AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on United States Assistance for Liberia and Other Refugee Relief Efforts

January 9, 1991

The President has taken two important steps which underline our concern for the beleaguered people of Liberia and our desire that there should be a peaceful settlement to the problems of that country.

On January 2, the President approved release of $6.0 million from the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund (ERMA) to meet urgent humanitarian needs of Liberian refugees. This is in addition to earlier U.S. contributions of $73 million for humanitarian assistance programs for Liberian conflict victims. Of this amount, $63.9 [million] was in food assistance and $9.1 million was in cash contributions and relief supplies to international and private voluntary organizations for their relief efforts in the region.

On January 7, the President approved a Department of State request to provide the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) with $2.8 million in economic support funds for its peacekeeping and humanitarian relief activities in Liberia. This assistance will be limited to nonlethal support for ECOWAS peacekeeping operations and for related humanitarian relief activities in Liberia.

Our contribution to ECOWAS reflects United States support for ECOWAS objectives in Liberia—a ceasefire, the formation of an interim administration, and the holding of free and democratic elections. These objectives offer the best formula for a peaceful solution to the conflict. The ECOWAS intervention in Liberia represents an encouraging example of African states finding African solutions to African problems. We call on the international donor community to continue its support for humanitarian relief assistance in Liberia and to demonstrate its solidarity with ECOWAS efforts to bring peace to Liberia.

The President also approved use of Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund money as follows: $3.0 million for refugee and migration needs in response to the Persian Gulf crisis; $2.5 million to meet the emergency needs of Sudanese refugees; and $600,000 for emergency assistance programs in Central Africa for new Chadian and Rwandan refugees and those uprooted by the current conflict in Rwanda.

Note: Presidential Determination No. 91–12 of January 2 was printed in the "Federal Register" of January 16. Presidential Determination No. 91–14 of January 7 was printed in the "Federal Register" of January 28.

Nomination of Bernadine P. Healy To Be Director of the National Institutes of Health

January 9, 1991

The President today announced his intention to nominate Bernadine P. Healy, of Ohio, to be Director of the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services. She would succeed James B. Wyngaarden.

Since 1985 Dr. Healy has served as chairman of the research institute at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, OH. Prior to this Dr. Healy served as Deputy Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy in Washington, DC, 1984–1985. Dr. Healy served as director of the coronary care unit at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, MD, 1977–1984, and as a member of the active staff in medicine and pathology at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, 1976–1985. From 1974 to 1984, Dr. Healy served with the Johns Hopkins Uni-

versity School of Medicine in several capacities: professor of medicine, associate professor of pathology, assistant dean for postdoctoral programs and faculty development, associate professor of medicine, assistant professor of medicine and pathology, fellow in the department of pathology, and as a fellow in the cardiovascular division of the department of medicine. In addition, Dr. Healy served as a staff fellow in the section of pathology in the National Heart and Lung Institute at the National Institutes of Health, 1972–1974.

Dr. Healy graduated from Vassar College (A.B., 1965) and Harvard Medical School (M.D., 1970). She was born August 22, 1944, in New York, NY. Dr. Healy is married, has two children, and resides in Gates Mills, OH.

Open Letter to College Students on the Persian Gulf Crisis

January 9, 1991

If armed men invaded a home in this country, killed those in their way, stole what they wanted and then announced the house was now theirs—no one would hesitate about what must be done. And that is why we cannot hesitate about what must be done halfway around the world: in Kuwait.

There is much in the modern world that is subject to doubts or questions—washed in shades of gray. But not the brutal aggression of Saddam Hussein against a peaceful, sovereign nation and its people. It's black and white. The facts are clear. The choice unambiguous—right vs. wrong.

The terror Saddam Hussein has imposed upon Kuwait violates every principle of human decency. Listen to what Amnesty International has documented. "Widespread abuses of human rights have been perpetrated by Iraqi forces . . . arbitrary arrest and detention without trial of thousands . . . widespread torture . . . imposition of the death penalty and the extrajudicial execution of hundreds of unarmed civilians, including children."

Including children—there's no horror that could make this a more obvious conflict of good vs. evil. The man who used chemical warfare on his own people—once again including children—now oversees public hangings of dissenters. And daily his troops commit atrocities against Kuwaiti citizens.

This brutality has reverberated throughout the entire world. If we do not follow the dictates of our inner moral compass and stand up for human life, then his lawlessness will threaten the peace and democracy of the emerging new world order we now see: this long dreamed-of vision we've all worked toward for so long. A year after the joyous dawn of freedom's light in eastern Europe, a dark evil has descended in another part of the world. But we have the chance—and we have the obligation—to stop ruthless aggression.

I have been in war. I have known the terror of combat. And I tell you this with all my heart: I don't want there to be war ever again. I am determined to do absolutely everything possible in the search for a peaceful resolution to this crisis—but only if the peace is genuine, if it rests on principle, not appeasement.

But while we search for that answer, in the Gulf young men and women are putting their own lives on hold in order to stand for peace in our world and for the essential value of human life itself. Many are younger than my own children. Your age, most of them—doing tough duty for something they believe in.

Let me tell you about one of the soldiers over there, Sfc. Terry Hatfield, a young man from Georgia. He sent me a Christmas card. And this is what he wrote: "Mr. President, I just wanted you to know my soldiers and I are ready to do whatever mission you decide. Freedom as we know and enjoy has been taken away from another country and must be restored. Although we are separated from family, friends, loved ones, we will