

and agencies—the administration of the Freedom of Information Act, as amended (the “Act”). The Act is a vital part of the participatory system of government. I am committed to enhancing its effectiveness in my Administration.

For more than a quarter century now, the Freedom of Information Act has played a unique role in strengthening our democratic form of government. The statute was enacted based upon the fundamental principle that an informed citizenry is essential to the democratic process and that the more the American people know about their government the better they will be governed. Openness in government is essential to accountability and the Act has become an integral part of that process.

The Freedom of Information Act, moreover, has been one of the primary means by which members of the public inform themselves about their government. As Vice President Gore made clear in the National Performance Review, the American people are the Federal Government’s customers. Federal departments and agencies should handle requests for information in a customer-friendly manner. The use of the Act by ordinary citizens is not complicated, nor should it be. The existence of unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles has no place in its implementation.

I therefore call upon all Federal departments and agencies to renew their commitment to the Freedom of Information Act, to its underlying principles of government openness, and to its sound administration. This is an appropriate time for all agencies to take a fresh look at their administration of the Act, to reduce backlogs of Freedom of Information Act requests, and to conform agency practice to the new litigation guidance issued by the Attorney General, which is attached.

Further, I remind agencies that our commitment to openness requires more than merely responding to requests from the public. Each agency has a responsibility to distribute information on its own initiative, and to enhance public access through the use of electronic information systems. Taking these

steps will ensure compliance with both the letter and spirit of the Act.

William J. Clinton

Message to the Congress on Whaling Activities of Norway

October 4, 1993

To the Congress of the United States:

On August 5, 1993, the Secretary of Commerce certified that Norway’s resumption of commercial harvesting of minke whales has diminished the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). The IWC acted to continue the moratorium on all commercial whaling at its most recent meeting last spring. Despite this action, Norway has recommenced commercial whaling of the Northeastern Atlantic minke, noting that it has lodged an objection to the moratorium. This letter constitutes my report to the Congress pursuant to section 8(b) of the Fishermen’s Protective Act of 1967, as amended (Pelly Amendment) (22 U.S.C. 1978(a)).

The United States is deeply opposed to commercial whaling: the United States does not engage in commercial whaling, and the United States does not allow the import of whale meat or whale products. While some native Alaskans engage in narrowly circumscribed subsistence whaling, this is approved by the IWC through a quota for “aboriginal whaling.” The United States also firmly supports the proposed whale sanctuary in the Antarctic.

The United States has an equally strong commitment to science-based international solutions to global conservation problems. The United States recognizes that not every country agrees with our position against commercial whaling. The issue at hand is the absence of a credible, agreed management and monitoring regime that would ensure that commercial whaling is kept within a science-based limit.

I believe that Norway’s action is serious enough to justify sanctions as authorized by the Pelly Amendment. Therefore, I have directed that a list of potential sanctions, in-

cluding a list of Norwegian seafood products that could be the subject of import prohibitions, be developed. Because the primary interest of the United States in this matter is protecting the integrity of the IWC and its conservation regime, I believe our objectives can best be achieved by delaying the implementation of sanctions until we have exhausted all good faith efforts to persuade Norway to follow agreed conservation measures. It is my sincere hope that Norway will agree to and comply with such measures so that sanctions become unnecessary.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 4, 1993.

Statement Announcing the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

October 4, 1993

I am pleased to announce that I have nominated and NATO has appointed Gen. George A. Joulwan, U.S. Army, to succeed Gen. John Shalikashvili as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. I also intend to send forward to Congress General Joulwan's nomination to serve as commander in chief, U.S. European Command.

General Joulwan has had a long and highly distinguished career spanning more than three decades, with Europe as the centerpiece of his service. He has served for 14 years in Europe, beginning as a platoon commander and rising to Commanding General of the V Corps, U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army. In these postings, as well as in his current role as commander in chief of the U.S. Southern Command, Panama, he has demonstrated both the military expertise and political acumen needed to fill one of our most sensitive security postings. He has also displayed superb talents as a manager of resources and personnel and is known throughout the military as a "soldier's soldier."

General Joulwan assumes the post of Supreme Allied Commander at an important time of change for Europe and for NATO as we seek to adapt the role of NATO to the needs of post-cold-war mutual security. I will look to General Joulwan to continue

the outstanding work of General Shalikashvili as SACEUR faces up to the challenge of helping guide NATO through this important period of transition. I have the utmost trust and confidence in his ability to do so.

Nomination of Three Defense Department Officials

October 4, 1993

The President announced his intention today to nominate public health expert Stephen C. Joseph to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs; former Pentagon official Richard Danzig to be Under Secretary of the Navy; and economic policy specialist Joshua Gotbaum to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Economic Security.

"The people who we are adding to our Pentagon team today are recognized experts in their fields and dedicated public servants," said President Clinton. "I welcome their service at the Department of Defense."

NOTE: The President also announced the appointment of 18 people to senior Defense Department posts not requiring confirmation by the Senate. They are:

Cliff Bernath, Deputy Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Operations;

Joel Resnick, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Reserve Affairs/Strategic Plans and Analysis;

Helen Forbeck, Senior Professional, Defense Reinvestment Assistance Task Force;

John Rogers, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs/Plans & Operations;

Mark Wagner, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Economic Security;

John Goodman, Special Adviser for Defense Conversion and Technology;

Sheila Cheston, Deputy General Counsel of the Air Force;

Dr. Larry Caviaiola, Deputy Under Secretary/Acquisition Operations;

Audrey Sheppard, Chief of Protocol;

Steven Preston, Deputy General Counsel;

Sheila Helm, Special Assistant to the Secretary/Personnel;