

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Ordering the Selected Reserve of the Armed Forces to Active Duty

September 15, 1994

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

I have today, pursuant to section 673b of title 10, United States Code, authorized the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Transportation with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service within the Department of the Navy, to order to active duty any units, and any individual members not assigned to a unit organized to serve as a unit, of the Selected Reserve. The deployment of United States forces to conduct operational missions to restore the civilian government in Haiti necessitates this action.

A copy of the Executive order implementing this action is attached.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Address to the Nation on Haiti

September 15, 1994

My fellow Americans, tonight I want to speak with you about why the United States is leading the international effort to restore democratic government in Haiti. Haiti's dictators, led by General Raoul Cédras, control the most violent regime in our hemisphere. For 3 years, they have rejected every peaceful solution that the international community has proposed. They have broken an agreement that they made to give up power. They have brutalized their people and destroyed their economy, and for 3 years we and other nations have worked exhaustively to find a diplomatic solution, only to have the dictators reject each one.

Now the United States must protect our interests, to stop the brutal atrocities that threaten tens of thousands of Haitians, to secure our borders and to preserve stability and promote democracy in our hemisphere and to uphold the reliability of the commitments

we make and the commitments others make to us.

Earlier today, I ordered Secretary of Defense Perry to call up the military reserve personnel necessary to support United States troops in any action we might undertake in Haiti. I have also ordered two aircraft carriers, U.S.S. *Eisenhower* and the U.S.S. *America* into the region. I issued these orders after giving full consideration to what is at stake. The message of the United States to the Haitian dictators is clear: Your time is up. Leave now, or we will force you from power.

I want the American people to understand the background of the situation in Haiti, how what has happened there affects our national security interests and why I believe we must act now. Nearly 200 years ago, the Haitian people rose up out of slavery and declared their independence. Unfortunately, the promise of liberty was quickly snuffed out, and ever since, Haiti has known more suffering and repression than freedom. In our time, as democracy has spread throughout our hemisphere, Haiti has been left behind.

Then, just 4 years ago, the Haitian people held the first free and fair elections since their independence. They elected a parliament and a new President, Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a Catholic priest who received almost 70 percent of the vote. But 8 months later, Haitian dreams of democracy became a nightmare of bloodshed.

General Raoul Cédras led a military coup that overthrew President Aristide, the man who had appointed Cédras to lead the army. Resisters were beaten and murdered. The dictators launched a horrible intimidation campaign of rape, torture, and mutilation. People starved; children died; thousands of Haitians fled their country, heading to the United States across dangerous seas. At that time, President Bush declared the situation posed, and I quote, "an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States."

Cédras and his armed thugs have conducted a reign of terror, executing children, raping women, killing priests. As the dictators have grown more desperate, the atrocities have grown ever more brutal. Recent news reports have documented the slaying