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industry, which were prevented from reaching Iran.

The U.S. Customs Service has continued to effect numerous seizures of Iranian-origin merchandise, primarily carpets, for violation of the import prohibitions of the ITR. Various enforcement actions carried over from previous reporting periods are continuing and new reports of violations are being aggressively pursued. Since my last report on March 14, 1997, OFAC has collected four civil monetary penalties totaling nearly $22,000. The violations relate to the unlicensed import from or export of goods to Iran. Civil penalty action is pending against 37 companies, financial institutions, and individuals for violations of the Regulations.

7. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from March 15 through September 14, 1997, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Iran are approximately $850,000, most of which represent wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel), the Department of State (particularly the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the Office of the Legal Adviser), and the Department of Commerce (the Bureau of Export Administration and the General Counsel's Office).

8. The situation reviewed above continues to present an extraordinary and unusual threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. The declaration of the national emergency with respect to Iran contained in Executive Order 12957 and the comprehensive economic sanctions imposed by Executive Order 12959 underscore the United States Government opposition to the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, particularly its support of international terrorism and its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. The Iranian Transactions Regulations issued pursuant to Executive Orders 12957 and 12959 continue to advance important objectives in promoting the nonproliferation and antiterrorism policies of the United States. I shall exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 17, 1997.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Federal Advisory Committees

September 17, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

As provided by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (Public Law 92–463; 5 U.S.C., App. 2, 6(c)), I am submitting the Twenty-Fifth Annual Report on Federal Advisory Committees, covering fiscal year 1996.

The executive branch continues to implement my policy of maintaining the number of advisory committees within the ceiling of 534 required by Executive Order 12838 of February 10, 1993. As a result, the number of discretionary advisory committees (established under general congressional authorizations) was held to 501, or 37 percent fewer than those 801 committees in existence at the beginning of my Administration. Savings achieved through elimination of discretionary committees during fiscal year 1996 totalled $2.5 million.

Through the advisory committee planning process required by Executive Order 12838, departments and agencies have worked to minimize the total number of advisory committees specifically mandated by statute. The 407 such groups supported at the end of fiscal year 1996 represents a modest 7 percent decrease over the 439 in existence at the beginning of my Administration. However, more can be done to assure that the total costs to fund these groups in fiscal year 1997, or $38.5 million, are dedicated to support high-priority public involvement efforts.

During fiscal year 1996, the General Services Administration (GSA) initiated a process for collaborating with executive departments and agencies to increase public participation opportunities at all levels of American society. Building upon my Administration's commitment to expand access to Federal decisionmakers, managers at all levels will be provided with more timely guidance that includes enhanced options for achieving objectives, better training, and exposure to a variety of tools and techniques, which when used in conjunction with advisory committees, offer additional flexibility to address a wide variety of public participation needs.

Actions to broaden the scope and effectiveness of public participation within the Federal sector will continue during fiscal year 1997. During the year, GSA will develop newly updated guidance implementing FACA. At the same time, GSA will continue to support and work closely with such agencies as the Council on Environmental Quality and the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior to align its efforts with key Administration policies relating to ecosystem and land management priorities.

My Administration will continue to work with the Congress to assure that all advisory committees that are required by statute are regularly reviewed through the congressional reauthorization process and that remaining committees are instrumental in achieving national interests.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 17, 1997.

Remarks on the 50th Anniversary of the United States Air Force in Arlington, Virginia

September 18, 1997

Thank you very much. Secretary Cohen, Secretary Widnall, General Eberhart, Chaplain Denlinger, Chief Benkin, to the Air Force Band, the Air Force Academy Cadet Chorale, the friends and families, especially the men and women of the United States Air Force. I'm delighted to be here as we celebrate this 50th anniversary of the best air force in the world.

Secretary Widnall thanked me for coming to your 50th birthday party. Actually, I thank you for having me. Ever since I turned 50 myself, I've been looking for all the company I can find. [*Laughter*] And since I can't run for office anymore, Secretary Cohen, I'm glad to come here and have this crowd you raised for me. I appreciate it very much. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, 50 years ago, when our Nation emerged from the crucible of World War II, we faced a political and military landscape that had been forever changed. Our European allies were devastated, the Iron Curtain was descending, the values for which we had fought so dearly seemed under siege from Europe to Asia. At that moment, only the United States had the strength to uphold the struggle for freedom around the world. And though our people were eager to turn their energies back home, we rose to the awesome responsibility at hand, creating the institutions that would protect our security and promote the cause of liberty and peace and eventually enable us to prevail in the cold war and enjoy the conditions that exist today, when, for the first time in human history, more than one-half the people on this planet live under governments of their own choosing.

In 1947, 50 years ago, the 4 essential players in that struggle came to life: the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Council, the Department of Defense, and the United States Air Force. For the record, I think it should be noted that President Truman signed this act aboard his so-called "Sacred Cow," the C–54 Presidential aircraft that served back then as Air Force One. In case you're wondering, President Truman was just like me; he didn't have an escape pod on his plane either. [*Laughter*] I might say, as long as the Air Force is flying me, I don't feel the need for a way out.

Fifty years later, our Air Force remains a world-class force without peer, thanks to the extraordinary men and women who serve in it. Your soaring spirit, your dedication, your skill have helped America to master the skies. You've made us more secure. You've made the world a safer place.

We have seen your courage and expertise in time of war. We have seen your compas-