

of IWC members share our concern and want Japan to curtail its program.

My Administration has already taken a wide range of economic and diplomatic measures in response to Japan's expanded program. On September 13, I directed the Secretary of State to make Japan ineligible to conduct fishing operations within the United States exclusive economic zone. I, members of my Cabinet, and other United States officials, have raised our strong concerns at the highest levels of the Japanese Government and will continue to do so. I have personally intervened with Prime Minister Mori. We also joined 14 other governments in making a high-level demarche to the Japanese Government to protest its decision to issue the permits. In September, we canceled a bilateral fisheries meeting that we have been holding annually for more than a decade. We also declined to participate in a ministerial meeting on environmental issues in August hosted by Japan. We have also actively supported the selection of a country other than Japan to host the next inter-session meeting of the IWC. As a result, the IWC voted 17-10 to hold the meeting in Monaco instead of Tokyo.

The United States has intensified its serious engagement on these issues with Japan. In November, we held bilateral consultations with Japan in Tokyo on scientific research on whales. At that meeting, we appreciated receiving the news that Japan is preparing to conduct two nonlethal scientific whale programs in the next 12 months. This is a very encouraging sign. We expect our bilateral meeting will lead to an IWC Scientific Committee workshop on methods for whale research. I view this meeting as a positive but limited step. Our goal remains that Japan substitute nonlethal techniques for its program.

We will vigorously pursue this objective in conjunction with our partners in the IWC.

We are concerned that the presence of these additional species of whales in the Japanese market could increase the risk of derivatives of whale products entering international commerce. To this end, we have raised these matters within the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, and an interagency team continues to consider additional measures to enforce international and national prohibitions on trade in whale products. If warranted, the Secretaries of Commerce and the Treasury will take appropriate additional measures.

In sum, I remain deeply concerned by Japan's unilateral actions. For this reason, I have directed the Departments of State, Commerce, the Interior, and the Treasury, as well as the Office of the United States Trade Representative, to keep this matter under active review. I will also direct these agencies to further examine the relationship between Japanese companies that both manufacture whaling equipment and export products to the U.S. market. I would consider actions regarding any imports from whaling equipment manufacturers, as well as actions regarding a broader range of imported products, should they be warranted by lack of progress from our bilateral and multilateral efforts; however, I do not believe that import prohibitions would further our objectives at this time. We are committed to a sustained effort in order to bring about positive movement in Japan's whaling policies.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address *December 30, 2000*

Good morning. The year 2000 is drawing to a close at a moment of great progress, prosperity, and peace for America. But while we have many reasons to be thankful, good weather is not one of them.

Terrible ice storms in the Southern Plains States have left more than a dozen people dead and thousands without heat and electricity. Two days ago I declared that an emergency exists in Arkansas and Oklahoma so that Federal aid

can be made immediately available to help families in those States. Now a major snowstorm is rolling into the Northeast, and weather experts tell us that this November and December are shaping up to be among the coldest on record. All this, along with the increased demand for energy that has accompanied unparalleled economic growth, is putting enormous pressure on the energy supplies Americans need to heat their homes and businesses.

Fortunately, we're far better prepared for this winter energy challenge because of actions we took this fall, and the new steps I am taking will ensure that we remain prepared. In late September, I directed the Department of Energy to exchange 30 million barrels of crude oil from the Federal Government's Strategic Petroleum Reserve. This was a step to prevent a supply crisis that would have had a particularly harsh effect on heating oil inventories in the Northeast.

At the time, many said that using the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help Americans heat their homes was a terrible idea, that it would never work. Well, now we have the results. I'm pleased to report that inventories of crude oil are up, and prices have dropped substantially, from \$37 to \$26 a barrel. Home heating oil prices also have fallen in recent weeks, and supply shortfalls have been cut by more than half.

But even though heating oil prices have begun to ease, the cost of heating a home still is too high, especially for families on low and fixed incomes. That's why I'm releasing \$300 million in funds from our Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Along with similar funds I released earlier this fall, we've now devoted more than \$850 million to assist families who can least afford to bear the burden of high energy prices this winter.

The simple lesson we've learned again and again is that the best way to meet challenges is to stay ahead of them. So I am taking some new steps to prepare for more cold weather this winter. First, I'm directing the Departments of Energy and Transportation to make extra efforts to keep navigation lanes in U.S. harbors

free of ice for ships bringing in heating oil. I'm also asking them to work with States to relieve bottlenecks on our Nation's roads, rivers, and pipelines.

Second, in the Northwest, which is experiencing tight electricity supplies, I am asking all Federal facilities to join those in California that are already reducing their electricity consumption during peak hours. This will help to keep lights and heat on in homes and businesses across the West.

Third, Energy Secretary Richardson has extended an emergency order to powerplants providing electricity to California to keep the power flowing in that hard-hit State.

Fourth, I am asking the Small Business Administration to reach out to small businesses with high energy costs to make them aware of special SBA loans that will allow them to stretch out their energy payments. That could be a big help for businesses trying to get through this cold winter.

None of us can control the weather. But all of us are responsible for how we respond to and prepare for it. With the actions I am taking, the Federal Government is fulfilling its responsibility. Across the Nation, Americans are doing their part: snowplow drivers are working late into the night; emergency shelter workers are offering a warm place to sleep for families whose homes are without power; younger neighbors are bringing hot food to their older neighbors and shoveling their walkways.

The worst weather always seems to bring out the best in the American people. If we continue to work together and bring out the best in each other, we'll get through this cold weather just fine and usher in a new year of unlimited promise for our great Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:50 p.m. on December 29 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.