

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Libya**

December 29, 1999

*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 Libyan emergency declared in 1986 is to continue in effect beyond January 7, 2000, to the *Federal Register* for publication. Similar notices have been sent annually to the Congress and published in the *Federal Register*. The most recent notice was signed on December 30, 1998, and appeared in the *Federal Register* on January 4, 1999.

The crisis between the United States and Libya that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 7, 1986, has not been resolved. Despite the United Nations Security Council's suspension of U.N. sanctions against Libya upon the Libyan government's hand over of the Pan Am 103 bombing suspects, there are still concerns about the Libyan government's support for terrorist activities and its noncompliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 731 (1992), 748 (1992), and 883 (1993). For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to apply economic pressure to the Government of Libya to reduce its ability to support international terrorism.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, 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 3, 2000.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus**

December 31, 1999

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)*

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1 to November 30, 1999. The previous submission covered events during August and September 1999.

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan announced on November 13 the start of proximity talks in New York on December 3 to work towards a resolution to the long-standing Cyprus dispute. The goal of these talks is to prepare the ground for meaningful negotiations leading to a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

This welcome news was highlighted during my trip to Turkey and Greece from November 15-20 as a positive step toward bringing about a just and lasting solution for all Cypriots and improving Greek-Turkish relations for a more secure southern Europe.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 3, 2000.

**Remarks on the Renomination of Alan Greenspan as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board and an Exchange With Reporters**

January 4, 2000

**The President.** You're supposed to stand over here today.

**Chairman Greenspan.** Over there?

**The President.** This is the only time I'm interfering with the independence of the Fed. [*Laughter*] You have to come over here.

Good morning, Ladies and gentlemen, the United States is enjoying an extraordinary amount of economic success, for which we are all grateful. It seems clear that it is the result of the convergence of a number of

forces: a great entrepreneurial spirit; stunning technological innovations; well-managed businesses; hard-working and productive men and women in our work force; expanding markets for our goods and services; a complete commitment to fiscal discipline; and of course, a Federal Reserve that has made independent, professional, and provably wise judgments about our monetary policy.

Since I took office 7 years ago, one of the hallmarks of our economic strategy has been a respect for the independence and the integrity of the Federal Reserve. I have always believed the best way for the executive branch to work with the Fed is to let the Chairman and the members do their jobs independently, while we do our job to promote fiscal discipline, to open markets, to invest in people and technologies. That has given us strong economic growth with low inflation and low unemployment.

Thanks to the hard work of the American people, we now enjoy the longest peacetime expansion in our history. In February it will become the longest economic expansion ever. With productivity high, inflation low, and real wages rising, it is more than the stock markets, which have boomed. This has helped ordinary people all over America.

We have a 30-year low in unemployment, a 32-year low in welfare, a 20-year low in poverty rates, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest single-parent household poverty in 46 years.

Clearly, wise leadership from the Fed has played a very large role in our strong economy. That is why today I am pleased to announce my decision to renominate Alan Greenspan as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. For the past 12 years, Chairman Greenspan has guided the Federal Reserve with a rare combination of technical expertise, sophisticated analysis, and old-fashioned common sense. His wise and steady leadership has inspired confidence, not only here in America but all around the world.

I believe the productive but appropriate relationship that our administration has enjoyed with the Fed has helped America play a critical and leading role in dealing with the

Asian financial crisis and many of the other things that we have faced over the last 7 years.

Chairman Greenspan's leadership has always been crucial to these successes. With his help, we were able, also, last year to enact historic financial reform legislation, repealing Glass-Steagall and modernizing our financial systems for the 21st century. He was also, I think it's worth noting, one of the very first in his profession to recognize the power and impact of new technologies on the new economy, how they changed all the rules and all the possibilities. In fact, his devotion to new technologies has been so significant, I've been thinking of taking Alan.com public; then, we can pay the debt off even before 2015.

On a more serious note, let me say again, this Chairman's leadership has been good not just for the American economy and the mavens of finance on Wall Street; it has been good for ordinary Americans. Even though my staff makes sure that I never give Chairman Greenspan advice, they have not been able to stop me from asking him for his advice. So I would also like to thank him for the many conversations we've had over the last 7 years in our ongoing attempt to understand this amazing and ever-changing economy.

Finally, I would like to thank him for his willingness to serve another term. After these years of distinguished public service and at a pinnacle of success, he could be forgiven if he were willing to walk away to a more leisurely and, doubtless, more financially lucrative life. His continued devotion to public service should be a cause of celebration in this country and around the world, and it's something for which I am very grateful.

Mr. Chairman.

[At this point, Chairman Greenspan made brief remarks.]

**The President.** Thank you.

### **Stock Market**

**Q.** Is the market irrational?

**Chairman Greenspan.** Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]. I—

**Q.** Do you stick by your previous statements on the stock market?

**Chairman Greenspan.** You surely don't want me to answer that.

**Q.** Yes, I do.

**Chairman Greenspan.** You do? Well, I don't think I will. [Laughter] Helen, you've been asking me questions now for decades—

**Q.** Since you reformed the Social Security system.

**Chairman Greenspan.** —and I usually answer them. So my record's not bad.

### Renomination

**Q.** Mr. President, did it take any persuading to get Mr. Greenspan to agree to serve another term if he's confirmed?

**The President.** No, I asked him and he said yes. I wish—you know, when we finish here, I have to go back to Shepherdstown. I wish I could have so much success in the Middle East peace talks—I just ask them, and they say yes, the way Mr. Greenspan did. [Laughter] It would be quite a joy.

**Q.** Are you going today?

**Q.** Mr. Greenspan, what factors played in your decision to stay? After a decade there, one might expect you might want to retire or move on.

**Chairman Greenspan.** There is a certain, really quite unimaginable intellectual interest that one gets from working in the context where you have to put broad theoretical and fairly complex conceptual issues to a test in the marketplace. Unlike a straight academic career, you end up fully recognizing that hypotheses matter, that actions matter, the ideas that you come up with matter. That, as I indicated, is really quite an unusual thing for an economist to deal with, and as I think Larry Summers probably knows as well, if not better than I, it's a type of activity which forces economists like ourselves to be acutely aware of the fact that our actions have consequences. And it's crucially important for us to try to determine in advance what those consequences are. And that is a challenge, which I must say to you, is, as I said to the President before, it's like eating peanuts. You keep doing it, keep doing it, and you never get tired, because the future is always ultimately unknowable.

### Israel-Syria Peace Talks

**Q.** Mr. President, how are the talks going in the Middle East—on the Middle East, Syria-Israel?

**The President.** Well, we just started, but all the issues are on the table. And it's a pretty full table, as you might imagine.

**Q.** Are they going to get together?

**The President.** We're working at it. I'm going back up today, and I'm hopeful.

**Q.** Are you disappointed at all with the pace of yesterday's talks and that the trilateral did not take place?

**The President.** No. No, that was partly my decision. We just had a lot of other work to do. And I'm going back today, and I think they're both very serious, I think they both want an agreement. I think there are difficult issues, and we'll just have to hope that we work it out.

**Press Secretary Joe Lockhart.** Thank you everyone. Thank you.

**Q.** How about the reports that the Israelis need \$17 billion, sir?

**The President.** What?

**Q.** The reports the Israelis need \$17 billion—

**The President.** I don't—excuse me, I lost my cufflink—I think there will be some cost associated with the security rearrangements. And then obviously, over the long run, as I have made clear, we need to make a contribution, as do our friends in Europe and hopefully some in Asia, to the long-term economic development of a regional Middle East economy. So there will be some costs involved there—over a period of years, not just in one year.

We're trying to determine exactly what that should be. And of course, before I can make any commitments, I will have to consult with the congressional leadership in both Houses and in both parties, and some of the committee leaders as well. And I have made that clear. So we're attempting to ascertain what the general outlines of the costs would be, over how many years those costs can be spread, and then I will have to do some serious consultation with the congressional leadership before I can do more than say I would support this.

We want to have a high probability of success, and I believe that in America, Americans of all political parties and all stripes desperately want us to see a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and understand that in the next 3 to 4 months we have an unparalleled opportunity that we have to seize. So I'm quite hopeful about that.

**Press Secretary Lockhart.** Thank you.

### ***Move to Chappaqua***

**Q.** [*Inaudible*]—help Mrs. Clinton move to New York?

**The President.** I have been helping. We've been working at it. We've been boxing things up and figuring out what to leave here, what to move there. It's been a rather interesting challenge over the holidays. But I've enjoyed it very much.

Thank you.

### ***Israel-Syria Peace Talks***

**Q.** Is \$17 million, \$17 billion the right figure?

**The President.** I don't know yet. What we're working on now up in West Virginia is sort of figuring out what the process for the next few days is going to be. And then we have to start working on that and figuring out what the specific jobs are that we would be asked to help finance, whether we could get any others to help, and over how many years it would have to be done. Then I'll have to go talk to the Congress. And I'm just not in a position yet to say what dollar amount I would ask our Congress for.

### ***Occupational Safety and Health Administration Regulations***

**Q.** Were you aware of these OSHA regulations, sir, about people having to have OSHA regulations when they work at home? Did you hear anything about that?

**The President.** No, not until I read about them.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

### **Remarks on Departure for Chappaqua, New York, and an Exchange With Reporters**

*January 5, 2000*

#### ***Legislative Agenda***

**The President.** Good afternoon. I just had a very good meeting with Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt about our legislative priorities for the coming year and the unparalleled opportunity we now have to take actions that could benefit America for the rest of the new century.

This is truly a remarkable moment. Who would have thought 7 years ago, when we had record budget deficits and high unemployment, that we would begin the new century with record surpluses, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, and next month the longest economic expansion in the history of the United States?

Never before have we enjoyed at once so much prosperity, social progress, and national self-confidence with so little internal crisis or external threat. Never have we had such an opportunity and, therefore, such a responsibility to address our long-term challenges, keeping our prosperity going by maintaining fiscal discipline and making America debt-free for the first time since 1835, the challenge of spreading our prosperity to people in places still left behind, helping parents to succeed at home and at work, preparing for the retirement of the baby boom generation, and most of all, meeting the challenge of giving all our children a world-class education.

President Kennedy once said the time to fix the roof is when the Sun is shining. Well, today the Sun is shining on America, and the roofs that need most fixing in America are the roofs of our Nation's schools. Anyone who visits schools regularly, as I have, will not be surprised to learn that a third of all our schools need extensive repairs or replacement. I've been to schools not only with leaky roofs but with window frames so old that if you try to powerwash the windows, the glass would pop out, with electrical service so inadequate that if you plug a new computer into the wall, the circuit breaker cuts out.