

July 28 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Burdensharing in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

July 28, 1999

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 3 of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949, on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic (the “resolution”), I hereby transmit a report concerning Burdensharing in the Alliance.

This report is comprised of two sections, which provide the information required by section 3(2)(B) of the resolution to the extent that such information is available. The unclassified section covers common NATO budgets, national defense budgets and their adequacy, costs incurred to date in connection with the membership of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, and the status of discussions concerning NATO membership for Partnership for Peace

countries. A classified addendum covers NATO members’ capabilities to deploy and sustain combat forces.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Floyd Spence, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at “In Performance at the White House”

July 28, 1999

The President. Thank you. The first thing I want you to do is relax, because I’m not going to play, and you’ll have to—[laughter]—but I’ll be wishing.

At the millennium event on jazz we had here last year, the great Wynton Marsalis said that just as we wouldn’t have democracy without the foundation of our Constitution, so we wouldn’t have jazz without the foundation of the blues. Like our Constitution, the blues is a great American tradition, whose power to move never seems to diminish and whose influence never seems to stop growing.

This compelling and wonderful music, once heard only on rural Southern porches and in South Side Chicago bars, now enjoys an audience as broad as America itself. In fact, now the whole world knows about the blues, and there are fans from Berlin to Bangkok who can tell you the life stories of blues icons like Bessie Smith and Robert Johnson. Today, there are more blues artists, more blues listeners, more blues clubs, and more blues recordings than

ever before. Even TV commercials now feature the blues, which dramatically reduces the number of people who hit the mute button. [Laughter]

Tonight we celebrate the music that has given birth to or influenced the whole large landscape of American music, from “Rhapsody in Blue” to rap. So it’s fitting that our host is a master of the great range of American music and entertainment, Miss Della Reese. If talent and personality are truly gifts from above, then Della Reese really has been “Touched by an Angel.” [Laughter] Please join me in welcoming Della Reese. [Applause]

[At this point, the program proceeded. Following the performances, the President made brief remarks, which are joined in progress.]

The President. —whether I want to be young like Jonny, or like B.B. when I’m a little older. [Laughter] They were all magnificent.

You know, we saw tonight in all these wonderful performers why blues is truly one of

America's great gifts to the world. Its appeal, we saw, literally spans the generations. Tonight we've been privileged to hear blues greats from every era.

I want to thank each and every one of them. Thank you, B.B. King. Thank you, John Cephas and Phil Wiggans. Thank you, Marcia Ball. Thank you, Jonny Lang. Thank you, bands. And thank you, Della Reese.

Thank you, and good night. Thank you.

[At this point, B.B. King presented the President with a guitar pick.]

The President. Now before you go, I've been saving my B.B. King picks for almost 20 years now. I've got another one tonight. [Laughter]

There is one more person that all of us have to thank this evening, Dick Notebaert with Ameritech. Let me tell you—Dick, I want you and Peggy to come up here, come on. He is about to leave his present position to start on a new adventure in life, and Hillary and I want to thank him for his long-standing support for these wonderful WETA's "In Performance at the White House." We have had so many in-

credible, incredible concerts here, thanks to the generosity of this gentleman and his fine company. And Dick and Peggy have accompanied us on so many nights, along with Sharon and Jay Rockefeller and many of you who've been here.

I want to thank all of you for coming tonight, especially the very large number of people from my native State and others who occupy that portion of the Mississippi Delta between Memphis and New Orleans, where all of this really got started. We are very glad to be here, but we offer a special thank you to you, my friend, and to you, Peggy. We've got a little expression of our thanks here. Bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks he referred to musician Wynton Marsalis; Richard C. Notebaert, chairman and chief executive officer, Ameritech Corp., and his wife, Peggy; and Senator John D. Rockefeller IV and his wife, Sharon. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on the National Economy and Appropriations Legislation July 29, 1999

Good morning. Before I leave for Sarajevo, I'd like to say just a word about our country's continuing prosperity and what we have to do to keep it going.

It was 6 years ago this summer that America made a visionary decision to set a new course for our economy; to abandon the large deficits and high unemployment of the previous 12 years; and to pursue an economic strategy of fiscal discipline, investing in our people, and expanding trade in American goods and services abroad. The strategy is working and has lifted our Nation to an unprecedented level of prosperity.

Now we have nearly 19 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, the highest homeownership ever. From a \$290 billion deficit in 1993, we're moving toward a record high surplus of \$99 billion in 1999.

The Senate is about to make a pivotal choice—whether to move forward with a sound strategy that led us to this point, or to return

to the reckless policies that threw our Nation into stagnation and economic decline. Congress must decide whether to invest our surplus, to honor our obligations to the future—saving Social Security and Medicare, continuing to invest in education, and paying down the debt—or to squander the surplus on a shortsighted, irresponsible, overlarge tax plan.

The right choice for me is clear, putting first things first. First, we must maintain our strategy of fiscal discipline and seize this moment to address the large, long-term challenges of the Nation. We must dedicate the bulk of the surplus to saving Social Security and to strengthening Medicare and modernizing its benefits with a prescription drug package. I have proposed a balanced budget that honors these values. It upholds our commitments to educating our children, protecting our environment, promoting biomedical research, strengthening defense, and fighting crime.