

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Use of United States Armed Forces in International Operations

October 18, 1993

Dear Mr. Leader:

I am writing to express grave concern about a number of amendments that may be offered to H.R. 3116, the Defense Appropriations bill for FY 94, regarding Haiti, Bosnia and the use of United States armed forces in international operations.

I am fundamentally opposed to amendments which improperly limit my ability to perform my constitutional duties as Commander-in-Chief, which may well have unconstitutional provisions, and which if adopted, could weaken the confidence of our allies in the United States. Such amendments would provide encouragement to aggressors and repressive rulers around the world who seek to operate without fear of reprisal.

America's adversaries and allies must know with certainty that the United States can respond decisively to protect the lives of Americans and to address crises that challenge American interests. Successive administrations have found it critical in world affairs to be able to state that no option has been ruled out.

I respect and acknowledge the importance of cooperation between the executive and legislative branches. There will inevitably be give and take between the executive branch and Congress as we work to redefine our role in the post Cold War world. But it is wrong and even dangerous to allow the questions of the moment to undercut the strength of our national security policies and to produce a fundamental shift in the proper relationship between our two branches of government.

The amendment regarding command and control of U.S. forces, which already has been introduced, would insert Congress into the detailed execution of military contingency planning in an unprecedented manner. The amendment would make it unreasonably difficult for me or any President to operate militarily with other nations when it is in our interest to do so—and as

we have done effectively for half a century through NATO. It could lead to an all-or-nothing approach that causes the United States to shoulder the entire burden of a conflict even when a multinational approach would be most effective from the standpoint of military planning, burden sharing and other American national interests.

With regard to potential amendments on Haiti, let me caution against action that could aggravate that nation's violent conflict and undermine American interests. The situation on the ground in Haiti is highly unstable. Limiting my ability to act—or even creating the perception of such a limitation—could signal a green light to Haiti's military and police authorities in their brutal efforts to resist a return of democracy, could limit my ability to protect the more than 1,000 Americans currently in Haiti, and could trigger another mass exodus of Haitians, at great risk to their lives and great potential cost and disruption to our nation and others.

With regard to potential Bosnia amendments, our nation has worked with NATO to prepare to help implement a fair and enforceable peace settlement. This amendment thus could undermine our relationship with our NATO allies and frustrate the negotiation of an end to the aggression and ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. As you know, I have placed strict conditions on any U.S. involvement in Bosnia with which I believe most members of Congress would agree.

I am committed to full consultation with Congress on our foreign policy. As I have clearly stated for the record, I welcomed congressional authorization for U.S. operations in Somalia and would welcome similar action regarding U.S. efforts in Bosnia, should that become necessary. Further, as this Administration has done and is continuing to do, we will consult with and keep Congress fully informed on these and other issues that affect American national security.

I would welcome an opportunity to engage you and others in the bi-partisan leadership in a full and constructive dialogue about the processes of executive-legislative relations regarding America's engagement in a changed world. But amendments such as these are not the right way for the American government to decide how

we act in the world, and I urge the Senate to reject them.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to George Mitchell, Senate majority leader, and Bob Dole, Senate Republican leader.

Statement on German Ratification of the Maastricht Treaty *October 18, 1993*

With the completion of Germany's ratification process last week, the way has been cleared for the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty. The Maastricht Treaty marks a milestone in the progress of the European Community toward

political and economic union, a goal which the United States strongly supports and encourages.

On behalf of the American people, I offer congratulations to the Community on this occasion and reiterate our commitment to a strong and vibrant transatlantic partnership.

Appointment for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations *October 18, 1993*

The President announced his intention to appoint 10 members to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) today. Among them is former Mississippi Governor William Winter, who will serve as ACIR's Chair.

The Commission was created during the 1970's to foster better relations between all levels of government. Its primary functions are to provide an intergovernmental problem-solving forum, policy recommendations for intergovernmental cooperation, identification of emerging issues, information dissemination, and technical and international assistance.

"As a former Governor and State attorney general, I am committed to improving cooperation between governments at all levels," said the President. "When people want something done by the government, they don't care whether it gets done by the county, by the State, or by the Federal Government, they just want the job done. The talented, experienced, and diverse group of people that I am appointing to this commission, with Governor Winter taking

the lead, will work to find ways to help public servants at all levels achieve that goal."

The commissioners being appointed are:

William F. Winter, former Governor of Mississippi

Carol Browner, EPA Administrator

Howard Dean, Governor of Vermont

Marcia L. Hale, White House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs

Arthur Hamilton, minority leader, Arizona House of Representatives

Michael Leavitt, Governor of Utah

Bob Miller, Governor of Nevada

Gloria Molina, member, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

Richard Riley, Secretary of Education

John Stroger, commissioner of Cook County, IL, and immediate past president of the National Association of Counties

NOTE: Biographies of the appointees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.