

ment officials provide advisory opinions on whether certain arrangements violate criminal health fraud statutes. The Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services are concerned that advisory opinions of this nature could create complexities that would burden the efforts to enforce laws against health care fraud and abuse. Therefore, I am directing the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services to work closely together in implementing this provision to ensure that it promotes and protects Federal law enforcement activities relating to health care fraud.

Finally, I want to reiterate my disappointment that the Congress dropped from this legislation the mental health parity provision that received such bipartisan support in the Senate. Individuals with mental illness have long suffered from discrimination in health plans that impose severe financial burdens on top of the illnesses they already face. I urge the Congress to act at the

earliest opportunity to require parity in health insurance coverage for mental health services. I look forward to working with the Congress to address this critical issue.

As I sign this legislation, I am particularly grateful to Senators Kassebaum and Kennedy and the many other Members of Congress who worked tirelessly to assure that this bill is a meaningful and important step toward making health care more accessible and more secure for millions of Americans. I pledge to continue this effort and hope that the Congress will work with me and so that all Americans can have health care security.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 21, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3103, approved August 21, was assigned Public Law No. 104-191.

Statement on Signing the War Crimes Act of 1996 *August 21, 1996*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3680, the "War Crimes Act of 1996." This bill, in furtherance of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, extends U.S. criminal jurisdiction over certain war crimes and provides the United States with clearer authority to prosecute violations of the laws of war.

Most grave breaches of the Conventions are already subject to U.S. prosecution if committed in the United States and many—such as hostage taking, terrorism or genocide—could be prosecuted even if committed abroad. However, many other crimes which would be considered grave breaches of the Conventions could not be prosecuted in United States courts. This legislation is designed to help fill that gap. It authorizes the prosecution of war criminals if they are found in or extradited to the United States. It applies to U.S. nationals or members of the Armed Forces who are perpetrators or victims of war crimes. It would apply, for example, in the case of American civilians subjected to war crimes in an overseas conflict.

This legislation represents an important reaffirmation of American leadership in the develop-

ment of the law for the protection of victims of war.

In keeping with this leadership role, however, we can and should do even more to strengthen the law in this area. To that end, my Administration is committed to working with the Congress to expand the scope of this legislation. This expansion should address: (1) war crimes committed by *any* person who comes within the jurisdiction of the United States courts, including crimes committed by non-U.S. persons against non-U.S. victims; (2) cases involving other serious war crimes not covered by H.R. 3680, such as those prohibited by The Hague Conventions of 1907; and (3) cases involving acts to be made criminal under the recently improved landmines protocol of the Convention on Conventional Weapons. This broadening of the law would not require the United States to exercise jurisdiction in any particular case, but would provide the authority to do so in the national interest.

This bill and the expansions we seek have been endorsed by the American Red Cross, which has had an important role to play in this area ever since its founder Clara Barton took

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the lead in securing U.S. ratification of the first Geneva Convention. The International Committee of the Red Cross has also voiced its support for our efforts to broaden the scope of this legislation.

In sum, this bill serves important goals and is a significant step forward. Now we should build on this progress and seek further improvements in promoting respect for the laws of war

and in reinforcing protections for the victims of war.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 21, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 3680, approved August 21, was assigned Public Law No. 104–192.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization

August 21, 1996

Dear Mr. :

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading “International Organizations and Programs” in Title IV of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104–107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Mark O. Hatfield, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Partnership For Peace Initiative

August 21, 1996

Dear Mr. :

In accordance with section 514(a) of Public Law 103–236 (22 U.S.C. 1928(a)), I am submitting to you this report on implementation of the Partnership for Peace (PFP) initiative.

The ongoing adaptation of Europe’s security structures to post-Cold War realities remains one of our highest foreign policy priorities. A central element of this adaptation is the extension of NATO’s zone of stability and security to Europe’s emerging democracies. Over the past two and a half years, the Partnership for Peace has made a significant contribution to this goal by forging new cooperative ties between the Alliance and its Partners. This U.S. initiative has united NATO Allies with countries recently emerged from communist and traditionally neutral states in a partnership based on respect

for democratic principles, peaceful resolution of disputes, and practical cooperation.

For all Partners, PFP will be an enduring instrument for forging stronger ties with NATO. For those Partners interested in joining NATO, PFP is the best path to membership. As you will see from the enclosed report, NATO and its Partners have made impressive progress in broadening and deepening the Partnership over the past year. We are working with our Allies and Partners to build on the Partnership’s early momentum in the shared conviction that cooperation and common action are the best means to achieving lasting security throughout the Euro-Atlantic area.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON