

At this point, it is not possible to predict how long this operation will continue. The duration of the deployment depends upon the course of events in East Timor and may include rotation of naval assets and embarked aircraft. United States support for this multinational effort will continue until transition to a U.N. peacekeeping force is complete. It is, however, our objective to redeploy U.S. forces as soon 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.

## The President's Radio Address *October 9, 1999*

Good morning. On Tuesday the Senate plans to vote on whether to ratify the nuclear test ban treaty. Today I want to emphasize why this agreement is critical to the security and future of all Americans.

Just imagine a world in which more and more countries obtained nuclear weapons and more and more destructive varieties. That may be the single greatest threat to our children's future. And the single best way to reduce it is to stop other countries from testing nuclear explosives in the first place. That's exactly what the test ban treaty will do.

The treaty is even more essential today than it was when President Eisenhower proposed it more than 40 years ago, or when President Kennedy pursued it. It's more essential even than when we signed it 3 years ago, because every year the threat grows that nuclear weapons will spread in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and Asia, to areas where American troops are deployed, to regions with intense rivalries, to rogue leaders, and perhaps even to terrorists.

The test ban treaty gives us our best chance to control this threat. A hundred and fifty-four countries have already signed it, including Russia, China, Japan, Israel, Iran, and all our European allies. Many nations have already ratified it, including 11 of our NATO Allies, including nuclear powers France and Britain. But for 2 years after I submitted the treaty to the Senate for ratification, there had been absolutely no action.

Now, only a week has been allotted to consider it. That is especially disturbing since the issue has been politicized, apparently with large numbers of Republican Senators committing to their leader to vote against it without even giving the issue serious consideration or hearing the arguments.

Now, a week is not enough time for an issue of this profound importance. That's why I've said I want to see the vote postponed so we can have a thorough debate that addresses all the legitimate concerns.

The stakes are high. If our Senate rejected this treaty outright, it would be the first time the Senate has rejected a treaty since the Treaty of Versailles, which established the League of Nations after World War I. We all know what America's walking away from the world after World War I brought us: in the Depression and the Second World War. If our Senate rejected this treaty, it would be a dangerous U-turn away from our role as the world's leader against the spread of nuclear weapons. It would say to every country in the world, "Well, the United States isn't going to test, but we're giving all of you a green light to test, develop, and deploy nuclear weapons."

Last year rival nuclear explosions by India and Pakistan shook the world. Now both countries have indicated their willingness to sign the test ban treaty. But if our Senate defeats it, can we convince India and Pakistan to forgo more tests? America has been the world's leader

against the proliferation of nuclear weapons for more than four decades. If our Senate defeats it, we won't be anymore. If our Senate defeats it, what will prevent China, Russia, or others from testing and deploying new and ever more destructive weapons?

Some oppose the treaty because they say we still need to test nuclear weapons ourselves to make sure they're reliable. But this week 32 American Nobel Prize-winning physicists and other leading scientists told the Senate that America doesn't need to test more nuclear weapons to keep a safe and reliable nuclear force. After all, we stopped testing back in 1992. And now we're spending about \$4½ billion a year on proven programs, using our advanced technology to maintain a superior nuclear force without testing. Since we don't need nuclear tests to protect our security, this treaty does not require us to do anything we haven't already done.

It's about preventing other countries from nuclear testing; about constraining nuclear weapons development around the world, at a time when we have an overwhelming advantage.

I've told the Senate I would be prepared to withdraw from this treaty if our national security ever required us to resume nuclear tests in the future. And I've urged them to work with me to include safeguards in their ratification act, as they normally do.

Some also say these treaties are too risky because some people might cheat on them. But with no treaty, other countries can test without

cheating and without limit. The treaty will strengthen our ability to determine whether other countries are engaged in suspicious activity. With onsite inspections and a global network of over 300 sensors, including 33 in Russia, 11 in China, 17 in the Middle East, we could catch cheaters and mobilize the world against them. None of that will happen if we don't ratify the treaty.

That's why four former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the current Chairman have all endorsed the nuclear test ban treaty. So have a broad spectrum of religious leaders and many other leading Americans, both Republicans and Democrats.

So I say to the Senators who haven't endorsed it, heed the best national security advice of our military leaders. Hear our allies who are looking to us to lead. Listen to the scientists. Listen to the American people who have long supported the treaty. And since you're not prepared for whatever reason to seize the priceless chance to fulfill the dream of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy for a safer world, delay the vote on the treaty, debate it thoroughly, and work with us on a bipartisan basis to address legitimate concerns. And then you'll be able to vote yes for our country and our children's future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:06 a.m. from the Lake Michigan Room at the Hilton Towers in Chicago, IL.

## Remarks to the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute Conference in Chicago, Illinois

October 9, 1999

Thank you. Good morning. You know, I was a little sleepy before I came in here and saw you. *[Laughter]* And I'm ready to go now. I thank you very much.

Let me begin by saying a simple thank you. Thank you for your friendship; thank you for your support; thank you for bringing all of the children who are here in this audience today to remind us of what our deliberations are all about. Thank you, Juan Andrade, for your long

leadership and your friendship to me, and thank you, Rey Gonzalez.

Thank you for bringing the Juan Andrade Scholarship award winners outside for me to have my picture taken with them. I enjoyed that. They were great. People who are worried about America should take a look at those young people. They would worry a lot less and feel a lot more hope.

I want to express my appreciation to everyone at the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute for