expenses. In some cases, the payment they get for selling their crops or livestock is so low that they cannot even cover the costs necessary to produce the commodity (such as feed, seed, fertilizer, etc.), so the farmers lose money for the year. Low prices resulting from imports directly reduce farmers' incomes, but because farmers do not actually lose their jobs, they do not qualify for the TAA benefit.

For example, farmers in my state are experiencing record low prices that result, in part, from a flood of imports of wheat, barley and livestock from Canada. These imports cost North Dakota farmers hundreds of millions of dollars in lost income. But North Dakota farmers have not been able to take advantage of the TAA program. The bill that I am introducing today would provide some equity by ensuring that farmers whose income was affected by imports would be eligible for TAA benefits just like other workers.

Most of us would agree that trade is extremely important to our overall economy. International trade allows Americans to sell U.S.-made products to world markets, rather than just to those who live in this country. Trade also allows American to buy products that the rest of the world produces.