

ficers, including Secretary of State Christopher later this month, will help to move the relationship forward.

Statement by the Press Secretary on Nuclear Testing by China

October 5, 1993

Last night, China conducted an underground nuclear test at the Lop Nur test site in northwest China, despite the urging of more than 20 nations, including the United States, not to do so.

The United States deeply regrets this action. We urge China to refrain from further nuclear tests and to join the other nuclear powers in a global moratorium. Such a moratorium will contribute to the achievement of the administration's goal of completing a Comprehensive Test Ban by 1996, to which the administration is committed.

The President has today directed the Department of Energy to take such actions as are needed to put the U.S. in a position to be able to conduct nuclear tests next year, provided the notification and review conditions of the Hatfield-Exon-Mitchell amendment are met in the spring of 1994.

The President's ultimate decision on whether to test will be based on fundamental U.S. national security interests, taking into account:

- the contribution further tests would make to improving the safety and reliability of the U.S. arsenal in preparation for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTB);
- the extent to which China and others have responded to the U.S. appeal for a global moratorium on testing;
- progress in the CTB negotiations;
- the implications of further U.S. nuclear tests on our broader nonproliferation objectives.

Administration officials will begin consultations at once with Congress and our allies on these issues.

Remarks on Signing the Hatch Act Reform Amendments of 1993

October 6, 1993

Thank you. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. This is a very happy day for me. I've had lots of discussions with Senator Glenn about this bill. Bill Clay is happy as a lark. This has put 30 years on his life today. And the Vice President and I had occasion to talk about this quite a lot during the reinventing Government effort. I have some remarks I want to make, but I hope you will forgive me if, just for a moment, since this is my opportunity to speak to the national press and to the American people as well as to speak to you, I make a brief statement about Somalia.

Today I have had two serious meetings with my national security advisers, along with the meeting we had last night, to discuss the future course of the United States in Somalia.

Our forces went there last year under the previous administration on an extraordinary human mission: 350,000 Somalis had starved because anarchy and famine and disease had prevailed. Today we are completing the job of establishing security in Somalia that will not only permit those who are now living to enjoy the immediate fruits of our common efforts with our allies in the United Nations but also to prevent that terrible crisis from occurring as soon as we are gone. It is essential that we conclude our mission in Somalia but that we do it with firmness and steadiness of purpose.

I want to emphasize that tomorrow I will be consulting with congressional leaders in both parties and with others, and then I will report to you and to the American people. But this much I want to say today. Our men and women in Somalia, including any held captive, deserve our full support. They went there to do something almost unique in human history. We are anxious to conclude our role there honorably, but we do not want to see a reversion to the absolute chaos and the terrible misery which existed before.

I think the American people, and I hope the Congress will be satisfied that we have assessed our position accurately and that we have a good policy to pursue. I will discuss that with them tomorrow, as I said, and then

I will be back to the American people and to the press as soon as that is done.

Let me say this is something of special importance to me today. When I was a 32-year-old freshman Governor, in my first year, one of the first bills I sponsored in my legislature was a bill repealing restrictions on political activities by State employees in my State. A bill that, very much like the Hatch Act, had stayed on in its present form because it was needed in a former time when, I'm a little embarrassed to say, State employees decades ago would mysteriously turn up with increases in welfare checks right before the election. Well, that hasn't happened in a long time in my State, or in any other. And so we changed the law. And I can honestly say in all the years since, not a single solitary soul ever lodged a single solitary complaint against any of our public employees for being good citizens.

Today, we put an end to a vexing contradiction in America's public life with a solution, I hasten to add, looking at the Members of Congress who are here, that is neither Democratic nor Republican but American in nature. And I thank the members of both parties who supported this important reform.

We've been supporting democracy throughout the world. We've been standing up for Boris Yeltsin in the tight he's been in and cheering when he prevailed and cheering when he reaffirmed his determination to have elections. But here in our own country, millions of our own citizens have been denied one of the most basic democratic rights, the right to participate in the political process, because of conditions that haven't existed for a very long time.

The original purpose of the Hatch Act was to protect Federal employees and other citizens from coming under improper political pressure. But now our Federal work force is the product of merit system, not patronage. We have laws to protect our citizens against coercion and intimidation. We have guarantees that the administration of Federal laws must be fair and impartial. We have an exceedingly vigilant press and people more than eager to talk to them whenever they have been abused or think they have. The conditions which once gave rise to the Hatch Act as it was before this reform bill passed

are no longer present, and they cannot justify the continued muzzling of millions of American citizens.

The Federal Employees Political Activities Act, which I'm about to sign, will permit Federal employees and postal workers on their own time to manage campaigns, raise funds, to hold positions within political parties. Still, there will be some reasonable restrictions. They wouldn't be able to run for partisan political office themselves, for example, and there will be some new responsibilities, which I applaud the Federal employees' unions for embracing and supporting.

While we restore political rights to these millions of citizens, we also hold them to high standards. The Federal workplace, where the business of our Nation is done will still be strictly off limits to partisan political activity. Workers on the job won't even be allowed to wear political campaign buttons. At the same time, the reforms will maintain restrictions on the activities of workers in the most sensitive positions, in law enforcement and national security.

Because we regard good ethics as the basis of good government, this reform strengthens criminal penalties for anyone convicted of abusing his or her position. And because we want our Federal workers to be responsible, to display an integrity worthy of the public service they perform, this reform includes a provision that allows the garnishment of Federal pay to repay private debt. That's been done in the private sector for many years. And just as we now treat Federal employees like private citizens in their political activities, there's no reason Federal workers should get special protection for privately unpaid bills and obligations.

Ultimately, I believe, as Senator Glenn said, that this reform of the Hatch Act will mean more responsible, more satisfied, happier, and more productive Federal workers. When we extend the political rights of any group of Americans, we extend the political rights of all Americans. And we deepen the meaning of our own democracy.

Congress has done a lot of work on that just in the last 8 months since I've been President. We've passed the motor voter bill, which expands the franchise to people who have difficulty registering to vote. Thanks to

the Vice President, we have a plan that will radically change the way Government operates. It will give rank-and-file Federal employees more meaningful jobs, more say over their work, and enable us to do more with less and increase the confidence taxpayers have in the work we do around here.

Serious proposals on campaign finance reform and on lobbying reform have already passed the United States Senate and are now being acted on in the House of Representatives. There is a serious commitment in this Congress to try to deal with the continuing imperfections in our democracy. And I applaud them for it.

Aristotle once said that, "liberty and equality are best attained when all persons alike share in the Government to the utmost." Working together, we're closing in on that goal. And now, when I sign this bill, 3 million more Americans will have a chance to share in their beloved Government to the utmost.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Missouri Representative William Clay. H.R. 20, approved October 6, was assigned Public Law No. 103-94.

Statement on Signing the Hatch Act Reform Amendments of 1993

October 6, 1993

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 20, the "Hatch Act Reform Amendments of 1993."

For too long, the rights of Federal and postal workers to express themselves and fully participate in our political process have been curtailed. Federal law currently penalizes public servants by limiting their political participation outside the Federal workplace. People who devote their lives to public service should not be denied the right to participate more fully in the democratic process. This law moves us in a more sensible direction.

The passage of H.R. 20 is primarily due to the steadfast efforts of many Members of Congress and the Federal and postal employees and their representatives. The Hatch Act reforms in this bill will provide Federal and

postal employees the opportunity to exercise their citizenship more fully and freely for the first time in over 50 years.

At the same time, this Act spells out the rights and responsibilities of Federal and postal workers. While employees will now be allowed to volunteer on their own time for the candidate of their choice, all political activity in the Federal workplace will be prohibited, including the wearing of campaign buttons.

Further, not only does H.R. 20 continue prohibitions against soliciting political contributions from the general public and subordinate employees, but it also strengthens the criminal penalties for those convicted of abusing their official position. This balanced measure will ensure Americans fair and impartial administration of Federal laws, while providing Federal and postal employees the rights that are essential to their independent exercise of personal choice.

H.R. 20 also includes a likewise overdue provision for the garnishment of Federal pay to repay private debt. We already have the authority to offset the salaries of Federal employees for Federal debt, and we use it. In presenting his National Performance Review report, Vice President Gore expressed his faith in the quality and integrity of Government employees. He and I share that faith. This new provision of law will ensure that those few Federal workers who fail to pay their private debts will no longer be able to hide behind their Federal employment to escape their personnel financial responsibilities.

As a candidate, I strongly supported the much needed reforms contained in H.R. 20. It gives me great pleasure to sign this bill into law. I look forward to the infusion of Federal and postal employee energy, expertise, and dedication into our political system that this bill makes possible.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 6, 1993.

NOTE: H.R. 20, approved October 6, was assigned Public Law No. 103-94.