PSR and the CTB

1962 PSR documented presence of radioactive strontium-90 in baby teeth of U.S. children and waged a campaign against atmospheric nuclear testing.

1963 President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev signed Limited Test Ban Treaty prohibiting testing in the atmosphere, underwater and in space but allowing underground testing.

1974 **1976** The U.S. and the Soviet Union negotiated two testing treaties -- the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty -- neither of which was ratified.

1985 The Soviet Union initiated a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, which the U.S. refused to join. For 19 months the Soviets conducted no nuclear tests, while the U.S. conducted at least 25.

1988 PSR and five other groups sponsored the First International Scientific Symposium on a Nuclear Test Ban in Las Vegas, Nevada.

1988 The American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association called for a CTB.

Carrying on the campaign begun in the early 60s, PSR activists nationwide have brought this message home: halting nuclear testing will contribute to ending the arms race. Resources squandered on weapons development could be better used to sustain the nation through proper health care, education and other domestic programs.

one-third of all underground tests have vented radioactivity into the atmosphere, contaminating the environment. If a CTB were negotiated in concert with deep and permanent reductions in U.S. and Soviet nuclear arsenals, it would no longer be necessary to make new weapons; the dangerous nuclear warhead production facilities at Savannah River, Hanford, Fernald, and many other sites could be closed down.

Why Test?

In the United States, tests for the U.S. and Great Britain are conducted in the Nevada desert near Las Vegas. The primary purpose of nuclear testing is the development of new and more exotic nuclear weapons. Each design requires from five to 200 tests. Over the years, U.S. nuclear testing has enabled the development of more than 70 different warhead designs. The U.S. Government claims nuclear testing is crucial for checking the reliability of existing weapons -- a claim that has been disputed by some of the government's own research scientists. These experts have testified that the safety and reliability of nuclear weapons can be assured without nuclear explosions.

Can We Verify?

The Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), a non-partisan analytical arm of Congress, concluded that the U.S. "can detect and identify underground nuclear explosions with yields below one kiloton," with a small number of seismic monitors along Soviet borders. If an external network is supplemented with seismic monitoring stations inside Soviet territory, reconnaissance and eavesdropping satellites, on-site inspections, and data exchanges, many experts believe that the U.S. could confidently verify a complete ban on nuclear testing, even if attempts were made to evade the monitoring network.

In an independent project, the Natural Resources Defense Council monitored tests in the Soviet Union and demonstrated that this procedure is accurate and dependable.

What Can Be Done?

International pressure is building for a CTB. The health and environmental hazards of nuclear weapons production are again in the forefront of public consciousness. The INF Treaty has raised hopes that disarmament is possible, and there is world-wide support for a CTB as the critical next step. In an unprecedented action, forty nations have called for a United Nations conference to amend the Partial Test Ban Treaty into a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), of which PSR is the U.S. affiliate, has implemented a world wide "Cease-Fire" campaign calling for an end to nuclear testing. To date 10,000 letters have been sent protesting each test and emphasizing that a comprehensive test ban treaty can bring the arms race to a halt.

You can make a difference. Call or write PSR for updates on nuclear tests and protest each nuclear test by sending a brief letter or telegram to:

President George Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

General Secretary Gorbachev
c/o The Soviet Embassy
1115 16th St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20005

Your Senator
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

National security cannot be achieved merely through military spending and a constant race to build new and more powerful nuclear weapons systems. Security also comes from the strength of our economy and the investments we make in health care, education, the environment and other social priorities. We have undermined our security by neglecting these priorities in pursuit of missiles, bombers and Star Wars weapons in space.

Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) is an organization of doctors and other health professionals committed to preventing nuclear war and helping the American public redefine its national security priorities. We believe the arms race threatens our health and security by increasing the risks of nuclear war, by consuming scarce resources, and by harming our global environment.

This brochure is one in a series on national security issues published by PSR. For more information about PSR's campaign to redefine national security, or to become a PSR member, write to 1000 16th St., NW, Suite 810, Washington, DC 20036; or call (202) 785-3777.

References available from PSR upon request.