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WHALING ACTIVITIES OF ICELAND

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

A REPORT REGARDING CERTIFICATION BY THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE THAT ICELAND HAS CONDUCTED WHALING ACTIVITIES THAT DIMINISH THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A CONSERVATION PROGRAM OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION (IWC), PURSUANT TO 22 U.S.C. 1978(B)



JUNE 23, 2004.—Message and accompanying papers referred to the Committees on International Relations and Resources, and ordered to be printed

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To the Congress of the United States:

On June 16, 2004, Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans certified under section 8 of the Fisherman's Protective Act of 1967, as amended (the "Pelly Amendment") (22 U.S.C. 1978), that Iceland has conducted whaling activities that diminish the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) conservation program. This message constitutes my report to the Congress consistent with subsection (b) of the Pelly Amendment.

The certification of the Secretary of Commerce is the first against Iceland for its lethal research whaling program. In 2003, Iceland announced that it would begin a lethal research whaling program and planned to take 250 minke, fin, and sei whales for research purposes. The United States expressed strong opposition to Iceland's decision, in keeping with our longstanding policy against lethal research whaling. Iceland's proposal was criticized at the June 2003 IWC Annual Meeting by a majority of members of the IWC Scientific Committee, and the IWC passed a resolution that urged Iceland not to commence this program. In addition, the United States, along with 22 other nations, issued a joint protest asking Iceland to halt the program immediately. The United States believes the Icelandic research whaling program is of questionable scientific validity. Scientific data relevant to the management of whale stocks can be collected by non-lethal techniques. Since Iceland's 2003 announcement, Iceland reduced its proposed take to 38 minke whales and in implementing its lethal research program, killed 36 whales last year. For this year, Iceland has proposed taking 25 minke whales. The United States welcomes this decision to reduce the take and to limit it to minke whales, and we appreciate Iceland's constructive work with the United States at the IWC on a variety of whaling issues. These adjustments, however, do not change our assessment that Iceland's lethal research whaling program is of questionable scientific validity and diminishes the effectiveness of the IWC's conservation program.

In his letter of June 16, 2004, Secretary Evans expressed his concern for these actions, and I share these concerns. I also concur in his recommendation that the use of trade sanctions is not the course of action needed to resolved our current differences with Iceland over research whaling activities. Accordingly, I am not directing the Secretary of the Treasury to impose trade sanctions on Icelandic products for the whaling activities that led to certification by the Secretary of Commerce. However, to ensure that this issue continues to receive the highest level of attention, I am directing U.S. delegations attending future bilateral meetings with Iceland regarding whaling issues to raise our concerns and seek ways to halt these whaling actions. I am also directing the Secretaries of State and Commerce to keep this situation under close review and to continue to work with Iceland to encourage it to cease its lethal sci-

entific research whaling activities. I believe these diplomatic efforts hold the most promise of effecting change in Iceland's research whaling program, and do not believe that imposing import prohibitions would further our objectives

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 22, 2004.*

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