

Remember at this Christmas time we celebrate the birth of a homeless child, whose only shelter was the straw of a manger but who grew to become the Prince of Peace. The Prince of Peace said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Let us bless the peacemakers at this Christmas time from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to our own troops in Bosnia. Let us pray especially for our peacemakers, those who will go to Bosnia and those who are soon to come home from Haiti.

And let us resolve, my fellow Americans, to be peacemakers. For just as so many nations around the world and so many children around the world cry for peace, so do we need peace here at home in our toughest neighborhoods, where there are children, so many children who deserve to have their childhood and their future free and peaceful.

And let us remember from the example of the Prince of Peace how even the humblest of us can do, through acts of goodness and reconciliation, extraordinary things. And as we light this wonderful Christmas tree, let us all remember that together a million small lights add up to make a great blaze of glory, not for ourselves but for our families, our Nation and the world, and for the future of our children.

Merry Christmas, and blessed are the peacemakers.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. on the Ellipse during the annual Christmas Pageant of Peace. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. John Tavlarides, who recited the Christmas prayer; Brendan and Bridget Walsh, Camp Fire Boys and Girls, Pittsburgh, PA; entertainers Denyce Graves, Jack Jones, and Kathie Lee Gifford; and television weatherman Willard Scott.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of United States Military Forces for Implementation of the Balkan Peace Process

*December 6, 1995*

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

I last reported to the Congress on September 1, 1995, concerning the use of U.S. aircraft in support of United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) efforts in the former Yugoslavia. In that report I noted our diplomatic efforts to assist the parties to reach a negotiated settlement to the conflict. I am gratified to report that those efforts have borne fruit.

On November 21, 1995, the Presidents of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and, on behalf of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the President of the Republic of Serbia initialed a peace agreement to end the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The agreement has 11 annexes including, among others, Military Aspects, Regional Stabilization, Elections, Human Rights, Refugees and Displaced Persons, and Civilian Implementation. These annexes were also signed or initialed by the state parties, and where appropriate, by officials from the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the first

step in a process that will lead to formal signing of the agreement on December 14 in Paris.

As a result of this important first step, consistent with our consultations with the Congress, and pursuant to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) decision of December 1, 1995, I have ordered the deployment of approximately 1,500 U.S. military personnel to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia as part of a NATO "enabling force" to lay the groundwork for the prompt and safe deployment of the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR). United States personnel participating in the enabling force will be under NATO operational control and rules of engagement. To date, I have also authorized the deployment of approximately 3,000 additional U.S. military personnel to Hungary, Italy, and Croatia in order to establish forward U.S. support infrastructure for the enabling force and the IFOR. These personnel will deploy in the very near future and will remain under U.S. command and control and rules of engagement.

As I have indicated before, now that I have approved the NATO operation plan for imple-

mentation, I will be requesting an expression of support from the Congress.

The enabling force will join previously deployed NATO communications personnel in Croatia as well as various national forces currently part of the United Nations Protection Force; these other national forces will come under NATO operational control when the IFOR main force is deployed. The enabling force consists of headquarters and administrative staff, communications units, movement control teams, logistics units, special forces units and civil affairs personnel under NATO operational control. The enabling force will have combat capability for force protection. These forces will be fully authorized and equipped to defend themselves, and will be backed by U.S. and NATO forces in the theater of operations, including U.S. air assets supporting Deny Flight and an amphibious reaction force in the Adriatic that are ready and able to counter any threat to their safety. In addition, British and other elements of the U.N. Protection Force/Rapid Reaction Force (UNPROFOR/RRF) in Bosnia will be available to protect U.S. forces. It is envisioned that the IFOR main body will begin to deploy following the signature of the peace agreement in Paris and the issuance of final NATO and U.S. orders. The enabling force will thereafter remain as part of the IFOR.

The U.S. forces participating in the enabling force being deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia are drawn largely from U.S. forces stationed in Germany. Among the nations providing forces to the enabling force are the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Canada. In total, approximately 2,600 troops will be deployed as part of the enabling force.

I authorized these deployments in conjunction with our NATO allies following NAC decisions to permit implementation of the peace agreement following its formal signing. I have directed the participation of U.S. forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in the former Yugoslavia, consistent with the War Powers Resolution.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 7.

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

December 7, 1995

### *Bosnia and the Budget*

*The President.* I'd like to just say a couple of opening words. First, I want to welcome the bipartisan delegation of House Members who are here and thank them for coming as we continue to discuss the question of our mission in Bosnia and search for unity on that.

I also want to say that I took a step today which I hope will help us to find unity on the budget. I presented a budget that is a 7-year balanced budget that protects Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment, doesn't raise taxes on working families, and meets the conditions that were set out in the resolution to which we all agreed. And I hope it will be

taken as a gesture in good faith that will start us on the road to real negotiations over this budget and that will bring about a constructive resolution for the American people.

So I'm very hopeful about that, and I'm looking forward to having the opportunity to have a discussion about Bosnia with the Members who are here present. And some of them I think have recently returned from a trip of their own to Bosnia, so I think we'll have a lot to discuss. And I thank you for being here. And I thank you for being here.

*Q.* Mr. President, Chairman Kasich said late today your budget came up there 400 in the hole. And he said by submitting this document