

the consequences of a potential use of a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapon in the United States. Many of these Federal programs offer training, planning, and assistance to State and local governments. But to maximize their effectiveness, these efforts need to be seamlessly integrated, harmonious, and comprehensive.

Therefore, I have asked Vice President Cheney to oversee the development of a coordinated national effort so that we may do the very best possible job of protecting our people from catastrophic harm. I have also asked Joe Allbaugh, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to create an Office of National Preparedness. This Office will be responsible for implementing the results of those parts of the national effort overseen by Vice President Cheney that deal with consequence management. Specifically, it will coordinate all Federal programs dealing with weapons of mass destruction consequence management within the Depart-

ments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other Federal agencies. The Office of National Preparedness will work closely with State and local governments to ensure their planning, training, and equipment needs are addressed. FEMA will also work closely with the Department of Justice, in its lead role for crisis management, to ensure that all facets of our response to the threat from weapons of mass destruction are coordinated and cohesive. I will periodically chair a meeting of the National Security Council to review these efforts.

No governmental responsibility is more fundamental than protecting the physical safety of our Nation and its citizens. In today's world, this obligation includes protection against the use of weapons of mass destruction. I look forward to working closely with Congress so that together we can meet this challenge.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Peacekeeping *May 8, 2001*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit herewith the 2000 Annual Report to the Congress on Peacekeeping required by section 4 of the United Nations Participation Act (22 U.S.C. 287b).

United Nations and other peacekeeping operations conducted under the previous Administration helped us protect U.S. interests before they were directly threatened and helped ensure that other nations shared with us the risks and costs of maintaining international stability.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that, under the right circumstances, peacekeeping remains a viable option for dealing with international conflicts.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Bob Stump, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations.