AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

once again it appears that the will of the American people will be thwarted.

In the dead of the night last night the House leaders concocted a process filled with enough poison pills and legislative sleights of hand to practically guarantee the defeat of this bill. This is a travesty. It's the sort of thing they did to kill commonsense gun legislation in the aftermath of Littleton. The American people want something; there is a bipartisan majority for it; the leadership makes a deal with the special interest and figures out some procedural way to tie everything up in knots to keep it from passing.

Now, a bipartisan majority is poised to pass this bill. But now they are being blocked by legislative tactics concocted by the leadership that blatantly put special interests ahead of the interests of the American people.

What is the result of this? The Republican leadership would ensure that the American people will have to wait for the right to see a specialist, wait for the right to have access to the nearest emergency room care, wait for the right to stay with their health care provider throughout a course of cancer treatment or pregnancy, wait for the right to hold their health plan accountable for harmful decisions.

Again, I ask the bipartisan majority who favor the Patients' Bill of Rights: Don't make them wait. Reject these tactics. Insist that the leadership allow a fair up or down vote on the Norwood-Dingell bill. Insist on an up or down vote on a bill that is comprehensive, enforceable, and paid for. Don't let this 11th hour gimmick kill 2 years of hard work for something the overwhelming majority of Americans of all political persuasions know we need to do.

The American people deserve more than partisan posturing and legislative gamesmanship on an issue this vital. The people who think it's the wrong thing to do ought to just stand up on the floor and vote against it. But they know they're in the minority; they shouldn't be able to pull some 11th hour deal that keeps the vote from coming out the way a majority want it to come out.

Let me say, finally, we also should proceed with our actions to protect Americans from the threat of nuclear weapons. Later this afternoon, I'll meet here at the White House with Nobel laureates, former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and others on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. I fervently believe, as all of you know, that this treaty will restrain the spread of nuclear weapons, while enabling us to maintain the effectiveness of our nuclear arsenal.

As you know, there are discussions between Republicans and Democrats on the Hill about a better process for deliberating on this important treaty. After 2 long years of inaction, one week is very little time for considered action. The Chemical Weapons Convention, for example, that we ratified in 1997, had 14 full days of hearings in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee after a long process of negotiations. But for now, the vote is scheduled for Tuesday, and I will continue to aggressively argue to the Senate and to the American people that this is in our national interests.

And I will have a little more to say about this later today at the other event.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Supporters of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

October 6, 1999

Thank you very much. Let me begin by saying a profound word of thanks to Senator Glenn, to General Shalikashvili, to Dr. Townes, and to Secretary Cohen for what they have said. I thank General Jones and Admiral Crowe for being here. I thank all the other Nobel laureates who are here; Secretary Richardson and General Shelton and the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Mr. Berger and Mr. Podesta, the other people from the White House. And I thank Senators Biden and Dorgan for their presence here and their enormous leadership on this issue, and other committed American citizens who are in this audience.

Let me say that I was sitting here thinking two things when the previous speakers were speaking. One is, it made me very proud to be an American, to know that our country had been served by people like these four, without regard to party. The second is that

each in their own way represent a different piece of the American experience over the last 50 years and bring a remarkable combination of intellect, knowledge, experience, and humanity to the remarks that they made.

There's a reason that President Eisenhower said we ought to do this and a reason that President Kennedy agreed. They saw World War II from slightly different angles and different ranks, but they experienced the horror of the atomic era's onset in much the same way. I think you could make a compelling argument that this treaty is more needed now than it was when they advocated it, when there were only two nuclear powers. I think you could make a compelling argument that, given the events of the last couple of years, this treaty is more needed than it was when I signed it at the United Nations 3 years ago. Nuclear technology and know-how continue to spread. The risk that more and more countries will obtain weapons that are nuclear is more serious than ever.

I said yesterday—I'd like to just stop here and go off the script. I am very worried that the 21st century will see the proliferation of nuclear and chemical and biological weapons; that those systems will undergo a process of miniaturization, just as almost all other technological events have led us to, in good ways and bad; and that we will continue to see the mixing and blending of misconduct in the new century by rogue states, angry countries, and terrorist groups. It is, therefore, essential that the United States stay in the nonproliferation lead in a comprehensive way.

Now, if you look at what we're trying to do with the Biological Weapons Convention, for example, in putting teeth in that while increasing our own ability to protect our own people and protect our friends who want to work with us from biological weaponry, you see a good direction. If you look at what we did with the Chemical Weapons Convention, working in good faith for months with the Congress to ask the same question we're asking here—are we better off with this or without it?—and how we added safeguard after safeguard after safeguard, both generated out of the administration and generated from leaders of both parties in the Congress, that's how we ought to look at this.

But we have to ask ourselves just the same question they all presented, because the nuclear threat is still the largest one, and are we better off or not if we adopt this treaty?

I think we start with the fact that the best way to constrain the danger of nuclear proliferation and, God forbid, the use of a nuclear weapon, is to stop other countries from testing nuclear weapons. That's what this test ban treaty will do. A vote, therefore, to ratify is a vote to increase the protections of our people and the world from nuclear war. By contrast, a vote against it risks a much more dangerous future.

One of the interesting things—I'll bet you that people in other parts of the world, particularly those that have nuclear technology, are watching the current debate with some measure of bewilderment. I mean, today we enjoy unmatched influence, with peace and freedom ascendant in the world, with enormous prosperity, enormous technical advances. And by and large, on a bipartisan basis, we've done a pretty good job of dealing with this unique moment in history.

We've seen the end of the cold war making possible agreements to cut U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals by more than 60 percent. We have offered the Russians the opportunity of further cuts if they will ratify START II. But we know the nuclear peril persists and that there's growing danger that these weapons could spread in the Middle East, in the Persian Gulf, in Asia, to areas where our troops are deployed. We know that they can be present in areas where there are intense rivalries and, unlike at least the latter years of the cold war, still very much the possibility of misunderstanding between countries with this capacity.

Now, let me say the reason I say that I think other countries will be looking at this, one of the concerns that I have had all along is that the countries we need to get involved in this, India, Pakistan, all the other countries, will say, "Well, gosh, when we all get in this Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Americans have a big advantage, because they're spending $4.5 billion maintaining the integrity of their nuclear stockpile." And I always thought that, too. And I think that's a good thing, because people around the

world know we're not going to abuse this responsibility we have.

But it is strange to me—and I'm sure strange for people in foreign capitals analyzing the debate going on in Washington—that there are people against this treaty who somehow think we will be disadvantaged by it. So instead, they propose to say, well, we—they don't, any of them, say we should start testing again. So the message of not ratifying this treaty is, "Okay, we're not going to test, but you guys have a green light."

Now, forgive my less than elevated language, but I think we've got to put this down where everybody can get it. And I don't think we ought to give a green light to our friends in India and Pakistan, to the Chinese or the Russians, or to people who would be nuclear powers. I think that would be a mistake.

I think we ought to give them an outstretched hand and say, let us show common restraint. And see this in the framework of our continuing work with the Russians to secure their own nuclear materials, to destroy nuclear weapons that are scheduled for destruction, and to continue our effort to reduce the nuclear threat.

The argument, it seems to me, doesn't hold water, this argument that somehow we would be better off, even though we're not going to start testing again, to walk away from this treaty and give a green light to all these other countries in the world.

Now, I sent this test ban treaty up to the Senate over 2 years ago. For 2 years, the opponents of the treaty refused to hold any hearings. Suddenly, they say, "Okay, you've got to vote up or down in a week." Now, this is a tough fight without much time, and there are lots of technical arguments can be made to confuse the issue. But I would like to just reiterate what has already been said by previous speakers and make one other point.

There are basically three categories of arguments against the treaty. Two have been dealt with. One is, "Well, this won't detect every test that anybody could do at every level," and General Shalikashvili addressed that. We will have censors all over the world that will detect far more tests than will be detected if this treaty is not ratified and does not enter into force. And our military have repeatedly said that any test of a size that would present any kind of credible threat to what we have to do to protect the American people, we would know about, and we could respond in an appropriate and timely fashion.

The second argument is, no matter what all these guys say, they can find three scientists somewhere who will say—or maybe 300, I don't know—that they just don't agree and maybe there is some scenario under which the security and reliability of the nuclear deterrent in America can be eroded. Well, I think that at some point, with all these Nobel laureates and our laboratory heads and the others that have endorsed this—say what they say, you have to say, what is the likelihood that America can maintain the security and reliability of its nuclear deterrent, as compared with every other country, if they come under the umbrella of this and the treaty enters into force?

The same people say that we ought to build a national missile defense, notwithstanding the technological uncertainties, because our skill is so much greater, we can always find a technological answer to everything. And I would argue that our relative advantage in security, even if you have some smidgen of a doubt about the security and reliability issue, will be far greater if we get everybody under this tent and we're all living under the same rules, than it will be if we're all outside the tent.

Now, there's a third sort of grab-bag set of arguments against it, and I don't mean to deprecate them. Some of them are actually quite serious and substantial questions that have been raised about various countries' activities in particular places and other things. The point I want to make about them is, go back and look at the process we adopted in the Chemical Weapons Convention. Every single other objection that has been raised or question that has been raised can be dealt with by adding an appropriately worded safeguard to this treaty. It either falls within the six we've already offered and asked for or could be crafted in a careful negotiation as a result of a serious process. So I do not believe that any of these things are serious stumbling blocks to the profound argument that this is in our interest.

Look, 154 countries have signed this treaty—Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, Israel, Iran, all our NATO Allies—51 have already ratified, 11 of our NATO Allies, including nuclear powers Britain and France. But it can't go into effect unless the U.S. and the other designated nations ratify it. And once again, we need American leadership to protect American interests and to advance the peace of the world.

I say again, we're spending $4½ billion a year a protect the security and reliability of the nuclear stockpile. There is a reason that Secretary Cohen and Secretary Richardson and our laboratory heads believe that we can do this. Once again, I say the U.S. stopped testing in 1992. What in the world would prevent us from trying to have a regime where we want other people to join us in stopping testing?

Let me just give one example. Last year the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan shook the world. After those tests occurred, they had a serious confrontation along the line of control in Kashmir. I spent our Independence Day, the Fourth of July, meeting with the Pakistani Prime Minister and his senior government officials in an intense effort to try to help defuse this situation.

Now, both of these countries have indicated they will sign this treaty. If our Senate defeats it, do you think they'll sign it? Do you think they'll ratify it? Do you think for a minute that they will forgo further tests if they believe that the leading force in the world for nuclear nonproliferation has taken a U-turn? If our Senate defeats the treaty, will it encourage the Russians, the Chinese, and others to refrain from trying to find and test new, more sophisticated, more destructive nuclear weapons? Or will it give them a green light?

Now, I said earlier we've been working with Congress on missile defense to protect us from a nuclear attack should one ever come. I support that work. And if we can develop a system we think will work, we owe it to the American people to work with the Russians and others to figure out a way to give our people the maximum protection. But our first line of defense should be preventing countries from having those weapons in the first place.

It would be the height of irresponsibility to rely on the last line of defense to say, "We're not going to test. You guys test. And we're in a race to get up a missile defense, and we sure hope it will work if the wheels run off 30 or 40 years from now." This argument doesn't hold water.

People say, "Well, but somebody might cheat." Well, that's true, somebody might cheat. Happens all the time, in all regimes. Question is, are we more likely to catch them with the treaty or without?

You all know—and I am confident that people on the Hill have to know—that this test ban treaty will strengthen our ability to determine whether or not nations are involved in weapons activities. You've heard the 300 sensors mentioned. Let me tell you what that means in practical terms. If this treaty goes into effect, there will be 31 sensors in Russia, 11 in China, 17 in the Middle East alone, and the remainder of the 300-plus in other critical places around the world. If we can find cheating, because it's there, then we'll do what's necessary to stop or counter it.

Let me again say I want to thank the former chairs of the Joint Chiefs who have endorsed this. I want to thank the current Chair, and all the Joint Chiefs, and the previous service chiefs who have been with us in this: Lawrence Eagleburger, the Secretary of State under President Bush; Paul Nitze, a top Presidential adviser from Presidents Truman to Reagan; former Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker, many Republicans and Democrats who have dealt with this issue for years have stayed with us. John Glenn, from *Mercury* to *Discovery*—are you going up again, John?—has always been at the cutting edge of technology's promise. But he's also flown fighter planes and seen war.

The Nobel laureates who are here, Dr. Ramsey, Dr. Fitch, both part of the Manhattan Project; Dr. Ramsey, a young scientist, Dr. Fitch, a teenage soldier, witnessed the very first nuclear test 54 years ago in the New Mexico desert. Their letter says, "It is imperative"—underline "imperative"—"that the test ban treaty be ratified."

Let me just say one other thing. There may be a suggestion here that our heart is overcoming our head and all that. I'd like to give

you one example that I think refutes that on another topic. One of the biggest disappointments I've had as President, a bitter disappointment for me, is that I could not sign in good conscience the treaty banning landmines, because we have done more since I've been President to get rid of landmines than any country in the world by far. We spend half the money the world spends on demining. We have destroyed over a million of our own mines.

I couldn't do it because the way the treaty was worded was unfair to the United States and to our Korean allies in meeting our responsibilities along the DMZ in South Korea and because it outlawed our antitank mines while leaving every other country's intact. And I thought it was unfair.

But it just killed me. But all of us who are in charge of the Nation's security engage our heads, as well as our hearts. Thinking and feeling lead you to the conclusion that this treaty should be ratified.

Every single serious question that can be raised about this kind of bomb, that kind of bomb, what this country has, what's going on here, there, and yonder—every single one of them can be dealt with in the safeguard structure that is normally a product of every serious treaty deliberation in the United States Senate. And I say again, from the time of President Eisenhower, the United States has led the world in the cause of nonproliferation. We have new, serious proliferation threats that our predecessors have not faced. And it is all the more imperative that we do everything we possibly can to minimize the risks our children will face.

That is what you were trying to do. I thank the Senators who are here with us today and pray that they can swell their ranks by next week.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:43 p.m in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator and astronaut John Glenn, who introduced the President; former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, USA (Ret.), Gen. Davis C. Jones, USA (Ret.), and Gen. William J. Crowe, Jr., USN (Ret.); and Nobel Prize for Physics recipients Charles H. Townes (1964), Noram F. Ramsey (1989), and Val L. Fitch (1980).

Statement on the London Commuter Train Crash

October 6, 1999

I want to offer my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of those who were injured or killed in yesterday's train crash in London. This incident was particularly tragic because it happened in such an everyday setting—as commuters headed towards another day at work. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Americans who were among the injured, and all the victims and their families.

Proclamation 7234—General Pulaski Memorial Day, 1999

October 6, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In the more than two centuries that have passed since the signing of our Declaration of Independence, America has grown from a struggling democracy into the most powerful Nation on earth. But today, even as we enter the new century as a proud, prosperous, and free people, we must never forget those friends who cast their lot with us when the outcome of our bid for independence was unclear. Among those to whom we owe such a debt of gratitude is General Casimir Pulaski of Poland, who gave his life for our freedom on a Revolutionary War battlefield 220 years ago this month.

Casimir Pulaski had scarcely reached adulthood when he joined his father and brothers in the struggle for sovereignty for their native Poland. Though the Polish forces were skilled in battle, neighboring empires outnumbered and defeated them, and Pulaski himself was forced into exile. But soon the young soldier answered another call for freedom—this time on behalf of the fledgling United States of America. He distinguished himself in his first military engagement in our War for Independence, and the Continental Congress immediately commissioned him as a brigadier general and assigned him to command the cavalry of the Continental Army. Fighting with characteristic valor and