

hired to do with an adversary breathing down your neck, questioning your every move, waiting for your next misstep. Trent Lott ought to just cut it out. [Laughter]

Now, many of you have been writing about my so-called stealth campaign for reelection. We hit our first major setback this week when the RNC broke the code on our press releases. But I want you to know I'm holding firm to my strategy, and my strategy is working. In fact, according to the New York Times, my Vice President is closer to formally announcing his candidacy than I am. [Laughter]

By the way, I want to congratulate the Times on that "Al Gore Wants to be President" scoop. [Laughter] Pulitzer's in the bag. [Laughter]

Some of you have been asking for 6 months now, when is this announcement speech? In keeping with the stealth campaign strategy, Mike McCurry had this idea that instead of the traditional announcement speech, tonight I should just give an off-the-record announcement on what he calls—he calls—"psych background." [Laughter] As if we didn't have enough trouble. So that way I could give you some insight into my truly secret, private thoughts about this election.

So, if we can all agree on the ground rules—[laughter]—I'd like to give you a sense of the musings of my inner candidate. [Laughter] You can attribute these remarks to a source inside the President's suit. [Laughter]

Now, I had occasion to give this topic considerable thought last weekend as I was going through the Sunday classified ads. [Laughter] Gosh, there must have been 8½ million listings, all of them at good wages. [Laughter] But I couldn't find a single job I'd prefer to this one.

So, in lieu of a formal announcement speech, you can report on psych background that Bill Clinton is under the strong impression that America is a great country, and that we are living in an age of possibility. Bill Clinton suspects that America is moving in the right direction, but we have to keep working together to find common ground. Bill Clinton is inclined to think he can help us meet America's challenges with just one more term.

Now, I'd like to go back on the record to say thank you and good night. [Laughter] So you may report that Bill Clinton said, "Thank you, and good night."

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:17 p.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Carl Leubersdorf, outgoing president, and Terence Hunt, incoming president, White House Correspondents Association; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Ralph Reed, Jr., executive director, Christian Coalition; Howard Fineman, columnist, Newsweek magazine; comedian Al Franken; Leon E. Panetta, White House Chief of Staff; and political consultant Mary Matalin.

Statement on Violent Crime

May 5, 1996

For 5 straight years before I took office, violent crime increased in America. Because of our tough and smart decisions to put more cops

on the street and get kids, guns, and drugs off the street, we are now beginning to reverse the trend in violent crime.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

May 4, 1996

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

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public

Law 102-1), and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance

with the resolutions adopted by the U.N. Security Council.

The Government of Iraq remains far from compliance with its obligations under applicable Security Council resolutions. The U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) Chairman Ekeus remarked recently in Washington that Iraq may be hiding up to 16 SCUD missiles, possibly armed with biological warheads. Iraqi officials blatantly violated Security Council resolutions in March when they repeatedly obstructed UNSCOM officials attempting to search buildings in Baghdad for weapons of mass destruction material. Iraqi officials may have removed or destroyed incriminating material during the delay. In a report released on April 11, UNSCOM expressed its concern that Iraq may still be engaged in weapons activities prohibited under Security Council Resolution 687. Iraq continues to evade its duty to return looted Kuwaiti property and help account for hundreds of civilians who disappeared in Kuwait during the occupation. Iraq still provides refuge for known terrorists. The Security Council took all these factors into account in maintaining sanctions without change at its March 8 review.

Saddam Hussein's unwillingness to comply with the norms of international behavior extends to his regime's continuing threat to Iraqi citizens throughout the country. We and our coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq as part of our efforts to deter Iraq's use of aircraft against its population. Iraq's repression of its southern Shi'a population continues, with policies aimed at destroying the Marsh Arabs' way of life as well as the ecology of the southern marshes.

The human rights situation throughout Iraq remains unchanged. Saddam Hussein shows no signs of complying with U.N. Security Council Resolution 683, which demands that Iraq cease the repression of its own people. The U.N. Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) recently adopted a strongly-worded resolution condemning "massive and extremely grave violations of human rights" carried out by the Government of Iraq. The resolution draws heavily from the report of the Special Rapporteur of the UNHRC. The resolution also continues the mandate of the Special Rapporteur. Parliamentary elections held in late March were as much a farce as last November's "Referendum" on Saddam Hussein's rule. Candidates were required to pledge their loyalty to Saddam Hus-

sein and his Ba'ath Party in order to be eligible. All legitimate international observers and Iraqi opposition groups rejected the legitimacy of both the process and the outcome of the elections.

The United States, together with international and humanitarian relief organizations, continues to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of northern Iraq. Security conditions in northern Iraq remain tenuous at best, with Iranian and PKK activity adding to the ever-present threat from Baghdad. We continue to facilitate talks between the two major Kurdish groups in an effort to help them resolve their differences and increase stability in northern Iraq.

Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 986, Iraq is authorized to sell a prescribed amount of oil for the purchase of humanitarian supplies. Discussions between U.N. and Iraqi officials on implementation of the Resolution continued in April. It remains unclear whether Iraq is serious about implementing the Resolution as drafted. We would like to see the provisions of Resolution 986 implemented, but only with the safeguards envisioned in the Resolution to ensure that Saddam Hussein cannot abuse the Resolution's humanitarian purposes.

In October 1994, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 949, which demanded that Iraq not utilize its forces to threaten its neighbors or U.N. operations in Iraq and that it not redeploy or enhance its military capacity in southern Iraq. In view of Saddam Hussein's proven record of unreliability, we have felt it prudent to maintain a significant U.S. force presence in the region in order to maintain the capability to respond rapidly to possible Iraqi aggression or threats against its neighbors. We recently deployed an air expeditionary force to Jordan as part of that presence.

Since my last report, the Multinational Interception Force (MIF), conducting the maritime enforcement of sanctions against Iraq, has encountered renewed attempts to smuggle commodities from Iraq. During March and April, MIF vessels intercepted vessels carrying Iraqi petroleum products worth an estimated \$1.1 million and Iraqi dates worth an estimated \$1.4 million. The expeditious acceptance of these diverted vessels by Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates has greatly contributed to the deterrent effect of MIF sanctions enforcement operations. It has also enhanced enforcement efforts by allowing MIF vessels es-

corting the diverted vessels to return to patrol operations.

We continue to achieve a significant foreign policy objective in maintaining multinational participation in the MIF. Ships from the United States, the United Kingdom, and The Netherlands participated in MIF operations from February through April of this year. Additionally, we have received firm commitments or serious proposals from Australia, New Zealand, Belgium and Canada to send frigates to participate in the MIF in late 1996 and early 1997.

Other countries have made different but important contributions toward enforcing the U.N. sanctions against Iraq. For example, Honduras recently deflagged four vessels and Belize deflagged three vessels. India has initiated "registry deletion" proceedings against vessels operating under its flag, and the United Arab Emirates is currently considering the deflagging of a vessel diverted twice for violating the sanctions.

We continue to provide briefings to the U.N. Iraq Sanctions Committee as part of our close coordination and consultation with the U.N. and with Security Council members on the issue of maritime Iraq sanctions enforcement. Evidence was provided concerning continued Iranian complicity in the export of Iraqi petroleum products through the provision to vessels violating the sanctions of false paperwork, the use of Iranian territorial waters, and warnings regarding the location of MIF vessels. Evidence was also provided concerning the acceptance of protection fees by Iranian officials in return for this assistance.

Security Council Resolution 687 affirmed that Iraq is liable under international law for compensating the victims of its unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. Although the U.N.

Compensation Commission (UNCC) has approved some 790,000 individual awards worth about \$3.0 billion against Iraq, it has been able to authorize the payment of only the fixed awards for serious personal injury or death (aggregating approximately \$13.5 million). The remainder of the awards cannot be paid because the U.N. Compensation Fund lacks sufficient funding. The awards are supposed to be financed by a deduction from the proceeds of future Iraqi oil sales, once such sales are permitted to resume. However, Iraq's refusal to meet the Security Council's terms for a limited resumption of oil sales has left the UNCC without adequate financial resources to pay the awards. Iraq's intransigence means that the victims of its aggression remain uncompensated for their losses 5 years after the end of the Gulf War.

To conclude, Iraq remains a serious threat to regional peace and stability. I remain determined that Iraq comply fully with all its obligations under the U.N. Security Council Resolutions. My Administration will continue to oppose any relaxation of sanctions until Iraq demonstrates peaceful intentions through its overall compliance with all of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 6.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Legislation To Promote Adoption

May 6, 1996

Dear _____:

I am writing to express my strong support for The Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996. Today, families seeking to adopt children face significant barriers, including high

adoption costs, complex regulations, and outdated assumptions. I am committed to breaking down these barriers and making adoption easier. Promoting adoption is one of the most important things we can do to strengthen American