

corting the diverted vessels to return to patrol operations.

We continue to achieve a significant foreign policy objective in maintaining multinational participation in the MIF. Ships from the United States, the United Kingdom, and The Netherlands participated in MIF operations from February through April of this year. Additionally, we have received firm commitments or serious proposals from Australia, New Zealand, Belgium and Canada to send frigates to participate in the MIF in late 1996 and early 1997.

Other countries have made different but important contributions toward enforcing the U.N. sanctions against Iraq. For example, Honduras recently deflagged four vessels and Belize deflagged three vessels. India has initiated "registry deletion" proceedings against vessels operating under its flag, and the United Arab Emirates is currently considering the deflagging of a vessel diverted twice for violating the sanctions.

We continue to provide briefings to the U.N. Iraq Sanctions Committee as part of our close coordination and consultation with the U.N. and with Security Council members on the issue of maritime Iraq sanctions enforcement. Evidence was provided concerning continued Iranian complicity in the export of Iraqi petroleum products through the provision to vessels violating the sanctions of false paperwork, the use of Iranian territorial waters, and warnings regarding the location of MIF vessels. Evidence was also provided concerning the acceptance of protection fees by Iranian officials in return for this assistance.

Security Council Resolution 687 affirmed that Iraq is liable under international law for compensating the victims of its unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. Although the U.N.

Compensation Commission (UNCC) has approved some 790,000 individual awards worth about \$3.0 billion against Iraq, it has been able to authorize the payment of only the fixed awards for serious personal injury or death (aggregating approximately \$13.5 million). The remainder of the awards cannot be paid because the U.N. Compensation Fund lacks sufficient funding. The awards are supposed to be financed by a deduction from the proceeds of future Iraqi oil sales, once such sales are permitted to resume. However, Iraq's refusal to meet the Security Council's terms for a limited resumption of oil sales has left the UNCC without adequate financial resources to pay the awards. Iraq's intransigence means that the victims of its aggression remain uncompensated for their losses 5 years after the end of the Gulf War.

To conclude, Iraq remains a serious threat to regional peace and stability. I remain determined that Iraq comply fully with all its obligations under the U.N. Security Council Resolutions. My Administration will continue to oppose any relaxation of sanctions until Iraq demonstrates peaceful intentions through its overall compliance with all of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

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 May 6.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Legislation To Promote Adoption

May 6, 1996

Dear _____:

I am writing to express my strong support for The Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996. Today, families seeking to adopt children face significant barriers, including high

adoption costs, complex regulations, and outdated assumptions. I am committed to breaking down these barriers and making adoption easier. Promoting adoption is one of the most important things we can do to strengthen American

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families and give more children what every child in America deserves—loving parents and a healthy home. This legislation will help children in need of adoptive homes to be united with devoted parents.

My Administration has worked hard to promote adoption in general, and adoption of children with special needs in particular. We championed the Family and Medical Leave Act which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or their health insurance. We strongly supported the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act to help increase the number of adoptions by prohibiting discrimination based on race or ethnicity, and we remain committed to enforcing that law vigorously. As part of our 1993 deficit reduction package, I signed into law a provision that requires ERISA plans to provide the same health coverage for adopted children as for biological children of plan participants. We have worked to preserve Federal support for adoption of children with special needs, and increased by 60 percent the number of children with special needs who have been adopted with Federal adoption assistance.

But together we can and must do more. I strongly support the adoption tax credit in this bill. It will alleviate a significant barrier to adoption and allow middle class families, for whom adoption may be prohibitively expensive, to adopt children to love and nurture. It will encourage adoption of children with special needs. It will put parents seeking to build a family

through adoption on a more equal footing with other families.

I believe that the bill is consistent with the Administration's policy and my longstanding goal to end the historical bias against interracial adoptions, which too often has meant interminable waits for children to be matched with parents of the same race. The Administration also has some concerns regarding some of the provisions used to offset the cost of the bill and would like to work with the Congress on these provisions. In addition, we need to ensure that unnecessary provisions are not included in the legislation.

The Adoption Promotion and Stability Act is an important first step toward meeting the challenge of removing barriers to adoption. I look forward to working with you so that the dreams of the waiting children in this country to have permanent homes and loving families can become a reality.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard K. Armey, House majority leader; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; and Bill Archer, chairman, and Sam Gibbons, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means. This letter was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 6 but was not issued as a White House press release.

Statement on the Death of William Colby *May 6, 1996*

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of former Director of Central Intelligence William Colby. Through a quarter century at the CIA, William Colby played a pivotal role in shaping our Nation's intelligence community. A dedicated public servant, he ably led the Agency through challenging times. He made

tough decisions when necessary, and he was always guided by the core values of the country he loved. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends in this time of sorrow and grieving.