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## **Clinton Presidential Records Mandatory Declassification Review**

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The Secretary of Energy  
Washington, DC 20585

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September 17, 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Through: The Honorable Anthony Lake, National Security Advisor

Regarding the potential Chinese nuclear weapon test

Urgent action is needed to reinforce your commitment to the moratorium on nuclear weapons testing in light of the evidence that China is preparing to test on October 5. Public leadership underlining the importance of the testing moratorium to achieving progress in the non-proliferation arena would stem any further erosion in adherence to the moratorium and might give the Chinese reason to rethink their testing plans.

Even if action by our government does not deter China from performing a nuclear test, strong international leadership on this issue will still serve us well in negotiations to achieve your goals of an indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and early agreement to a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. As you demonstrated on Monday, during this historic period of international realignment, the United States has the opportunity to lead the world to a more secure future.

Threatened renewal of nuclear testing by the United States in response to a Chinese test would be unlikely to have any affect on their plans. It would require six to nine months of advance work, both technical and procedural, before we could perform such a test or tests. Moreover, if we resume testing, it would likely have a domino effect, leading to testing by the other three primary nuclear weapons states. Pressure on Russian President Yeltsin to resume testing at this time would complicate his political situation at a sensitive moment.

Over the past few months, our nuclear weapons laboratories have become convinced that the stockpile stewardship program currently under development is the most effective way of ensuring the safety, reliability and performance of our remaining nuclear weapons consistent with your goal of achieving a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Preparing for nuclear testing now would come at the expense of delaying progress on the stewardship program designed to meet the challenge of maintaining our nuclear deterrent in a comprehensive test ban regime.

I remain convinced that your conclusion, announced in the July 3 radio address extending the nuclear testing moratorium, remains valid: the price we would pay for conducting additional nuclear tests outweighs the risks of continuing the moratorium.

NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

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My recommendations are as follows:

- o Make a high-profile public statement on the importance of maintaining the nuclear testing moratorium, possibly tied to the signing of the Presidential Decision Directive concerning non-proliferation. It is important that such a statement occur *prior* to final backfilling of the Chinese test device which is expected to occur within a week.
- o Make direct contact with the Chinese leadership to express your personal concern about the implications of continued testing on our shared non-proliferation goals.
- o Privately and personally encourage other foreign leaders, including the Presidents of Russia and France, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, to directly contact the Chinese leadership expressing support for the continuation of the testing moratorium.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. [unclear]', written in a cursive style.