

Memorandum on Delegation of Authority To Report on Cooperative Projects With Russia

March 3, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Delegation of Authority to Transmit Report on Cooperative Projects With Russia

By authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, I hereby delegate to the Secretary of Defense the duties and responsibilities vested in the President by section 2705(d) of Division G of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277; 112 Stat. 2681-844). Such duties and responsibilities shall be exercised subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of State.

The reporting requirements delegated by this memorandum to the Secretary of Defense may

be redelegated not lower than the Under Secretary level. The Department of Defense shall obtain clearance on the report from the Office of Management and Budget prior to its submission to the Congress.

Any reference in this memorandum to the provisions of any Act shall be deemed to be referenced to such Act or its provisions as may be amended from time to time.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 6. It was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Statement Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

March 6, 2000

Thirty years ago—March 5, 1970—the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entered into force. The countries that negotiated the NPT had clear and important goals. They wanted a safer, more secure world in which states not possessing nuclear weapons would forswear their acquisition, and in which states with nuclear weapons would work toward eliminating them. They wanted an effective verification system to confirm these commitments. And they wanted to ensure that countries could use the atom peacefully to improve the lives of their people without spurring nuclear weapons proliferation.

On that day in 1970, 43 countries committed themselves to the vision of the NPT. Today, there are 187 parties. Over the past 30 years, the NPT has served as an increasingly important barrier to the spread of nuclear weapons. The United States remains committed to achieving universal adherence to the NPT and will con-

tinue working to bring all remaining countries into the treaty.

The strength and effectiveness of the NPT today are a legacy of countless individuals who crafted and promoted this irreplaceable treaty. I am proud that during my administration the parties to the NPT made a major contribution to lasting peace and security by agreeing in 1995 to make the treaty permanent.

Adherence to the NPT, together with inspections called for in the treaty by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), provide assurance to countries that their neighbors' nuclear programs are peaceful. The United States strongly supports the IAEA and calls on other NPT parties to work with us in strengthening the IAEA's ability to ensure compliance with the treaty.

Such compliance allows countries with nuclear technology to share the many peaceful benefits

of the atom, reducing the risk that this cooperation will not result in weapons activities. Improved human health, increased food production, and adequate supplies of clean water are only a few of the many ways in which nuclear techniques contribute to a better world.

The NPT also calls for parties to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.” Remarkable progress in nuclear disarmament has occurred since the end of the cold war. Under the START process, the United States and Russia have committed to reduce deployed strategic nuclear warheads by approximately two-thirds from cold war levels. We have agreed to a START III framework that would cut these arsenals by 80 percent from those peaks, and we will intensify our efforts to work with Russia to bring this agreement into effect. Already, the United States has eliminated some 59 percent of our overall nuclear weapons, and many U.S. facilities once dedicated to the production of nuclear weapons have been shut down, deactivated, or converted to other uses. Our nuclear weapons are no longer targeted against any country; our Army, Marine Corps, and surface and air Navy no longer deploy nuclear weapons; and our bomber force no longer stands on alert.

NATO has reduced the number of nuclear warheads dedicated to its sub-strategic forces in Europe by 85 percent, and NATO’s dual capable aircraft, the Alliance’s only nuclear forces, are no longer maintained on alert status, and their readiness levels have been reduced from minutes to weeks.

The United States and Russia are cooperating to ensure no further production of weapons-usable material, the safe storage of existing quantities of such material, and internationally supervised elimination of surplus stocks of nuclear materials.

We will continue the U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing and work to establish a universal ban through the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Conference on Disarmament should take the next essential step for global nuclear disarmament by negotiating a fissile material cutoff treaty now, without conditions.

The United States is committed to the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons. Achieving this goal will be neither easy nor rapid. Accordingly, the United States rededicates itself to work tirelessly and expeditiously to create conditions that will make possible even deeper reductions in nuclear weapons and, ultimately, their elimination.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

March 7, 2000

Gun Safety Legislation

The President. Good afternoon. Given what I want to talk about today, it seems fitting that I am speaking to you in the briefing room we have just named for Jim Brady.

Last spring, the brutal shootings at Columbine gave a life-and-death urgency to the call for strengthening our Nation’s gun laws. The Senate responded to that call, in spite of fierce pressures by the gun lobby. With a tie-breaking vote by the Vice President, the Senate passed an amendment to close the gun show loophole and pass other commonsense provisions that require child safety locks and ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips.

Unfortunately, the House narrowly defeated the McCarthy amendment to close the gun show loophole and passed a much weaker bill than the Senate did. Now, for the past 8 months, the leaders in Congress have done virtually nothing to complete a final bill.

That’s why I called upon Senators Hatch and Leahy and Representatives Hyde and Conyers to come to the White House this morning. I met with them in the Oval Office for nearly an hour. We had a very good discussion. My message was simple: Congress has kept the American people waiting long enough. I want Congress to finish the gun bill and send it to me by the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy, April 20th.