As every nuclear-age president before Reagan recognized, the most effective way to lessen nuclear tensions is through a comprehensive test ban. Not only would such an accord halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons, it would also stop the superpowers from testing ever more destablizing systems. Over the past few years, significant progress toward verifying compliance with a CTB has been made. Through seismic monitoring and on-site inspections, the means of implementing a verifiable CTB are now available.

Polls show that 75-85% of the U.S. public consistently supports a CTB. By using this politically popular and understandable approach to curbing the nuclear arms race, we can also open a broader public discourse on the convergence of environmental, development, and disarmament issues. Worldwide, native populations and others living downwind from the test sites continue to reap devastating environmental and health effects of nuclear testing in Nevada, the South Pacific and the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan. Internationally, there is no issue which commands such broad public and diplomatic support.

1991