

I urge Congress to act quickly to provide relief to communities that are clearly in need.

NOTE: A portion of the President's statement was also made available on the White House Press Office Actuality Line. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels**

*February 25, 2000*

On March 1, 1996, by Proclamation 6867, I declared a national emergency to address the disturbance or threatened disturbance of international relations caused by the February 24, 1996, destruction by the Government of Cuba of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. In July 1996 and on subsequent occasions, the Government of Cuba stated its intent to forcefully defend its sovereignty against any U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft that might enter Cuban territorial waters or airspace while involved in a memorial flotilla and peaceful protest. Since these events, the Government of Cuba has not demonstrated that it will refrain from the future use of reckless and excessive force against U.S. vessels or aircraft that may engage in memorial activities or peaceful protest north of Cuba. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
February 25, 2000.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 28, 2000]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on February 29. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Notice on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba**  
*February 25, 2000*

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

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2000.

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 item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on Further Deployment of United States Forces to East Timor**  
*February 25, 2000*

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

On October 8, 1999, I reported to the Congress, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, the deployment of a limited number of U.S. military forces to East Timor to provide support to the multinational force (INTERFET) peacekeeping mission in East Timor. This force, established by the United

Nations Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter, was to restore peace and security in East Timor, protect and support the United Nations Mission in East Timor, and, within force capabilities, facilitate humanitarian assistance operations. The U.S. support to the multinational force was limited to planning and staff, communications, intelligence, and logistics.

This multinational force was formally replaced in East Timor on February 23, 2000, by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Consequently, the U.S. personnel who were the subject of my October 8 report have redeployed from East Timor. The UNTAET, which was established by Security Council Resolution 1272, has a mandate that includes maintaining law and order throughout East Timor, establishing an effective administration, ensuring the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance, and supporting capacity-building for self-government. To implement this plan, the Security Council authorized UNTAET to deploy up to 8,950 military personnel, 200 military observers, and 1,640 civilian police.

The U.S. military contribution to UNTAET is small. The United States has agreed to provide three military observers and one judge advocate; these personnel serve in the United Nations pursuant to the United Nations Participation Act (Public Law 79-264) and will operate under U.N. operational control.

Nonetheless, because the United States has a strong national security interest in promoting regional security and supporting East Timor's transition to independence, the United States will maintain a credible and visible presence in East Timor. The United Nations also supports a continued U.S. presence in East Timor and has indicated that East Timor would benefit greatly from U.S. military deployments to and engagement activities in East Timor. As a result, I have authorized the deployment of a support group (USGET), consisting of approximately 30 U.S. personnel, to facilitate and coordinate U.S. military activities in East Timor. Personnel assigned to USGET will operate under U.S. command and control and rules of engagement. In addition, I have author-

ized a rotational presence of U.S. forces to be achieved through temporary deployments, including periodic ship visits, to East Timor during which U.S. forces will conduct humanitarian and assistance activities throughout East Timor. These rotational presence operations will provide peacetime exercise opportunities for U.S. forces in East Timor, allow for a flexible and visible U.S. force presence independent of UNTAET, and provide humanitarian and civic assistance to East Timor's citizens in critical areas.

The first rotational presence operation, involving the USS BONHOMME RICHARD amphibious group, her embarked helicopters, and the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), commenced in East Timor on February 23, 2000. These forces are operating under U.S. command and control and rules of engagement.

At this point, our rotational presence operations are envisioned to continue through the summer of 2000. It is likely that future rotational presence operations will include rotation of naval assets, embarked aircraft, and small light engineer units. Certain of these forces, including those of the BONHOMME RICHARD, will be equipped with the normal complement of defensive weapons. The duration of our support depends upon the course of events in East Timor. It is, however, our objective to redeploy USGET and reduce rotational presence operations as circumstances permit.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## **The President's Radio Address**

*February 26, 2000*

Good morning. Last month, in my State of the Union Address, I called on Congress to help us launch a 21st century revolution in education, guided by our faith that every child can learn. This morning I'm announcing new steps to do just that—to provide tools for States and local communities to turn around their worst performing schools or shut them down.

If our Nation is going to make the most of the promise of the new economy, we must help every American make the most of their God-given potential. But students can't aim high in schools that perform low. Every child deserves a high-quality education.

Over the last 7 years we've followed a commonsense reform strategy: Invest more in our schools and demand more in return. I'm proud that our administration has enacted the largest investments in education in three decades, while, at the same time, working hard for higher standards, greater accountability, and extra help so that all children can meet those high standards.

It's working. Across our Nation, reading and math scores are on the rise. But in spite of this progress, too many schools in our poorest neighborhoods still fail to offer a quality education, and too few of these failing schools ever get enough help to turn around.

That's why I challenged Congress last year to pass my plan to establish a new school accountability fund to help States and local communities to fix failing schools. Together, we enacted a landmark initiative to provide \$134 million to States and school districts this year alone. Today I'm releasing official guidelines to ensure that these funds are invested in what works.

We're taking two unprecedented steps. First, under our plan districts and States will soon receive money dedicated entirely to turning around failing schools. This accountability fund will enable districts to take firm measures, putting in a tougher curriculum, helping teachers get the skills and training they need, and if necessary, closing down a failing school and reopening it under new management or as a public charter school.

Second, my plan also expands public school choice. For the first time ever, we'll require that districts give students in a chronically failing school the option to transfer to a better performing public school.

We know accountability works because that's what the experience of local communities tells us. Two years ago, for example, North Carolina drew up a list of the State's 15 worst performing schools and sent assistance teams to each school. Just a year later, reading and math scores shot up and 14 of those 15 schools improved their performance enough to be taken off the list. I've been to schools all over our country that are achieving in the very same way.

Ultimately, of course, it's up to States and local communities to take the reins and turn around a failing school, but the Federal Government must play a key role by granting more flexibility, demanding more accountability, and investing more in education. With today's action, we're declaring as a nation that we will not fail our children by tolerating failing schools. We must do more.

In our budget for the coming year, I'm doubling the size of the accountability fund to \$250 million and doubling our support for after-school and summer school programs, so that every child in a low performing school has the opportunity to participate. I ask Congress to do its part and make these vital investments.

Again, I also ask Congress to pass my "Education Accountability Act," which will make our schools even more focused on results. We must stay on track to hiring 100,000 high-quality teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. We must fulfill our commitment to build and modernize public schools. And we must invest in efforts to mentor disadvantaged students to help them understand that if they learn what they need to learn, they can all now go on to college.

This entire strategy is rooted in fundamental values: Everyone counts; everyone deserves a chance; everyone has a role to play; and we all do better when we help each other.

Fixing a failing school isn't easy, but communities are proving every day that it can be done. So we must continue to invest more