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Statement on the Nomination of Gen. Eric K. Shinseki To Be Chief of Staff of the United States Army

April 21, 1999

I am pleased to nominate Gen. Eric K. Shinseki to be Chief of Staff of the United States Army. If confirmed by the Senate, General Shinseki will succeed Gen. Dennis J. Reimer, who will be retiring later this year after 37 years of distinguished active duty service.

General Shinseki currently serves as the Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. Immediately prior to assuming his present position, he served as Commander in Chief of United States Army Europe and concurrently as Commander of NATO's Stabilization Force in Bosnia. He brings to the position of Chief of Staff extensive operational and joint experience as well as proven leadership ability and a deep concern for the soldiers, civilians, and families of the United States Army.

During his distinguished career, General Shinseki served two combat tours in Vietnam and has commanded at every level from company through theater army. As Commander of the Stabilization Force, he directed the operations of the three Multinational Divisions in Bosnia, promoting implementation of the Dayton accords.

General Shinseki assumes the post of Chief of Staff as the U.S. Army proudly celebrates 224 years of dedicated service to our Nation in war and peace. With General Shinseki as Chief of Staff, I am confident that the total Army—active, Reserve, and National Guard—will continue its tradition of excellence, dedication, and professionalism as it enters the 21st century.

Statement on the Nomination of Lt. Gen. James L. Jones, Jr., To Be Commandant of the United States Marine Corps

April 21, 1999

I am pleased to nominate Lt. Gen. James L. Jones, Jr., for appointment to the grade of general and assignment as Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. If confirmed by the Senate, General Jones will succeed Gen. Charles C. Krulak, who will be retiring later this year after 35 years of distinguished active duty service.

General Jones brings to the job of Commandant a wealth of operational experience, exceptional leadership skills, and strong strategic vision.

During his distinguished career, General Jones served a combat tour in Vietnam, commanded the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, served as Chief of Staff of Joint Task Force Provide Promise in Bosnia and Macedonia, and was Commanding General of the 2d Marine Division. As Deputy Chief of Staff of the Marine Corps for Plans, Policy and Operations and, most recently, as Senior Military Assistant to Secretary of Defense, he has demonstrated keen insight into defense policy and the crucial role of the Marine Corps in protecting our national security.

General Jones assumes the post of Commandant as the Marine Corps takes on the challenges of the 21st century. With General Jones as Commandant, I am confident that the Marine Corps will continue its long and proud tradition of defending America's interests and values.

Statement on Congressional Action on Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

April 21, 1999

I am pleased that a little more than a year after I proposed national ed-flex legislation to the Nation's Governors, an overwhelming majority in Congress has passed a solid ed-flex bill. I look forward to signing it without delay. This bill will offer States more flexibility in their use of Federal funding in exchange for demonstrated increases in student achievement.

I am particularly pleased that the conference report strengthens accountability measures and preserves our effort to reduce class size in the early grades. The bipartisan work on this legislation shows we can and must work together to improve our Nation's schools.

Now Congress can move on to the most important aspects of the Nation's education agenda—finishing the job of hiring 100,000

well-prepared teachers to reduce class size, passing my initiative to help build and modernize 6,000 public schools, and re-authorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act with my plan to hold States and school districts accountable for results.

Statement on the Damage Assessment of China's Acquisition of Nuclear Weapons Information and the Development of Future Weapons

April 21, 1999

I welcome the Intelligence Community's damage assessment on the "Implications of China's Acquisition of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Information and the Development of Future Chinese Weapons" and the review of the damage assessment by a panel of independent experts led by Admiral Jeremiah, as requested by the House Select Committee, chaired by Congressmen Cox and Dicks. I appreciate the careful analysis by the intelligence community and the independent panel, as well as their efforts to make as much information as possible available to the public on this crucial issue.

The findings of the damage assessment underscore the need to implement fully the Presidential Decision Directive I issued in February 1998 to strengthen security and protections at the U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories. I commend Secretary Richardson for his efforts in this regard and look forward to the review of lab security I requested by the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, chaired by Senator Warren Rudman.

Measures to protect sensitive nuclear weapons information must be constantly scrutinized, whether this information is at the national laboratories or at other U.S. Government institutions. Therefore, I am asking the National Counterintelligence Policy Board to assess potential vulnerabilities at other institutions associated with nuclear weapons besides the national laboratories and to propose any concrete steps that may be appropriate to strengthen protections against efforts by China and other countries to acquire sensitive nuclear weapons information.

I have also asked DCI George Tenet to review the recommendations made by Admiral Jeremiah on intelligence collection and resources and to act promptly on these recommendations.

Memorandum on Humanitarian Relief for Kosovar Refugees

April 21, 1999

Memorandum for All Federal Government Employees

Subject: Humanitarian Relief for Kosovar Refugees

As you are no doubt aware, Slobodan Milosevic's ethnic cleansing of Kosovo has resulted in a grave humanitarian disaster, the displacement of almost 1.4 million Kosovar Albanians, and the slaughter of thousands. The refugees now in Macedonia and Albania, and those who continue to arrive each day, are in urgent need of food, shelter, and clothing. Relief organizations are working around the clock to provide this assistance, but these organizations and the refugees they serve need support from all of us.

I have heard from many Federal employees who want to know what they can do to help in this time of crisis. We can best help alleviate the suffering in the Balkans by providing financial support to relief agencies on the front lines. The Federal Government has established a toll-free telephone hotline, 1–800–USAID–RELIEF, that you may call to be referred to a number of private humanitarian organizations that are providing vital relief. The organizations are also located on the USAID Internet website, *www.info.usaid.gov*, under the listing for Kosovo. The organizations are on site, they know how to deliver the relief, and they need financial support.

Together we can provide the humanitarian assistance that the people so urgently need, while we work with our NATO allies to create the conditions that will allow them to return safely to their homes and rebuild their lives.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the contents of this memorandum.