

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on

Budget Deferrals
December 4, 1996

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

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report seven new deferrals of budgetary resources, totaling \$3.5 billion.

These deferrals affect programs of the Department of State, the Social Security Administration, and International Security Assistance.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, 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 December 5. The report detailing the deferrals was published in the *Federal Register* on December 16.

Remarks Announcing the Second Term National Security Team and an Exchange With Reporters

December 5, 1996

The President. Good afternoon. During our first term in office, the Vice President and I were blessed to work with a remarkable national security team: Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Secretary of Defense Bill Perry, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright, Director of Central Intelligence John Deutch, all very bright, forceful, strong-minded individuals who came together as a team to advance America's interests and values around the world.

Today the fact that our Nation is at peace, our economy is strong, and we are making real progress in seizing the opportunities, meeting the challenges of the 21st century, these things are due in no small measure to the teamwork, vision, and leadership they gave to the American people. The Vice President and I and every other American owe all of them a great debt of gratitude.

Now as we embark upon a new term, our responsibility is to build on the strong foundation laid in the last 4 years, to make sure that as we enter the 21st century, America remains the indispensable nation, the world's greatest force for peace and prosperity, for freedom and security.

Today I am pleased to announce the new national security team I have selected to help

us meet that responsibility: Secretary of State-designate Madeleine Albright; Secretary of Defense-designate William Cohen; Director of Central Intelligence-designate Anthony Lake; National Security Adviser Samuel Berger. Each of these individuals has remarkable qualities of intellect, energy, and leadership. All are committed to work together as a team that will rise above partisanship and rise to the challenges of meeting the opportunities, of dealing with the challenges that we all face.

The challenges are many: terrorism; the spread of weapons of mass destruction; drug trafficking; environmental degradation; ethnic, religious, and racial conflicts; dealing with the sea changes occurring in Asia and elsewhere throughout the globe. But the opportunities are even greater: working toward a Europe that for the first time is undivided, democratic, and at peace; building a new partnership with a democratic Russia; meeting the challenge of change in Asia with strength and steadiness, in a way that advances freedom and prosperity; extending the reach of peace and freedom in the Middle East and Africa; opening more markets in Latin America and strengthening the democracies that have taken root there.

These new people who will form the new national security team, they have the experience,

the judgment, the vision to meet the heavy responsibility and the high privilege of leadership.

By virtue of her life and accomplishments, Madeleine Albright embodies the best of America. It says something about our country and about our new Secretary of State-designate, that a young girl raised in the shadow of Nazi aggression in Czechoslovakia can rise to the highest diplomatic office in America. She watched her world fall apart, and ever since, she has dedicated her life to spreading to the rest of the world the freedom and tolerance her family found here in America.

During her 4 years as our Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright's steely determination has helped to advance our interests and our ideals around the world. She knows firsthand what it means for America to be the indispensable nation. And I know firsthand that Madeleine Albright has the instincts, the intelligence, the skill, and the strength to lead American foreign policy in this time.

Time and again I have benefited from her judgment and counsel on issues from Bosnia to NATO, and many, many other difficult areas. The American people have also benefited because of her special ability, forged during her tenure as a teacher at Georgetown, to explain why American leadership is more important than ever and to get the job done.

Bill Perry has done a remarkable job in preparing America's military for the challenges of the 21st century and in carrying out all other aspects of the Secretary of Defense's job, which include running the largest and most complex organization in the Nation's Government. The bottom-up review he completed has decreased the size of our forces, while increasing their readiness capabilities and technological edge. From Haiti to Bosnia, from the Persian Gulf to the Taiwan Strait, through Bill Perry's leadership, we have demonstrated that our men and women in uniform remain the best equipped and best trained fighting force in the world.

Earlier I had the opportunity to pay tribute to the contributions of Secretary Christopher. I want to say again how much I appreciate what he has done. But today I also want to thank Bill Perry for being one of the finest Defense Secretaries in the history of the United States. I thank you, Bill, and I will miss both of you very much.

Bill Cohen is the right man to build on these achievements, to secure the bipartisan support

America's Armed Forces must have and clearly deserve. He served in the United States Congress for 24 years, including 18 in the Senate. There his name became synonymous with discipline, intellect, creative independence, and deeply held principles.

While serving the people of Maine, he has also served every American through his determination to find common ground on difficult issues. He brought fresh ideas and thoughtful analysis to his work on the Senate Armed Services Committee; he helped craft the START I arms control treaty with Russia that we have entered into force and played a key role in legislation that reorganized and strengthened our military command.

Now the Senate's loss will be our administration's gain. I thank Senator Cohen for his willingness to cross party lines to make sure that America's security is there in the 21st century.

Just about every morning these last 4 years, the point man of our foreign policy team, Tony Lake, came into this office to brief me on the state of the world and to tell me what he thought I should do about it. It's been a great comfort to me and a great benefit to the American people to have Tony Lake just down the hall and to bring the power of his mind, the toughness of his character, the strength of his integrity to bear on the most difficult challenges we face. In moments of crisis, in times of triumph, he has always been at my side.

Let me thank John Deutch for the remarkable job he has done on behalf of our country at home and abroad, first as the Deputy Secretary of Defense and then in a difficult time as Director of Central Intelligence. He has done an excellent job, and I thank him. Thank you, John, for your service.

I can think of no more powerful proof of my commitment to carry on John Deutch's work of maintaining a strong, successful intelligence community than asking Tony Lake to take the helm as Director of Central Intelligence and a member of my Cabinet. Our intelligence informs just about every foreign policy decision we make. We cannot do without it. And while it will be hard for me to do without Tony Lake just down the hall, I am grateful he will be working the halls at Langley and leading our intelligence community into the 21st century.

Sandy Berger has also served just down the hall these past 4 years. He's been a good friend and adviser to me for a lot longer than that.

In fact, we have known each other since we were about half our present age. I hate that. [Laughter] I have looked to him for advice and counsel on foreign policy and on many other issues, as well, over the years. As Deputy National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger has helped to pull together our foreign policy team and given it direction, guidance, and shared purpose. I believe we have to have these things to move forward on the interests and values of the American people. As National Security Adviser, he will bring to the job not just the ability to work hard and to work well but the vision and sense of our larger purpose that is necessary to meet the challenges our Nation faces. I am pleased and the American people are fortunate that Sandy Berger will be serving as my National Security Adviser.

And before I ask each member of the new national security team to say a few words, starting with the Secretary-designate, I'd like to thank the one member of the team that will not be changing for a while, as long as his tenure lasts, and that's General Shalikashvili. Thank you, sir, for your remarkable service to America.

And now Ms. Albright.

[At this point, Secretary of State-designate Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defense-designate William Cohen, Director of Central Intelligence-designate Anthony Lake, and National Security Adviser Samuel Berger made brief remarks.]

Q. Mr. President, what do you say to those individuals who were on your list to become one of these Cabinet Secretaries? What do you say to them now that they haven't gotten the position? And part two of that question is, we thought your doctors told you not to talk. [Laughter]

The President. They did, but they made a little change in my medication and I was—my voice was working enough today for me to do this announcement. And you know, you and I, we're partners, too, and I had to give you something, or you were going to go crazy. So I was able to speak enough.

To the other—I say to them that I thank them for being willing to be considered. I thank them for their service to our country, and I ask them to support the decision I've made. I made the best decision I could, and I believe it will serve America well.

Q. Mr. President, many Republicans on Capitol Hill especially are outright hostile to the United Nations. Here you are now naming our U.N. Ambassador to be the Secretary of State. Do you, and should you, perhaps, expect a smooth confirmation process?

The President. I do. There is no question that Ambassador Albright is supremely qualified for this job. And the people on the Hill know that I believe the United Nations is an important organization. The United States has taken the lead in reforming it. And we, in general, and Ambassador Albright and Secretary of State Christopher, in particular, have taken a good deal of heat for trying to reform it. And we have pressed ahead.

But that doesn't mean we don't need the United Nations or that it doesn't do a world of good; it does. It is important, and it's going to get more important, and the United States had better be there playing its part if we expect it to do what we think should be done in the world.

Q. Mr. President, was Ambassador Albright picked because she's a woman or in spite of? And also, who will be her role model, Kissinger or Christopher? [Laughter]

The President. The second question should be hers to answer. Let me say I'm very proud to have had the opportunity to appoint the first woman Secretary of State in the history of America; I'm proud of that. But it had nothing to do with her getting the job, one way or the other. She got the job because I believe, amid a list of truly outstanding people, she had the best combination of qualities to succeed and to serve our country at this moment in history. And she proved it to me not only by her service in the United Nations and by her ability to speak to America and the world about what we are and what we stand for but also in the quiet councils that we've had over the last 4 years over some of the most difficult problems imaginable. And that's why I decided to name her.

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Cohen has a reputation as a bit of an independent and somebody who goes against the grain in his own party. Are you concerned that he might do so in your administration?

The President. No. [Laughter] But let me say, I think anybody who has been in this administration would tell you that we go out of our way to follow a process which encourages people

to be independent, to speak their mind, to argue for new ideas, to break new ground. In fact, everybody knows that we are in the process every day we're here of breaking new ground—of creating, if you will, a new conventional wisdom for the 21st century. And we're not there yet. So I think a man with a creative, independent, inquiring mind is just what is needed for this team.

Senator Cohen and I have talked about that a lot. There's a difference between being a Senator and Secretary of Defense. But I don't—when I appoint people, I expect them to speak their mind and tell me what they think. Then we'll get together, we'll make a decision as a team, and then we'll all carry it out and do our jobs.

Q. Mr. President, can I follow up on Helen's [Helen Thomas, United Press International] question? You're flanked by a woman and a Republican—want to have a Cabinet that looks like America—

The President. We're getting close. [Laughter]

Q. Given that—that's a good point. Given that, how can you say that the fact that she's—the Ambassador is a woman had nothing to do with it?

The President. Well, because—she got the appointment to the United Nations because I thought she'd be a good Secretary-General—as much as I enjoy appointing women.

Secretary-designate Albright. Ambassador. [Laughter]

The President. As much as I—you don't want that job, do you? [Laughter]

The Vice President. She does speak French, though.

Secretary-designate Albright. I do speak French. [Laughter]

The President. As much as I enjoy appointing people who had not previously—who represent groups of people who've not previously been able to serve, I owe it to the United States, to all the American people never to make any appointment of someone I think would not succeed. And in this case, I'm appointing Madeleine Albright because of the work she has done for the last 4 years and the opportunity it has given me to see her perform.

Yes, I told you I wanted a Republican in the Cabinet. But the most important thing is that the national defense of the United States be secured and that we continue to adjust to the changes of the new era.

I would never have asked Senator Cohen to join the Cabinet solely because he's a Republican. It would have been folly. I think he is uniquely well-qualified at this moment in history for the reasons that I said.

So, am I glad that I have a Republican in the Cabinet? Yes. Am I proud that I got a chance to appoint the first woman Secretary of State? You bet I am. My mama is smiling down on me right now. [Laughter] But that is not why I appointed her. And that is why she will succeed. And I hope she will be an inspiration to the young women all across our country and all across the world, so that everybody will be able to have a chance to live up to the fullest of their abilities.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, what effect do you think having Senator Cohen will have on your relations with the Senate?

The President. I hope it will be good.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah, 1996 December 5, 1996

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Hanukkah.

In this season of joy, we remember the story of Judah Maccabee and his steadfast followers who freed Jerusalem from its oppressors and rededicated the Temple to God. Although they had only a small supply of consecrated oil with

which to rekindle the temple's Holy Light, the courage and faith of the Maccabees were rewarded as the oil burned miraculously for eight days and eight nights until a new supply could be prepared.

Today, more than two thousand years later, families around the world celebrate this Festival