

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on Chemical
Weapons**

December 22, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, I hereby certify in connection with Condition (7)(C)(i), Effectiveness of Australia Group, that:

Australia Group members continue to maintain an equally effective or more comprehensive control over the export of toxic chemicals and their precursors, dual-use processing equipment, human, animal, and plant pathogens and toxins with potential biological weapons application, and dual-use biological equipment, as that afforded by the Australia Group as of April 25, 1997; and,

The Australia Group remains a viable mechanism for limiting the spread of chemical and biological weapons-related materials and technology, and the effectiveness of the Australia Group has not been undermined by changes in membership, lack of compliance with common export controls and nonproliferation measures, or the weakening of common controls and nonproliferation measures, in force as of April 25, 1997.

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: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 23.

**Statement on the Death of
Tom Henderson**

December 23, 1999

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Tom Henderson, a

member of my Advisory Council on HIV and AIDS and a senior staff person at the Environmental Protection Agency. Tom was a longtime friend to both of us and combined great intelligence with a sharp Texas wit. He was a strong and effective advocate for our efforts to combat AIDS, the disease that eventually took his life. We will miss Tom, as will members of the Council, his colleagues at the EPA and the White House, and the hundreds of people around the country who were blessed to know him as a friend. Our thoughts and prayers are with his partner Michael, his daughter Melissa, and all of those like us who grieve his loss.

Christmas Greeting to the Nation

December 24, 1999

The President. On this holiest of holidays, Hillary and I would like to wish all of you a very merry Christmas. This is a season of joy, a time for family and friends to rejoice in one another's company and in the magic of Christmas. This is also the season of peace.

On behalf of all Americans, I'd like to send a special greeting to the brave men and women in uniform who are serving our country in lands far from home. Thank you for the greatest gift of the season, for protecting our Nation and safeguarding the blessings we all hold dear.

The First Lady. At the dawn of this new millennium, let us reflect on our hopes, our dreams, and the gifts we can give to the future. So let all of us cherish the gift of every child among us and pledge to build a world where all children, no matter where they are born, can make their dreams come true.

The President. From our family to yours, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and may God bless you all.

NOTE: The greeting was videotaped at approximately 2:30 p.m. in Room 459 in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building for later broadcast and was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 23 but was embargoed for release until 12:01 a.m., December 24. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this greeting.