

Week Ending Friday, December 5, 1997

The President's Radio Address

November 29, 1997

Good morning. This week, millions of Americans have gathered with family and friends to share Thanksgiving. Much has changed for America since George Washington first proclaimed a day of thanksgiving for our new Nation in 1789. But the Thanksgiving spirit, sharing our good fortune with others, coming together to meet our common challenges—that is as important as ever. That's why we must keep that spirit alive throughout the year through citizen service.

Citizen service must be at the heart of our efforts to prepare America for the 21st century, as we work to guarantee all Americans the opportunity and conditions to make the most of their own lives and to help those who need and deserve it with a hand up. My administration's most important contribution to citizen service is AmeriCorps, our national service program that already has given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve our country and earn money for a college education. In community after community, AmeriCorps members have proved that service can help us meet our most pressing social needs.

For example, in Simpson County, Kentucky, AmeriCorps members helped second graders jump three grade levels in reading. In boys and girls clubs all across the country, AmeriCorps members are mentors for at-risk young people. Habitat For Humanity relies upon AmeriCorps members to bring in more volunteers and build more houses. In communities beset by floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes, AmeriCorps members have helped to rebuild homes and restore hope.

Now, AmeriCorps members are mobilizing thousands and thousands of college students from 800 campuses in our America Reads program, to make sure that all our young people can read independently by the third grade. AmeriCorps brings people of

every background together to work toward common goals. And after years of partisan fighting over it, I'm pleased that Congress now seems ready to come together to support AmeriCorps.

Today, I'm proposing legislation to give more Americans the chance to serve by strengthening AmeriCorps and our student and senior citizen service programs and extending them for 5 years. This legislation reflects the spirit of the Presidents' Summit on Service, where last spring thousands of Americans pledged to give our children the support they need to make the most of their lives. As General Colin Powell reported this week, we've made a lot of progress since the summit with more AmeriCorps members, more reading tutors for our children through America Reads, more mentoring programs for young people, more partnerships with private businesses and community groups. At Thanksgiving, I want to thank especially the citizens and businesses who have worked with us to ensure that our Nation's surplus food helps to feed the hungry, not fill up dumpsters.

Now we must create more opportunities for people to serve all year long and, through service, to reach out to one another across the lines that divide us. In honor of the spirit of citizen service embodied in the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., the Congress has designated the Martin Luther King holiday as a day of national service. And I'm pleased to announce that our Corporation for National Service has awarded 73 grants to communities from Boston to Los Angeles, to help make this day of service a resounding success. Dr. King once said that everybody can be great because anybody can serve; you only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love.

As we look forward to a joyous holiday season, let us pledge to live up to those words by making citizen service a part of our lives every day.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:25 p.m. on November 28 in the Residence at Camp David, MD, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 29. In his remarks, the President referred to Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), chairman, America's Promise—The Alliance For Youth.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq

November 26, 1997

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

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This report covers the period from September 23 to the present.

Since my last report, the Government of Iraq attempted to defy the international community by unilaterally imposing unacceptable conditions on the operations of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM). On October 29, the Iraqi government announced its intention to expel all U.S. personnel working in Iraq for UNSCOM. Iraq's aim appears to have been to establish an environment under which it could restore its capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction without restriction. For 3 weeks, the Government of Iraq refused to allow American UNSCOM personnel to enter the country or to participate in site inspections, expelled UNSCOM personnel who are U.S. citizens, threatened the safety of the U.S. Air Force U-2 aircraft that flies missions for UNSCOM, tampered with UNSCOM monitoring equipment, removed UNSCOM cameras, moved and concealed significant pieces of dual-use equipment, and imposed additional unacceptable conditions on continued operations of UNSCOM. Two confrontational actions were undertaken in an atmosphere of strident, threatening Iraqi rhetoric, the dispersal of Iraqi armed forces as if in preparation for a military conflict, and the placement of innocent civilian "human shields" at military sites and at many of Sad-

dam Hussein's palaces in violation of international norms of conduct.

On November 20, having obtained no agreement from the U.N. or the United States to alter UNSCOM or the sanctions regime—indeed, having obtained none of its stated objectives—the Iraqi government announced that it would allow UNSCOM inspectors who are U.S. citizens to return to their duties. This encouraging development, however, will be ultimately tested by Saddam Hussein's actions, not his words. It remains to be seen whether the Government of Iraq will now live up to its obligations under all applicable UNSC resolutions, including its commitment to allow UNSCOM to perform its work unhindered.

As expressed unanimously by the five permanent members (P-5) of the Security Council meeting in Geneva November 20, the will of the entire international community is for the unconditional decision of Iraq to allow the return of UNSCOM inspectors to Iraq in their previous composition. I must note that the United States was not briefed on, did not endorse, and is not bound by anything other than the terms of the P-5 statement. Neither the United States nor the U.N. are bound by any bilateral agreement between Russia and Iraq. We will carefully monitor events and will continue to be prepared for any contingency. Iraq's challenge was issued, in part, in response to U.N. Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1134, of October 23, in which the Security Council condemned Iraq's flagrant violations of relevant Security Council resolutions and expressed its firm intention to impose travel restrictions on the Iraqi leadership if the long-standing pattern of obstruction and harassment of UNSCOM personnel continued. In the debate of UNSCR 1134, not one nation on the Security Council questioned the need to continue sanctions. The only serious debate was over when and how to impose additional sanctions. UNSCR 1134 was based on the UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) 6-month reports to the UNSC that indicated that the Government of Iraq has not provided the "substantial compliance" called for in UNSCR 1115 of June 21, 1997—especially