

is to provide a continued military presence in order to deter renewed hostilities, stabilize and consolidate the peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and contribute to a secure environment to facilitate the civilian implementation process to which SFOR provides broad support within its means and capabilities.

The U.S. force contribution to SFOR in Bosnia is approximately 6,200. In the first half of 1999, all NATO nations and 19 others, including Russia and Ukraine, have provided military personnel or other support to SFOR. Most U.S. forces are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered around the city of Tuzla. In addition, approximately 2,200 U.S. military personnel are deployed to Hungary, Croatia, and Italy in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR. The U.S. forces continue to support SFOR in efforts to apprehend persons indicted for war crimes. In the last 6 months, U.S. forces have sustained no fatalities.

The United Nations mandate for the U.N. Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia expired on February 28, 1999, and it was not renewed or extended. The U.S. military contingent that had been deployed to Macedonia as part of UNPREDEP remained in Macedonia under U.S. operational control in anticipation of providing logistical support to U.S. forces that

could support future NATO operations in the area. That contingent subsequently redeployed and was replaced with other U.S. forces more suited for this possible support mission. The new contingent has been incorporated into the U.S. national support element operating in Macedonia that, as I reported in my letter to the Congress of June 12, 1999, is supporting the International Security Presence in Kosovo (KFOR).

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive, and in accordance with various statutory authorities. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in Bosnia and other states in the region. I will continue to consult closely with the Congress regarding our efforts to foster peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Education Legislation *July 19, 1999*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

Nothing will do more to prepare all of our people to succeed in the 21st century than strengthening our public schools. That's why I am deeply concerned about the legislation that the House is preparing to consider that undermines a bipartisan commitment to reduce class size in the early grades across the nation. If the Congress sends me H.R. 1995 in its current form, I will veto it in order to protect our nation's commitment to smaller classes and better schools.

Last year, Congress came together across party lines to make a down payment to begin hiring 100,000 well-prepared teachers to reduce class size to a nationwide average of 18. Earlier

this month, the Education Department released \$1.2 billion in grants to help states and local school districts begin hiring the first 30,000 well-trained teachers for the new school year. Now is the time to work together to keep our bipartisan commitment on class size, not walk away from it.

After all, research confirms what parents and teachers understand: smaller classes with well-prepared teachers have a lasting impact on student achievement, with the greatest benefits for lower achieving, minority, and poor children.

July 19 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Earlier this year, I sent to Congress my proposal to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that would help all students reach high standards by strengthening accountability, improving teacher quality, and building on our progress to reduce class size in the early grades all across America. Regrettably, in its current form, H.R. 1995 abolishes a dedicated funding stream for class size reduction and replaces it with a block grant that fails to guarantee that any funding will be used for hiring new teachers to reduce class size. It eliminates the focus on early grades where smaller classes make the most difference and help children learn to read and master the basics. Moreover, the block grant could be used simply to replace state or local funding instead of increasing overall investment in our public schools. I urge the House to approve a substitute measure

that I understand will be offered by Representative Martinez, that would improve teacher quality and maintain our commitment to the class-size reduction effort begun last year.

Last year we made a promise to America's children to provide smaller classes with well-prepared teachers. I urge Congress to keep that promise by enacting legislation that improves our nation's schools by ensuring greater investments in education, improved teacher quality, and smaller classes all across America.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard A. Gephardt, minority leader, House of Representatives.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

July 19, 1999

Thank you very much. John, that was so nice. I hope somebody got a tape of it. [Laughter] Next time somebody gets mad at me, I'll just turn the tape on and play it. [Laughter]

I want to thank you and all your officers and Governor Romer and all the people from the DNC here. I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to some people who are here, without whom I could not do my job: my political director, Minyon Moore; and Karen Tramontano, who's done so much work with all of you. I thank them for being here. And someone who's here who spends more time with you than me now, but without whom I would not be here, my good friend Harold Ickes. And Janice Enright, who's also here, thank you very much.

And I'm delighted to see all of you, but I'm especially glad tonight to see emerging from his own rather unique diet control plan, Gerry McEntee—[laughter]—thank you for coming back to us tonight. Thank you. I told him how good he looked, and he said, "I don't recommend it to anybody." [Laughter]

Let me say the most important thing I can say to you is thanks. Thank you for being so good to me and to Al Gore, to Hillary, to Tip-

per, to our entire administration. We are very grateful to you. And thank you for fighting not only for your own members, but for the interests of Americans everywhere who are not fortunate enough to belong to an organized group who can give them voice.

I sat down 3 or 4 years ago—I wish I had done it again tonight before I came here—just one day I had a little time in my office, and I wrote down the list of all the things that the labor movement was fighting for, with me and the Congress. And only about half of them directly affected your members. Most of our members wouldn't benefit from an increase in the minimum wage. Most of your members even had family and medical leave. Most of your members had the health care protections you were trying to get for other people. And I wish that more Americans knew how much time and effort and money you spend doing things because you believe that you'll be better off if the rest of America is better off.

And I guess—I was in the home of a very wealthy man in Florida a couple of days ago—well, what's today—Monday—4 or 5 days ago—who said that he had stayed a Democrat all these years because he really thought he'd be