

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the Notice on
Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt
the Middle East Peace Process**

January 21, 1998

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

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 1998, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The first notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 1996.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency, on January 23, 1995, has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities with the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process, and which are hostile to U.S. interests in the region. Such actions threaten vital interests of the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to deny any financial support from the United States for foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

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

**Remarks at the White House
Endowment Dinner**

January 21, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention please? This will be a brief program, because we want you to have a wonderful time tonight at the White House. We thank you for doing so much to support the White House Endowment Fund and for your commitment to ensuring that this house, the people's house, remains the pride of our people well into the next millennium.

No one has been more committed to making sure that this house is for all of our people than the First Lady. Over the past 5 years, Hillary has worked so hard to showcase the talent and creativity of all Americans in each of these grand and historic rooms, from refurbishing the Blue Room to securing the first painting by an African-American, or the first painting by Georgia O'Keefe for the White House's permanent collection. Her contributions to this house will remain a long time after we're gone from Washington.

Let me say it was in no small part because of her dedication that the 1.5 million visitors who walk through the White House every single year have been able to enjoy the richness and diversity of America's cultural heritage. I thank her for her leadership and for making this house on all floors a more wonderful and truly historic place to live.

And now, in reverse of the usual order, it is my pleasure and honor to introduce the First Lady of the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on Emigration
Policies of Albania**

January 21, 1998

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

I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Albania. The report indicates continued Albanian compliance with U.S. and

international standards in the area of emigration. In fact, Albania has imposed no emigration restrictions, including exit visa requirements, on its population since 1991.

On December 5, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Albania was in full compliance with the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. That action allowed for the continuation of most-favored-nation (MFN) status for Albania and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver. This semiannual report is submitted as required by law pursuant to the determination of December 5, 1997.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 22.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and an Exchange With Reporters

January 22, 1998

Middle East Peace Process

The President. Let me say before we begin that I am very pleased to welcome Chairman Arafat back to the United States as our partner in the peace process. As I did with Prime Minister Netanyahu, I want to emphasize what a critical time this is in the process and the importance of both parties meeting their obligations.

I also would like to take just a second to underline the principles of the peace process: mutual obligations and the concept of land for peace, so that Israelis can live in security, recognized by all their neighbors, and the Palestinians can realize their aspirations to live as a free people. If we can focus on these principles, I'm convinced we can make some progress. I'm going to give Chairman Arafat a little report on my meeting with Mr. Netanyahu, and then we're going to go to work.

Q. Mr. President, when do you think the Israelis will finally meet their U.N. obligations, or treaty obligations, to give back conquered land?

The President. Well, we're going to discuss that. We're working on it. We believe the Oslo process sets out a schedule for redeployment, and that's obviously one of the major issues to be discussed.

Q. But they're not going to meet it, are they?

The President. Well, give us a chance. We're working on it.

[*At this point, a reporter asked Chairman Arafat a question in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.*]

Q. Mr. President, what's the next step now, and is there a timeframe where you want things to move?

The President. Well, after this meeting, then what we'll do is to see whether we have moved the parties closer together. And if we have, then we'll try to figure out how to close the loop and get an understanding on what the next steps are. And if we can do that—we want to do it, obviously, fairly quickly; we don't want to just keep dragging this out. I think we have a sense of urgency here.

[*At this point, a reporter asked Chairman Arafat a question in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.*]

Q. Mr. Arafat, do you believe progress was made with Prime Minister Netanyahu, and do you believe progress will be made this week? And would you agree to a few-stage withdrawal?

Chairman Arafat. As long as there is pressure and efforts by President Clinton, I'm fully confident that the peace process will be protected and will be succeeded. And we should not forget that the President also has sent Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, and Mr. Ross to the region many times to push the peace process forward.

Q. So you believe Mr. Netanyahu will stand by his commitments?

Chairman Arafat. We hope so, he would do so.