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Statement on the Presidential Election in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

October 24, 1994

I congratulate President Gligorov on his election to a second term as President of his country. Under his able leadership, I am confident the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will continue on its path toward full integration into the international community of nations. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has upheld the principles of democracy and has courageously embarked on a bold program of economic reform and renewal. Despite strong external economic pressures which have caused great hardship, President Gligorov and his countrymen have shown a determination to continue on the path to free market democracy.

I am pleased that international observers to the recent elections concluded that the first round of elections were conducted in an overall free and fair manner. The second round of parliamentary elections, scheduled for the end of this month, will be the next important step in the FYROM's democratic development. It is our hope that they will take place in a free and peaceful environment.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's peaceful political and economic development is essential to stability in the Balkans. The United States has taken numerous steps to support that development, including sending U.S. troops to participate in a U.N. peacekeeping mission there, establishing a liaison office in Skopje, and increasing our economic assistance under the SEED program in fiscal year 1995. I have instructed my Special Envoy, Matthew Nimetz, to redouble his efforts in the weeks ahead, in tandem with U.N. mediator Cyrus Vance, to help Skopje and Athens resolve their differences. We will continue to work with other friends of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the months ahead to try to help bridge the country's balance-of-payments gap so that programs prepared by the IMF and World Bank can go forward.

Proclamation 6748—National Consumers Week, 1994

October 24, 1994

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The American marketplace is the great engine of our free enterprise system. Ever-expanding as it evolves in response to consumer needs and desires, it inspires technological innovation and the development of new products and services, and it rewards efficiency and productivity. The framers of our Constitution sought to establish a free market in which competition, ingenuity, and productivity would flourish. Today, it is more apparent than ever that their intent has been realized—Americans can choose from the greatest variety of goods and services in the history of the world.

This extraordinary economic machine works most efficiently when we as consumers are at the controls: when our choices and decisions, our requirements and collective will determine the direction and the workings of the marketplace. But individuals and the Nation's economy suffer when products and services are ineffective, inferior, or unsafe; when prices are unfair; and when consumer needs for reliable information and protection are unmet. If such abuses were to become common, the consequent loss of faith in our free market system would jeopardize our American way of life.

On March 15, 1962, President John F. Kennedy acknowledged the centrality of consumers in our marketplace in his Special Message to Congress on Protecting the Consumer Interest.

> *The Federal Government—by nature the highest spokesman for all the people—has a special obligation to be alert to the consumer's needs and to advance the consumer's interests.*

Since then, what has come to be called the Consumer Bill of Rights has evolved as our marketplace has evolved. At present, it includes:

(1) The Right to Safety—the right to expect that the consumer's health, safety, and financial security will be protected effectively in the marketplace;