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Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bosnia

June 21, 1996

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

In my report to the Congress of December 21, 1995, I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Implementation Force (IFOR). I am providing this follow-up report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

We and other countries are working in concert to encourage the parties to fulfill their commitments under the peace agreement and to usher in a new era of cooperation. In accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1031 and the North Atlantic Council decision of December 16, 1995, IFOR continues to carry out its mission to monitor and ensure compliance by all parties with the military aspects of the peace agreement initialed in Dayton and formally signed in Paris on December 14, 1995. Consistent with the accomplishment of its principal task, IFOR is also assisting various aspects of civilian implementation, including elections support, support to the International Criminal Tribunal, and the facilitation of freedom of movement of civilian persons. NATO has also agreed and IFOR stands ready to provide emergency support to the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES). One year ago, war raged throughout Bosnia. Today, the killing has ended and peace is taking hold.

Approximately 17,000 U.S. military personnel remain deployed in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina under NATO operational command and control as part of a total IFOR contingent of about 60,000. Most of these U.S. personnel are assigned to a sector surrounding Tuzla. In addition, approximately 5,500 U.S. military personnel are deployed in Hungary, Croatia, Italy, and other states in the region in order to provide logistical and other support to IFOR. These personnel remain under U.S. command and control and rules of engagement.

Many of the U.S. forces participating in IFOR are from U.S. Army forces who are stationed in Germany. Other participating U.S. forces include special operations forces, airfield operations support forces, air forces, and reserve personnel. An amphibious force is normally in reserve in the Mediterranean Sea, and a carrier battle group remains available to provide support for IFOR's air operations.

Thus far, U.S. forces have sustained one fatality, which occurred when a soldier was killed by a mine. One soldier was also slightly wounded by sniper fire in an isolated incident, one soldier was wounded after interrupting an attempted break-in at a storage facility, and several were injured, one seriously, when their vehicle struck a mine. Several other deaths have occurred because of accidents. The IFOR's mission for 1 year ends in December 1996, at which time it will begin withdrawal. At present, it is our intention that IFOR will complete the withdrawal of all troops in the weeks after December 20, 1996, on a schedule set by NATO commanders consistent with the safety of troops and the logistical requirements for an orderly withdrawal.

A U.S. Army contingent remains deployed in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as part of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). This U.N. peacekeeping force observes and monitors conditions along the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, effectively contributing to the stability of the region. Several U.S. Army support helicopters are also deployed to provide support to U.S. forces and UNPREDEP as required. Most of the approximately 500 U.S. soldiers participating in these missions are assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 63rd Armor, 1st Infantry Division. A small contingent of U.S. military personnel is also serving in Croatia in direct support of the UNTAES Transitional Administrator.

The U.S. naval forces continued, until recently, to assist in enforcing the U.N.-mandated arms embargo and economic sanctions

as part of NATO's participation in Operation "SHARP Guard." Since the arms embargo has been terminated and economic sanctions have been suspended, U.S. naval activities in support of Operation SHARP Guard have ceased. Operation SHARP Guard, however, will not be terminated until economic sanctions are terminated and U.S. naval forces will remain on call to provide assistance again should economic sanctions be reimposed.

It is in the U.S. national interest to help bring peace to Bosnia. Through American leadership and in conjunction with our NATO allies and other countries, we have seen real progress toward sustainable peace in Bosnia. We have also made it clear to the former warring parties that it is they who are ultimately responsible for implementing the peace agreement.

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 the former Yugoslavia. 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 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 June 24.

Message to the Congress on Trade With China

June 23, 1996

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by Section 902(b)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (P.L. 101–246) ("the Act"), and as President of the United States, I hereby report to Congress that it is in the national interest of the United States to terminate the suspensions under section 902(a) of the Act with respect to the issuance of licenses for defense article exports to the People's Republic of China and the export of U.S.-origin satellites, insofar as such restrictions pertain to the Hughes Asia Pacific Mobile Telecommunications project. License requirements remain in place for these exports and require review and approval on a case-by-case basis by the United States Government.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 23, 1996.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 24.

Remarks to the Family Re-Union V Conference in Nashville, Tennessee

June 24, 1996

Thank you very much. Well, Mr. Vice President, I kind of hate to talk, that panel was so good. I sort of—I think they were the keynote, and I'll just try to finish it with a grace note.

I'd like to begin by thanking the Vice President and Tipper for showing this consistent commitment to the American family. I mean, it's one thing to have one of these conferences, but to have one every year and have each one be better than the last and to be able to demonstrate to the American people that we are building on it and actually doing something with it—I mean, after that conference last year, I left here with a renewed commitment to make sure that when we passed the telecommunications bill it had the V-chip in it. I left here with a renewed sense that, because of the media people that were here, that we could work with the leaders of the entertainment industry to develop a television rating system, and we did. And I believe we'll be able to get an agreement to increase the quality and quantity of educational time on television. And I believe a lot of good things will come out of this conference as well. So, for—we're indebted to them for a lot of things, but this will be a lasting legacy.

I also want to thank Dr. Erickson and Representative Purcell, Speaker Naifeh, Gov-