

Statement on the Withdrawal of the Nomination of Shirley Chisholm To Be Ambassador to Jamaica October 13, 1993

I deeply regret that illness has forced Shirley Chisholm to ask that her nomination to be our country's Ambassador to Jamaica be withdrawn. As I said when I first announced my decision to nominate her, Shirley Chisholm is a true pioneer of American politics. Even before she ran for elective office, she had made her mark through her work teaching the children of New York and through the force of her remarkable personality. As the U.S. Ambassador to Jamaica,

she would have been a powerful voice for co-operation and justice.

Hillary and I both wish Shirley Chisholm all the best at this difficult time. She is in our thoughts and in our prayers.

NOTE: The President's statement was included in a White House statement announcing the withdrawal of the nomination.

The President's News Conference October 14, 1993

Somalia

The President. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'm sorry I am a little late, but I just finally got through to Ambassador Oakley, and I wanted to have a chance to speak with him directly for a couple of minutes before I came out here.

I also spoke with Mrs. Durant this morning to congratulate her and to wish her well. Obviously, she is very happy. She has now had an extended conversation with her husband. And he is, as you know, in the U.N. field hospital in Mogadishu. But he will be going to Germany as soon as the doctors say that he can travel. And then, as soon as possible, he'll be back home with his family and his friends. I welcome his release, and I want to express my deepest thanks to the African leaders who pressed hard for it and to Bob Oakley, the International Red Cross, and to the United Nations, to all who have worked on this for the last several days.

Over the past week, since the United States announced its intention to strengthen our forces in Somalia, as well as to revitalize the diplomatic initiative and send Bob Oakley back, we have seen some hopeful actions: the release of Michael Durant and the Nigerian peacekeeper, the cessation of attacks on the United States and U.N. peacekeepers. That demonstrates that we are moving in the right direction and that we are making progress.

Our firm position on holding Durant's captors responsible for his well-being and demanding his release, I think, sent a strong message that was obviously heard. Now we have to maintain our commitment to finishing the job we started. It's not our job to rebuild Somalia's society or its political structure. The Somalis have to do that for themselves. And I welcome the help of the African leaders who have expressed their commitment to working with us and with them. But we have to give them enough time to have a chance to do that, to have a chance not to see the situation revert to the way it was before the United States and the United Nations intervened to prevent the tragedy late last year.

I want to also emphasize that we made no deals to secure the release of Chief Warrant Officer Durant. We had strong resolve. We showed that we were willing to support the resumption of the peace process, and we showed that we were determined to protect our soldiers and to react when appropriate by strengthening our position there. I think the policy was plainly right. But there was no deal.

If you have any questions, I'll be glad to try to answer them.

Q. Mr. President, there's still a \$25,000 bounty on Mr. Aideed. Would you still like to see Mr. Aideed arrested? Do you think that's appropriate? And do you think that the United Nations now should release Mr. Aideed's forces

that it's captured recently?

The President. Well, let me answer the first question. The United States position is that we have a U.N. resolution which says that there must be some resolution of the unconscionable incident which started this whole thing, which was the murder of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers who were not there in battle but were simply there doing the job that we all went there to do, the humanitarian mission. I think that it's very important to remember that.

It is further our position that we cannot afford to have any police work that we were asked to do as part of the U.N. mission be transformed into a military endeavor that, in effect, made many people believe that there was no longer a diplomatic initiative going on in Somalia. So there still has to be some resolution of that. We have a U.N. resolution, and we ought to pursue it. Now, there may be other ways to do it, and I am open to that.

As far as the release of any people is concerned, that will obviously be up to the United Nations. But they have to consider what our obligations are with regard to the murder of the Pakistani peacekeepers. That's what started this whole thing.

Q. Mr. President, isn't it pretty clear, though, that Aided must have been given some immunity from arrest, because he talked to reporters? He seems to be pretty available. You don't seem to be laying a glove on him. Have you called off the dogs?

The President. There was no deal made, I can tell you that. We have taken account of the behavior of others on the ground there, and we will continue to do that. But for the next few days, we have to work through what the resolution will be of the U.N. requirement that got us all into the position we were in last week, which is that we have to have some means of resolving what happened to the Pakistanis, who were clearly not in anybody's combat, were just doing their jobs. And we have to do it.

Q. Well, do you hold him responsible?

The President. Well, he offered, if you remember, an independent commission to look into that. The United Nations asked the United States to attempt to arrest him and to go out of our way not to hurt him while arresting him because he was suspected of being responsible. So if he's willing to have somebody that we can all trust look into that, then that's something

I think that Mr. Oakley is certainly willing to entertain over there.

Foreign Policy Accomplishments

Q. Mr. President, despite your success today, there's been a lot of criticism that U.S. foreign policy has been run in a naive and somewhat disorganized way. What's your response to that?

The President. Well, I can tell you first of all, I've had people who were involved in the two previous administrations say that our national security decision-making process was at least as good as the two in the previous ones, perhaps better. Secondly, I think on the biggest issues affecting the future and the security of the United States, we have a good record. We have done very well with Russia, the most important issue. We have set up a system that did not exist before we came to office to deal with the other republics of the former Soviet Union and to work on nuclear issues and other issues. I think we have done quite well with the Middle East peace process and with its aftermath. I think we have done well to establish the groundwork of a new basis of a relationship with Japan and with Asia generally. We have certainly put nonproliferation on a higher plane than it was there before. I think we did very well. The United States had the most successful meeting of the G-7 in over a decade. That was clear: the first time in 10 years we were complimented instead of criticized, making real progress there.

So I think that the people who say that, because of what happened in Somalia last week, have a pretty weak reed to stand on. And in terms of Haiti,—and maybe we can get to that—when I took office, what we had was everybody in Haiti thinking about whether they could leave and come to the United States because they thought there was no way that anybody would ever stick up for the democratic process in Haiti, and the fact that two-thirds of the people voted for somebody to lead their country that was then ousted by the old regime. At least we have made an effort to try to change that. And I assure you that my determination there is as strong as ever.

It's easy to second-guess. When you get into something like Somalia, I think anybody who really thought about it at the time the decision was made—I supported it. I think it was the right thing to do. I think we went there for the right motives. But you had to know when

we went there that (a) that there was no way America was going to get out in January because there was no political process in place there that could have given the Somalis a chance to survive, and (b) that there was every chance that someone, for their own reasons, at some point during this mission might kill some peacekeepers, which would complicate the mission.

We are living in a new world. It's easy for people who don't have these responsibilities to use words like "naive" or this or that or the other thing. The truth is, we're living in a new and different world, and we've got to try to chart a course that is the right course for the United States to lead, while avoiding things that we cannot do or things that impose costs in human and financial terms that are unacceptable for us. But I think that in this new world, we've made a pretty good beginning and clearly on the things that affect us most.

Haiti

Q. Mr. President, you were very clear last week in saying that you did not want your reaction to events in Somalia to be the wrong signal to the world's thugs and bullies. I wonder, sir, if it occurs to you that the events of Haiti may indicate that that signal was sent anyway?

The President. No. The problem we had in Haiti with the boat was that we sent 200 Seabees over there who were commissioned specifically to train military officers to do more work to rebuild the country. They were lightly armed; they were not in any way—they were not peacekeepers or peacemakers.

I would remind you that the Governors Island Agreement basically was an agreement among all the major parties in Haiti which clearly set forth the fact that they did not want other countries' forces or a U.N. force coming in there to provide law and order. They wanted French-speaking forces to come in and retrain the police force. They wanted French-speaking Canadians and the United States to come in and retrain the army to rebuild the country.

So those people were simply not able or ever authorized to pursue any mission other than that. I was not about to put 200 American Seabees into a potentially dangerous situation for which they were neither trained nor armed to deal with at that moment. And I did not want to leave the boat in the harbor so that that became the symbol of the debate. I pulled the boat out of the harbor to emphasize that the

Haitian parties themselves who were still there in Haiti are responsible for violating the Governors Island Agreement. We moved immediately to reimpose sanctions to include oil. We are going to do some more things unilaterally in the next day or two. And I think that we still have a chance to get this done, because the people who were there who don't want to give up power agreed to the Governors Island Agreement, and we're going to do our best to hold them to it.

Q. You don't think that those thugs on the dock there in Haiti were encouraged by the events in Somalia to try what they tried?

The President. They may or may not have been, but they're going to be sadly disappointed. I think those people on the docks in Haiti were probably the hired hands of the elites that don't want democracy to come to Haiti. So I don't think they had drawn any sophisticated interpretation from world events. But if they did, they ought to look at what else has happened in Somalia. Look at the way we have bolstered our forces. Look at the reports in the newspaper today.

What we've done in Somalia—let me go back to that—is consistent with our original mission. We did not go there to prove we could win military battles. No one seriously questions the fact that we could clean out that whole section of Mogadishu at minimum loss to ourselves if that's what we wanted to do. The reports today say that 300 Somalis were killed and 700 more were wounded in the firefight that cost our people their lives last week. That is not our mission. We did not go there to do that. We cannot let a charge we got under a U.N. resolution to do some police work—which is essentially what it is, to arrest suspects—turn into a military mission.

But the people in Haiti would be sadly misguided if they think the United States has weakened its resolve to see that democracy—the expressed will of two-thirds of the people of Haiti. I noticed Congressman Kennedy on the television this morning saying that President Aristide won an election victory with a higher percentage of the vote than any leader in the Western Hemisphere. And he can't even get into office. We're going to try to change that.

Let me just make one other comment about Haiti. This is very important to me. In addition to President Aristide, there is a government that has been struggling mightily to function in Haiti,

headed by Prime Minister Malval, a business person, a person who basically did not ask for the responsibilities that he has undertaken. I want to send a clear signal today, too, that the United States is very concerned about his ability to function and his personal safety and the safety of his government. That is very important to us. Malval is key to making this whole thing work. He is recognized as a stabilizing figure, as a person who will work with all sides, as a person who will be fair to everybody. And it would be again a grave error to underestimate the extent to which this country regards him as an important part of the ultimate solution.

Somalia

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to go back to what you said about Aideed, because it appears that you've opened the door to leave him a way out this morning when you said that we have to take into account what others did on the ground there. Do you think there's a possibility that Aideed was not directly responsible for the attack on the Pakistani U.N. forces? And do you believe there's also a possibility that Aideed could now become part of the political process and indeed may someday become President?

The President. Well, let me answer the questions somewhat separately. First of all, to take the second question, what happened over the last several weeks—and let me back up and say I understood why the United States was thought to have the only capacity to pursue the police function once the Pakistanis were killed. But keep in mind what that function was: That function was to arrest people suspected of being involved in that, not to be judge and jury, not to say we know exactly what happened, not to find people guilty in advance.

So our young soldiers, at significant risk to themselves, went out of their way to capture people without killing them. As a consequence, however, because of the circumstances, as we all know, several of them lost their lives, and hundreds of Somalis who were fighting them, either with weapons or by getting in their way, lost their lives. Now, that never should have been allowed to supplant—as I said at the United Nations before this incident occurred—that never should have been allowed to supplant the political process that was ongoing when we were in effective control up through last May.

So we had to start the political process again. We have no interest in keeping any clan or

subclan or group of Somalis out of the political process affecting the future of their people. The clan structure seems to be the dominant structure in the country. It is not for the United States or for the United Nations to eliminate whole groups of people from having a role in Somalia's future. The Somalis must decide that with the help and guidance, I believe, primarily of the African states and leadership around them, first of all.

Secondly, with regard to the specific incident, what I want to do is to see the U.N. resolution honored. That is, we want to know that there is some effort, honest, unencumbered effort, to investigate what happened to those Pakistanis and to have some resolution of that consistent with international law. We cannot expect the United Nations to go around the world, whether it's in Cambodia or Somalia or any of the many other places we're involved in peacekeeping, and have people killed and have no resolution of it.

Aideed, himself, as you know, offered in a letter to President Carter to have a genuinely unbiased commission look into this and have evidence presented to it. The United Nations may choose to take a different course in this, but we should honor the resolution. That is, you asked me a question about Aideed personally. I can't answer that. I can say that I believe in the strongest terms that the United States should continue to say, if you want us to be involved in peacekeeping, if peacekeepers get murdered doing their job the way the Pakistanis did, and others, there has to be an effort to look into who did it and to hold those accountable. If there is another way to do that, that's fine. What I said at the U.N., I will reiterate: The United States being a police officer in Somalia was turned into the waging of conflict in a highly personalized battle which undermined the political process. That is what was wrong, and that is what we have attempted to correct in the last few days.

Haiti

Q. Mr. President, your statement reassuring Prime Minister Malval of Haiti about his personal security raises the question, of course: Is there a threat to his personal security, and what happens if something happens to Prime Minister Malval?

The President. If something happens to him, it would be a very difficult situation for the

Haitians. It would make President Aristide's job more difficult, and it would further isolate the military and police authorities there and the people who are sponsoring them from the international community. I hope that he is not in danger. I do not have any information that he is in imminent danger. He's continuing to function, but if you know how he works down there, I mean, he has very limited security, he does a lot of work out of his home, he has not constructed a military apparatus around himself. He really is a good citizen serving his country, and he is a necessary part of the glue that would permit President Aristide to go back down there.

Keep in mind, Aristide gave these people amnesty. The truth is, a lot of them never thought he'd do it. I know there are people who have criticized Aristide, who say that, you know, maybe he's not really a political person, can't do this. All I know is that in our dealings with him, he has done what he said he would do. And I think they were disoriented by the fact that he issued the amnesty order when they didn't think he would. And I am genuinely concerned that the forces in Haiti—let me back up and say, they signed off on the Governors Island Agreement because they realized that the sanctions were having a crushing blow on them. And in the end, they and the people who were funding a lot of their activities understood that it was going to cost them more to stay with the present course than to permit this transition to democracy.

And what we're trying to do now—our policy clearly is to remind them of why they signed off in the first place in the most forceful terms and to make it absolutely clear that no one in the international community is going to walk away from our previous policy toward Haiti if they don't honor their commitments under that agreement.

Peacekeeping Missions

Q. Mr. President, would your experiences this month in Somalia and Haiti make you more cautious about sending American peacekeepers to Bosnia?

The President. Well, my experiences in Somalia would make me more cautious about having any Americans in a peacekeeping role where there was any ambiguity at all about what the range of decisions were which could be made by a command other than an American command with direct accountability to the United States here.

Now, to be fair, our troops in Somalia were under an American commander. And even though General Bir was the overall commander, it was clear always that General Hoar here in the United States was the commanding officer of General Montgomery. But because we got a general charge from the U.N. to try to arrest people suspected of being involved in the killing of the Pakistani soldiers, not every tactical decision had to be cleared here through General Hoar.

What I've made clear all along, the reason I've said that I thought that any Bosnian operation would have to be operated through NATO—the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe is an American general that talks every day to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that works in very clear cooperation with the other NATO forces. They have drilled together. They have trained together. They have worked together. It is a much more coherent military operation. And I would have a far higher level of confidence about not only the safety of our troops but our ability to deal with that as a NATO operation. It's a whole different issue, Bosnia, but I would have a much higher level of confidence there.

With the U.N., let me just say, to go back to the U.N., I still believe that U.N. peacekeeping is important. And I still believe that America can play a role in that. But when you're talking about resolving longstanding political disputes, the United States as the world's only superpower is no more able to do that for other people than we were 30 years ago, or 20 years ago.

That's why if you go back and look at Somalia, what's going to happen here, and compare it to what the U.N. did in Cambodia, where the U.N. went into Cambodia first of all with this theory about what they had to do to or with the Khmer Rouge, and then they moved away from any kind of military approach and sent a lot of very brave peacekeepers, none of whom were Americans and some of whom lost their lives, Japanese and others, they worked through the politics of Cambodia by, in effect, creating a process in which the local people had to take responsibility for their own future. If we are going to do that kind of work, we ought to take the Cambodian model in Somalia and everywhere else.

Where we have to do peacekeeping, if we're

going to do that in a unified command, even if the Americans are always under American forces, we have got to make the kind of changes in the United Nations that I advocated in my speech to the U.N. We have got to have that international peacekeeping apparatus far better organized than it is now. And if you go back to the U.N. speech, it received little notice because of the momentary and important crises in Somalia and elsewhere. But the reorganization of the peacekeeping apparatus of the U.N. is an urgent mission because keep in mind, the U.N. peacekeepers, with no American soldiers there, are involved all over the world now, and they have done an awful lot of good work. But we plainly have to reorganize that and strengthen that. Got to go. Thank you.

Haiti

Q. Would you support the blockade in Haiti, President Clinton? Would you support a blockade?

The President. I support strongly enforcing the sanctions and—I want to answer that. I support strongly enforcing these sanctions, strongly. And over the next few days we will be announcing the form in which that sanctions enforcement will take place.

Thank you.

Q. Is that a yes or a no?

The President. Well, the word “blockade” is a term of art in international law, which is associated with a declaration of war, so I have to—

Q. How about patrols?

The President. I have to be careful in using that word, but I think that we have to enforce the sanctions.

NOTE: The President’s 28th news conference began at 10:21 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

Statement on Action by the House of Representatives on Education Reform Legislation October 14, 1993

I am pleased by last night’s overwhelming vote in the House of Representatives in favor of my Goals 2000 education reform bill. This bill takes an important step towards codifying into law the national education goals.

Goals 2000 invites every State to participate in true systemic reform and will serve as the cornerstone of my administration’s efforts to create a world-class system of education and training with high expectations and opportunities for every child.

I want to thank Chairmen Bill Ford and Dale Kildee and other Democratic members of the Education and Labor committee, whose experienced leadership and cooperation across party lines were crucial to attaining this important victory.

I am especially gratified by the broad bipartisan support that Goals 2000 enjoys. I want

to thank the many distinguished Republicans, starting with Representatives Bill Goodling and Steve Gunderson, who worked hard over many months to improve this bill and who spoke out so forcefully on its behalf yesterday. And I congratulate Secretary of Education Riley and Secretary of Labor Reich, whose unswerving commitment and effective advocacy were essential.

The enactment of my comprehensive education and training agenda is crucial to achieving an economy that can compete effectively in world markets and create high-skill, high-wage jobs for all Americans. I urge the Senate to bring this legislation to the floor as quickly as possible and approve it with bipartisan support.

It will be a great day for the children of America and for all Americans when I am able to sign Goals 2000 into law.