

- The Congress has again included a provision (section 113) that requires the Secretary of Defense to give 30 days advance notice to certain congressional committees of any proposed military exercise involving construction costs anticipated to exceed \$100,000. In approving H.R. 2465, I wish to reiterate an understanding, expressed by Presidents Reagan and Bush when they signed Military Construction Appropriations Acts containing a similar provision, that this section encompasses only exercises for which providing 30 days advance notice is feasible and consistent with my constitutional authority and duty to protect the national security.

I urge the Congress to pass all of the FY 2000 appropriations bills as quickly as possible and send them to me in an acceptable form. As of today, the Congress has finished its work on only two of the thirteen appropriations bills. Moreover, many of the remaining bills would require deep cuts in essential government programs, including education, law enforcement, science and technology, the environment, and programs to advance global security through the peaceful use of diplomacy, helping minimize our chances of needing to use military force to the same ends.

When it returns in September, the Congress still has a great deal of work to do. I urge the Congress to approach this work responsibly in order to pass funding bills which are sufficient to meet our Nation's needs in the year 2000.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 17, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 2465, approved August 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106-52.

Statement on Signing the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 *August 17, 1999*

Today I have signed into law S. 507, the "Water Resources Development Act of 1999," a multibillion dollar omnibus bill to authorize water projects and programs of the

United States Army Corps of Engineers. I am pleased that the Act includes some program reforms, as well as a number of authorizations for projects and programs that are important to the Nation, but I also have serious reservations about this bill.

I am pleased that the bill increases flood protection for Sacramento, California, and that the Congress accepted a reform proposed by my Administration to optimize the use of Folsom Dam, a Federal facility protecting the city. However, I am disappointed that the Congress did not authorize other features needed to provide the higher level of flood protection sought by my Administration. I am committed to working with the Congress to reduce further the risk of flood damage facing this community.

In 1998, I proposed an innovative approach to integrate Federal flood protection and environmental restoration efforts: the "Challenge 21" program. I am pleased that the Congress has embraced this proposal and has included a \$200 million authorization for it in this bill. The bill also removes impediments to better flood plain management and broadens the tools available to communities that seek to reduce their risk of flood damage. The bill will promote the use of effective, nonstructural means to address flooding concerns and complement efforts across the Nation to restore the environmental value of flood plains and aquatic ecosystems.

I support the bill's authorization to develop and implement a comprehensive fish and wildlife habitat restoration plan for the Missouri River and to increase the amount of land along the river corridor authorized for acquisition from willing sellers. These authorizations will allow us to recreate a string of natural areas along the length of this great American river once traveled by Lewis and Clark. The legislation also includes an important authorization to study the effects of bank stabilization on the Yellowstone River, the Nation's last major freely meandering river.

On July 1, 1999, my Administration transmitted to the Congress its comprehensive long-term plan to restore the Florida Everglades, which is one of our national treasures. I am pleased that S. 507 continues the authority for related Federal water resources projects in South Florida and look forward

to working with the Congress over the next year to authorize the first steps in this important restoration effort.

I also support several of the bill's provisions that authorize improvements to our Nation's ports and harbors. I urge the Congress to enact my proposed Harbor Services Fund legislation, which will ensure a stable source of funding to improve our national port infrastructure and meet the demands of the global economy.

I am disappointed, however, in many of the provisions of S. 507. The amount of construction spending authorized in S. 507—over \$4 billion in new Federal spending—far exceeds a reasonable assessment of the available future Federal budgetary resources for the Corps of Engineers program. With an existing construction backlog of more than \$27 billion of Army Corps of Engineers water resources projects, it would require nearly 20 years at current funding levels just to complete all of the ongoing projects that the Congress previously has authorized. This legislation will place significant further stress on the funding capabilities of this program and create expectations for future funding that are not likely to be forthcoming.

Roughly three-quarters of the significant new projects in this Act and many of its project modifications are still in the planning stage or undergoing review and, therefore, simply are not ready for authorization at this time. Until the completion of the review required for proposed Federal water resources projects under Executive Order 12322, neither the Executive branch nor the Congress is likely to know which of these projects will raise significant concerns regarding their scope, economic and technical feasibility, environmental acceptability, or the ability of local sponsors to provide the required cost-share.

This legislation authorizes nearly \$900 million for local environmental infrastructure and other projects that may be worthwhile, but most of which should not become a responsibility of the Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, although S. 507 would reduce Federal costs for future shore protection projects and is a first step towards establishing a more equitable sharing of their substan-

tial long-term costs, it does not go far enough.

My Administration will work with the Congress on the next water projects authorization bill for the Army Corps of Engineers to address these problems.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 17, 1999.

NOTE: S. 507, approved August 17, was assigned Public Law No. 106-53.

Statement on the Death of Ignaz Bubis

August 17, 1999

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Ignaz Bubis, the President of Germany's Central Council of Jews. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, the Jewish community in Germany, and the many non-Jews in Germany for whom he was a beacon.

Imprisoned in Nazi labor camps while still a boy, Ignaz Bubis lost virtually his entire family in the Holocaust. After the war, he settled in Frankfurt and became a successful businessman and a key figure in the small community that sought to reestablish Jewish life in Germany. He was elected early in this decade to lead Germany's Jewish community, and he used his position to engage his fellow citizens on issues regarding their nation's past and the need for vigilance to uphold the values at the heart of contemporary Germany. Because of the clarity of his vision and the persuasiveness of his message, he became one of his nation's foremost champions of tolerance and openness. He was a friend and valued counselor to many of Germany's leaders. I was greatly impressed by his wisdom and determination to build a more tolerant world.

Ignaz Bubis never ceased to bear witness to history and the consuming evil that was perpetrated earlier in this century. But he also demonstrated that the demands of conscience and the goal of reconciliation are not at odds but instead must be pursued together. At a time when conflicts in the Balkans have confronted Europe and the world