

I am proud that they are diverse, but I would not have appointed a single one of them because of their gender or their racial or ethnic background had I not thought that they could succeed. And if you look at the comparative record in department after department after department of the people who served in the first 4 years and compare the results they achieved, the work they did, I think that the evidence will indicate that.

And it goes back to something you asked me. You know, what we do, we all show up for work every day, and we create a team and work like crazy for the American people. We have goals, we have objectives, we hold ourselves to timetables, and we keep score about what we're doing for other people. And if that is your focus, which is what people hire us to do, that's what you worry about, and that's what you do. So I feel good about it.

Now, this is—

Campaign Financing and White House Access

Q. [Inaudible]—feel pressure—

The President. Well, my feelings are that, in the areas where we had more direct control—our campaign and the legal defense fund—as far as I know, the proper decisions were made because the proper scrutiny was applied. The Democratic Party officials have already admitted that they did not apply the proper review, and I am very displeased about it because 99 percent-plus of all the contributors did not do any-

thing wrong, and over 98 percent of the money appears to be perfectly in order, and the other 1 percent got all the publicity and, thereby, dis-serving the Democrats around the country, the people who gave, and everything else. That is wrong.

And all they have to do is to institute a simple review system. Now, from time to time, mistakes may be made. If you have over a million contributors, as both parties do now, that may happen from time to time, but common sense and strict review are the order of the day.

I feel the same way about this. I realize that the Secret Service and others are reluctant to be too burdensome with all the thousands and tens of thousands of people that come in the White House complex every year, but I'm confident that if they put their minds to it they can come up with a better screening procedure so that things like this don't happen.

It's not a press conference. We've been here a long time. We'll have another press conference early next year.

Merry Christmas. I'll see you early next year.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Chinese businessman Wang Jun, chairman, Poly Technologies; and Archibald Cox, former Watergate special prosecutor. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at the White House Children's Christmas Party

December 20, 1996

The President. Thank you. Give them a hand. Weren't they great? [Applause] Hello.

Children. Hello. Hi, Bill Clinton.

The President. Thank you, Antonio. Welcome to the White House. We're very glad to have you here. Every year the First Lady and I love to meet with some children about this time and read the night before Christmas story, because Christmas is really a time for children, isn't it?

Children. Yes.

The President. And a time when we give gifts to each other and to our children to say how important you are. And it's a very special time for us. You know, Hillary wrote a book about

children and families, and just today she gave a great gift—she gave the money that came in from the book to children's hospitals all across the country and to other things for children.

And one of the things that we hope will come out of this is that not only all of you here but all the children all over our country will feel very special; and as Christmas celebrates the birth of Baby Jesus, that all the little children in our country will feel that they are very, very special.

So I want you to listen carefully to this story. A lot of you know this story, don't you?

Children. Yes.

The President. Do you?

Hillary Clinton. You can chime in.

The President. So you can chime in. If you know any of the lines when I read it in this wonderful book—see the pictures, can you see

it—you say the lines, too. Okay? Okay, here we go. “The Visit of Saint Nicholas.”

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. Prior to his remarks, a group of carolers sang for the audience.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of United States Military Forces for Implementation of the Balkan Peace Process *December 20, 1996*

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

In my report to the Congress of June 21, 1996, I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to Bosnia and other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization-led Implementation Force (IFOR). I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

We continue to work in concert with others in the international community to encourage the parties to fulfill their commitments under the Dayton Peace Agreement and to build on the gains achieved over the last year. It remains in the U.S. national interest to help bring peace to Bosnia, both for humanitarian reasons and to arrest the dangers the fighting in Bosnia represented to security and stability in Europe generally. Through American leadership and in conjunction with our NATO allies and other countries, we have seen real progress toward sustainable peace in Bosnia. We have also made it clear to the former warring parties that it is they who are ultimately responsible for implementing the peace agreement.

Approximately 9,000 U.S. troops currently are deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina under NATO operational command and control as part of the current Stabilization Force (SFOR) total of about 35,800. All NATO nations and 18 others, including Russia, contributed troops or other support to IFOR and most will continue to provide such support to the follow-on force, discussed below. Most U.S. troops are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered

around the city of Tuzla. In addition, approximately 6,900 U.S. troops are deployed to Hungary, Croatia, Italy, and other states in the region in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR.

Consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1031 (1995) and the North Atlantic Council decision of December 16, 1995, IFOR has now successfully accomplished its mission to monitor and ensure compliance by all parties with the military aspects of the Peace Agreement initialed in Dayton and formally signed in Paris on December 14, 1995. War no longer rages throughout Bosnia. Weapons have been cantoned, troops demobilized, and territory exchanged. While inter-ethnic tensions remain, the killing has ended and peace is taking hold. Building on its accomplishment of military tasks that established the necessary environment for civilian implementation, IFOR also assisted in the overall civilian implementation effort, including elections support, support to the international criminal tribunal and the facilitation of freedom of movement of civilian persons. IFOR also stood ready to provide emergency support to the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES).

In order to contribute further to a secure environment necessary for the consolidation of peace throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO has approved, and I have authorized U.S. participation in, an IFOR follow-on force to be known as the Stabilization Force (SFOR). The United Nations Security Council authorized member states to establish the follow-on force in UNSCR 1088 of December 12, 1996. Transfer of authority from IFOR to SFOR occurred on December 20, 1996. The parties to the Peace