

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus August 3, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period April 1–May 31, 2000. The previous submission covered events during February and March 2000.

Following President Clerides' surgery in early May, the United Nations rescheduled the recommencement of Cyprus talks for July 5 in Geneva. Despite this delay, U.S. officials remained actively engaged in efforts to bring about a comprehensive Cyprus settlement based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright underscored the United States commitment to a Cyprus solution

with her Greek and Turkish counterparts in early May.

Special Presidential Emissary Alfred H. Moses, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas G. Weston, and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald K. Bandler reinforced these messages with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leadership and urged all parties to support positive movement in the United Nations-sponsored talks.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 4.

Statement Announcing an Upcoming Visit and Further Assistance to Colombia

August 4, 2000

I am pleased to announce I will travel on August 30 to Colombia to meet with President Andres Pastrana and to personally underscore America's support for Colombia's efforts to seek peace, fight illicit drugs, build its economy, and deepen democracy. I am delighted that Speaker Dennis Hastert and Senator Joe Biden, two longtime champions of peace and democracy in Colombia, will join me on the trip.

Colombia's success is profoundly in the interest of the United States. A peaceful, democratic, and economically prosperous Colombia will help to promote democracy and stability throughout the hemisphere.

I have also signed a Presidential decision directive ordering, as a matter of national priority, an intensified effort to aid the Colombian Government in implementing Plan Colombia—President Pastrana's bold plan to build a better future for his country.

The Presidential decision directive complements and supports the \$1.3 billion assistance package that I requested from Congress, and that Democrats and Republicans passed in a bipartisan spirit last month. The cornerstone of our Colombia initiative, this supplemental includes a tenfold increase in U.S. funds to promote good government, judicial reform, human rights protection, and economic development in Colombia. It will help Colombia strengthen its democracy while helping the Government staunch the flow of drugs to our shores.

This directive, along with the sharp increase in funding from Congress, will intensify our efforts to help the Colombian Government implement its comprehensive national strategy. It is the right way to advance America's interests in the region, and I am proud of the bipartisan effort that has made it possible.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Nantucket, Massachusetts August 4, 2000

The President. When Smith started that story I didn't know where it was going. [Laughter] I thought he was going to say he called a surgeon or something.

Let me say, first of all, I am delighted to be back here. I had a wonderful time last year, and Hillary and I came back. Chelsea came with us this year. Just took a tour of Nantucket, and it's a beautiful place. And I want to thank all of you for coming out here tonight to help.

You know, we just finished the Republican Convention, and now it's our turn. And one thing that we apparently agree on—they did agree that the country was in good shape. [Laughter] And I appreciated that act of uncommon generosity on their part. [Laughter] We disagree on how it happened—[laughter]—and on what to do with it. I say that—I like to hear you laugh. I like to hear them laugh more. [Laughter] I mean, we need to lighten up here. But on the other hand, we need to be more serious about the election.

I actually think this is a great opportunity for the American people because we don't have to say bad things about our opponents as people. And if I have anything to do with it, the Democrats won't do that. I don't like it. I've never liked it, and we don't need it. All we need to do is to give the American people the chance to have an honest debate over the issues, what are the differences and what are the consequences of the election.

But if I could just say three or four things. First, I am profoundly grateful for the chance that I've had to serve. It's been a joy. Even the bad days were good, and the fights were worth making—if I had to fight it all again, I'd do it all again. I loved it.

Audience member. Thank you.

The President. And secondly, when we ran in '92, we had a very clear strategy. I didn't have any idea if it would work or not. I mean, when I started, the incumbent President was at 70-something percent approval, but the country was not in good shape. And so I actually laid out to the American people in great detail what it was I would try to do if I were fortunate enough to be elected.

And I tried to make it a campaign of ideas, committed to change, but change rooted in endless American values, opportunity for everybody who is responsible, and a community in which all Americans can be a part. And it's worked pretty well. I mean, we voted in '93 to get rid of the deficit, and the lower interest rates led to a boom in the stock market and lower interest rates and getting rid of the—and more jobs, and you know the rest. It's worked pretty well.

Last year I couldn't say this, but now we've had the longest economic expansion in our history and over 22 million new jobs. So if it worked, and you have evidence, then the question is, which course is more likely to keep this going and to spread the benefits of the recovery to the people in places who still aren't part of it?

When I became President, the crime rate was going up. Now it's gone down for 7 years. We put 100,000 police on the street. We took assault weapons off the street. We passed the Brady background check law, and it plainly had a big impact on the crime rate. And so if there's a difference in crime policy, you have to decide, since America is nowhere near safe enough, which strategy is more likely to keep the crime rate coming down.

When we tried to do welfare reform, I had to veto a couple of bills first, but then we said, "Okay, able-bodied people ought to go to work, but the kids ought to be able to keep their guarantee of medical care and nutrition." And the welfare rolls have been cut in half, and all the horror stories that some people predicted haven't materialized because we went out of our way to give people, that we were requiring to work, the education, the transportation, and the support to be good parents so that it would work. And so you have to decide what you think is best for low-income people and how to empower them to go to work.

The same is true in health care; the same is true in the environment. Somebody came up to me tonight and asked me to sign a picture of the Grand Canyon, and I was saying we just set aside another million acres around the Grand Canyon to protect the watershed. And Al Gore