

AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

PEACE CAUCUS

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FROM KAZAKHSTAN TO THE U.N.: AN INTERNATIONAL DEMAND FOR A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN

By Patrice Sutton & Bob Gould

In May of this year, in the remote village of Karaul, about 20 miles from the Soviet nuclear test site, several Peace Caucus members had the remarkable experience of joining together with 600 foreign and Soviet citizens to demand an end to nuclear testing. This historic demonstration was among a series of events organized by the International Citizen's Congress for a Comprehensive Test Ban. The Congress was hosted by the Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement, a grass roots anti-nuclear movement in the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan, and the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), which received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1985.

The Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement was born in February 1989 following news of a radiation leak during a Soviet nuclear weapons test in Kazakhstan. Kazakh poet Olzhas Suleimenov, appearing on local television, issued a statement condemning nuclear weapons testing and called for a mass protest meeting for the next day. The depth of popular opposition to nuclear testing was apparent from the

start -- over 5,000 people showed up for the meeting the next day in Alma Ata, the capitol of Kazakhstan.

Public Opposition Cancels Soviet Tests

The new movement was called "Nevada-Semipalatinsk", Suleimenov explained, "in the hope of uniting our efforts with fellow thinkers opposing the atomic test site in the USA." The Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement forced the Soviet Union to cancel 11 of 18 scheduled nuclear tests in 1989. No nuclear tests have taken place there in the past 10 months, and it appears likely that public pressure will be successful in shutting down the Semipalatinsk test site permanently. Soviet nuclear testing may be moved to the remote Arctic island of Novaya Zemlya where local and international opposition is already mounting.

The urgent need for fierce opposition to nuclear testing resounded through all the presentations and discussions at the International Citizen's Congress. Testing of nuclear weapons is crucial to the development of a new generation of more accurate, and lethal weapons systems. In remarks

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NICARAGUA REPORT: REACTIONS OF AN ELECTION OBSERVER

By Janet Gottschalk

Sunday, February 25, 1990, an unprecedented event in Central American history took place -- the Nicaraguan people held their *second* free and fair election in 10 years -- one which was probably the cleanest, most massively observed election in the history of Latin America.

During the early hours of the 26th, as I awoke several times, there was a strange "silence" -- even the roosters seemed to be quiet. As the day dawned and radios throughout the country announced the election totals, an extraordinary quiet settled over the country -- as if the entire nation were in a state of "profound recollection." More extraordinarily, to my knowledge, nowhere in the country were there large demonstrations celebrating the victory of UNO over the Sandinista Frente.

I was in Estell in Northern Nicaragua, in a region where a few days earlier four people had been tortured/killed by the Contras -- presumably because two had been scheduled

to be poll watchers for the elections and two were Sandinista activists. In Estell, the silence continued most of the day. Hearing my neighbor singing at the back sink we shared, I went to talk with her. Her first words were: "No more war... no more killing." When I walked through the streets, as I had for the past five days, some people smiled and said to me: "We won," repeating that now there would be no more war. Also, as two young men and their girl friends told me: "No more military service... no more draft!"

I already knew what the small shopkeepers with whom I had been talking those same days were thinking... now with the massive U.S. aid everyone was expecting and the lifting of the economic blockade of U.S. products and multilateral aid, there would be an improvement in the desperate economic situation. Once again, there would be access to credit, to dollars; there would be spare parts for tractors, cars, toilets; and business people could open their shops for

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business, not just because it was the thing to do.

As evening came, I met with a group of people from some of Estell's Basic Christian Communities. The group was smaller than usual, I was told, as many were afraid to come for fear of attacks by UNO supporters. As I sat there in the dim light, listening to the stories and the sobbing of the mothers and relatives of what are known in Nicaragua as "heroes and martyrs" -- some of the 30,000 people who have been killed these past years by the Contras -- I wept with the people, struggling in their deep sorrow and confusion to understand WHY this totally unexpected event had occurred.

Just as the people of Nicaragua have had to do, let me try and share with you some of the pieces of the puzzle -- as I pieced them together my first day back in the U.S. as a Witness for Peace observer. I had gone to Miami last February 15th to join 80 other observers in a two-day orientation on the Nicaraguan electoral process and our role in that process.

We went through the history of the recent stages in the Central American Peace Process initiated by President Oscar Arias at Esquipulas, Guatemala in 1987; we learned of the eventual willingness of the Sandinistas to hold free and fair elections, months earlier than scheduled, *on the condition* that the Contras would be disbanded and the attacks cease. In June 1989, a Supreme Electoral Council was formed to oversee the elections, and in August 1989, during a National Dialogue, a satisfactory electoral process was hammered out, with political parties reshuffled, the military draft suspended for six months, and all political parties signing a statement calling for the demobilization of the Contras.

Soon after, at the Tela, Honduras, Central American Summit, U.N. observation groups were set up to oversee the electoral process and the demobilization of the Contras.

In September 1989, UNO (a coalition of 14 parties ranging from the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Nicaragua to others on the far right) was organized with U.S. assistance. It is commonly believed that Violeta Chamorro and Virgilio Godoy were selected as UNO's candidates under U.S. State Department pressure.

In October 1989, 1.7 million people, or about 90 percent of the population, registered to vote. During this period, the Contra War began "heating up," with a total of 748 persons killed since March 1988, when the Sandinistas had declared a unilateral cease-fire. When military reservists were killed by the Contras on their way to register to vote, President Ortega made the unpopular decision to end the unilateral cease-fire, even though he did not begin an offensive.

That same month, the U.S. Congress voted to continue Contra aid -- against the wishes of the Central American presidents and against the signed statements of all political

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IPPNW Letter-Writing Campaign in Support of a Comprehensive Test Ban

The Amendment Conference of the Limited Test Ban Treaty, will be held at the United Nations in New York City this coming January. To demonstrate public support for a Comprehensive Test Ban, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and the U.S. Comprehensive Test Ban Coalition is encouraging all of us to write letters to key politicians.

The text for a sample letter, addressed to President George Bush, is given on the following page. Please adapt this letter and give it your own personal flavor if you desire. Alternatively, please adopt it wholesale.

This activity, among others, will hopefully encourage the United States to take the kind and gentle stance in support of a comprehensive ban on all nuclear weapons testing.

In addition to addressing your letter to President Bush, please send copies of your letter to the following individuals:

The Honorable James A. Baker 3d
The Secretary of State
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Thomas R. Pickering
U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
U.S. Mission to the United Nations
799 U.N. Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Your Senator:
The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Your Representative:
The Honorable _____
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Please also send a copy of your letter to the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War central office:

IPPNW
126 Rogers Street
Cambridge, MA 02142

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Letter-Writing Campaign

SAMPLE LETTER

President George Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The Soviet Government is ready to stop nuclear weapons testing. Why does the United States refuse to stop? I urge you to join the many nations party to the Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) who will vote in favor of a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) at the Amendment Conference of the Limited Test Ban Treaty. This meeting will be held at the United Nations in New York City in January 1991.

Your Administration has expressed its commitment to non-proliferation. The "threshold" nuclear states -- Argentina, Brazil, India, Pakistan, Israel and South Africa -- who have not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty are parties to the LTBT. An agreement on a Comprehensive Test Ban could commit these nations to a non-proliferation policy and certainly increase global security.

Your Administration has expressed its commitment to putting a hold on government spending. Continued nuclear testing for the purpose of modernizing nuclear weapons is the engine that drives military spending. Testing for modernization propels runaway military spending.

As a U.S. citizen, I am deeply troubled by the insistence of our government to move ahead in the development of new generations of deadly and destructive weapons. It is vital to our national security that the U.S. stop nuclear weapons testing.

Sincerely,

1990 PEACE CAUCUS PROGRAM

With the upcoming United Nations Limited Test Ban Treaty Amendment Conference, to be held this January, the Peace Caucus is sponsoring several related events, including a DEMONSTRATION at the United Nations on Tuesday. These events start on Saturday evening. Also, please note the special presentation by Dr. Marta Medina of Nicaragua on Monday evening. *Due to the labor dispute, locations of sessions scheduled for the Marriott should be confirmed at the PSR booth in New York.*

Saturday, September 29

7:30 - 9:00 PM **IMPACT OF A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

A Panel Discussion featuring: Chin Maya Ghare Khan, Ambassador to the United Nations from India
Dan Young, President, Physicians for Social Responsibility
Carolyn Cottom, Director, U.S. Comprehensive Test Ban Coalition
Moderator: Victor W. Sidel, Professor of Social Medicine, Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine
sponsors: International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Peace Caucus, Physicians for Social Responsibility
location: Hilton, 53rd & Avenue of the Americas

Sunday, September 30

2:00 - 4:00 PM **AS WE APPROACH THE UNITED NATIONS TEST BAN TREATY AMENDMENT CONFERENCE: THE NEXT STEPS**

Moderator: Carolyn Cottom, Director, U.S. Comprehensive Test Ban Coalition
sponsors: International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Peace Caucus
location: *see APHA program*

Monday, October 1

12:30 - 2:00 PM **ECONOMIC CONVERSION: AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS FINALLY COME**

Moderators: Victor W. Sidel, Professor of Social Medicine, Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Rosalind Singer, Commission on Aging, Berkeley, CA
12:30 Introduction
12:35 The Labor Perspective -- Anthony Mazzocchi, Secretary-Treasurer, Oil, Chemical & Atomic Workers International Union
12:55 The Business Perspective -- Jerome Grossman, President, Council for a Livable World
1:15 The National Commission Perspective
-- Seymour Melman, Professor Emeritus of Industrial Engineering, Columbia University
1:35 Discussion
sponsors: Peace Caucus, Occupational Health and Safety, Socialist Caucus
location: Sheraton Center, Royal Ballroom A

4:00 - 5:30 PM **CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS: PUBLIC HEALTH IN REVERSE**

President: Victor W. Sidel
4:00 Chemical and Biological Weapons: Where Do We Stand? -- Victor W. Sidel
4:15 Use of Chemical Agents in Tbilisi: Physical and Psychological Consequences -- Jennifer Leaning
4:30 Recombinant DNA: A New Era in Biological Weaponry -- Richard P. Novick
4:45 Opportunities for Strengthening the Ban on Biological Weapons -- Barbara Hatch Rosenberg
5:00 Discussion
sponsor: Peace Caucus, Environment, International Health, Socialist Caucus
location: Sheraton Center, Versailles Terrace

6:00 PM **JOINT SOCIAL HOUR**

sponsors: Rainbow Coalition Health Commission and the APHA Caucuses
location: *see APHA program*

7:00 - 8:30 PM **HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES IN NICARAGUA IN OCTOBER 1990**

Marta Medina, M.D., Ph.D., Center for Research and Consulting in Health and Social Development, Managua, Nicaragua
sponsor: Peace Caucus, Socialist Caucus, Physician's Forum, International Health
location: Hilton, Regent

Tuesday, October 2

12:00 - 2:00 **DEMONSTRATION FOR A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN**
 PM **Special Event -- BE SURE TO ATTEND!!**

NOTE: Health care workers may want to wear their white coats, bring banners, signs, etc.

Moderator: Victor W. Sidel, Professor of Social Medicine, Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

sponsors: New York Physicians for Social Responsibility, Peace Caucus

endorsed by (partial list): SANE/Freeze Council, U.S. Comprehensive Test Ban Coalition, War Resisters League

location: United Nations, Dag Hammarskjold Plaza
 East 47th and First Avenue

4:00 - 5:30 **HUMAN RIGHTS: HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

PM

Presider: Larry Egbert

4:00 Physicians and Torture -- Jonathan Fine

4:15 Hearing Loss in Former Japanese Prisoners of War -- Harry D. Kerr, TE Grossman, JC Byrd, GM Mosley

4:30 Medical Neutrality and Low-Intensity Conflict: the Phillipines Reality -- Janet Gottschalk

4:45 Use of Anesthetics for the Execution of Criminals in the United States -- Larry Egbert

5:00 Trying to Believe in Miracles and to Forget Mengele: Law, Language, and Human Experimentation -- George T. Annas

5:15 Discussion

sponsors: Peace Caucus, Socialist Caucus, International Health

location: Sheraton Center, Senate

Wednesday, October 3

12:30 - 2:00 **NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION FACILITIES - UPDATE**

PM

Presider: H. Jack Geiger

Featured Speakers: Thomas B. Cochran, Senior Staff Scientist, Natural Resources Defense Council

Anthony Robbins, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War

David A. Lewis, Physicians for Social Responsibility

sponsors: Peace Caucus, Occupational Health and Safety, Environment, Socialist Caucus,

location: Marriott, Majestic/Music Box

4:00 - 5:30 **CENTRAL AMERICAN INTERVENTIONISM: HEALTH AND SOCIAL EFFECTS**

PM

Presider: Robert Gould

4:00 Nicaraguan Health After 10 Years of Contra War -- Marta Medina

4:20 The U.S. Invasion of Panama: Military Strategy and Health Rights -- Sylvia D. Hobbs

4:40 Current Situation of Health and Human Rights in El Salvador -- Jon Liebman, Harold Nelson

5:00 Health and Repression in Guatemala -- Howard E. Takiff

5:20 Discussion

sponsors: Peace Caucus, Socialist Caucus, International Health

location: Marriott, Empire

6:00 - 7:00 **PEACE CAUCUS BUSINESS MEETING**

PM

location: Marriott, Empire

7:00 - 9:30 **IMPACTS OF POLITICAL CONFLICTS AND OPPRESSION IN HFA 2000**

PM

7:00 Introduction

7:05 Reportage of Contra Attacks on Health Units/Workers and Other Civilians in the Elite U.S. Press and the London Times, 1983-1987 -- Delfi Mondragon

7:25 The Political Economy of Pesticide Use on Guatemala -- Tracey Dewart

7:45 Health Care for Afghan Women in the Midst of Civil War -- Linda Tawfik, Catherine Solter

8:05 Enduring Effects of War in Vietnam: Health Consequences for Women, Infants and Children -- Ralph Timperi, Robert

Master, William Bicknell, Jonathan Fine, Pham Song, Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Phương, Duong Quynh Hoa, Bui Tung, Gloria

Emerson, Jennifer Cochran, Susan Lett

9:05 Discussion

sponsors: International Health, Peace Caucus

location: *see APHA Program*

COME VISIT THE PSR/PEACE CAUCUS BOOTH IN THE EXHIBIT HALL!

From Kazakhstan to the U.N.

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filmed two hours before his death last fall and shown to the Congress, Andrei Sakharov, leading Soviet dissident and designer of the hydrogen bomb, stressed the importance of a test ban so that each side would know that its opponent could not make a "major breakthrough," thus ending the "dangerous, stupid circle, in which each side fears lagging behind." The deadly paradox of nuclear weapons production and testing was explored by U.S. nuclear physicist and former bomb designer Ted Taylor who pointed out that Americans and Soviets are more likely to be killed by the pollution from their own nuclear testing than by an enemy bomb.

United Nations Test Ban Amendment Conference

A major opportunity to stop nuclear weapons testing will take place at the United Nations in January 1991, when the signers to the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty (which ended above ground testing) will convene for the purpose of amending the treaty to make it comprehensive in scope. If they are successful in passing a comprehensive test ban (CTB) amendment, all 118 countries which signed the 1963 treaty will be obligated to stop testing, including the "nuclear threshold" states of India, Pakistan, Israel, and South Africa.

The United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union have the power to veto a CTB amendment. The Soviet Union supports a CTB, and has announced its willingness to stop nuclear testing the moment the U.S. agrees to reciprocate. The U.S. has consistently rejected this offer even during a 19 month unilateral moratorium on nuclear weapons testing undertaken by the Soviet Union in 1985.

"As long as testing goes on, the arms race will go on," summed up retired Admiral Eugene Carroll at the Congress. Despite the risks posed by global arms proliferation, the U.S.

government has announced its intention to continue nuclear testing for at least another ten years. This testing program, central to Department of Energy (DOE) plans to continue the production of nuclear weapons until the middle of the 21st Century, illustrates how the U.S. remains the prime obstacle to enacting a CTB. To further underscore this point, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Thomas R. Pickering, at a meeting with IPPNW leaders held prior to the Citizen's Congress in Kazakhstan, confirmed that the U.S. will vote against a CTB. It is likely that Great Britain, which conducts its own tests at the Nevada Test site, will follow the U.S. lead.

As such, it is extremely important for us to vigorously support APHA's ongoing opposition to nuclear weapons testing. Since the 1986 APHA-sponsored demonstration against nuclear testing at the Nevada Test Site, APHA in 1987 passed a resolution calling for enactment of a CTB, and is now an active participant in the U.S. CTB Coalition, an alliance of over 200 organizations.

CTB Demonstration at the United Nations

At the APHA annual meeting this year you will have the opportunity to directly take a stand against nuclear weapons testing. On Tuesday October 2nd, between 12:00 and 2:00 PM, a demonstration for a CTB will be held at the United Nations Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, located at 47th Street and 1st Avenue. *We strongly urge you to participate in the demonstration to show your support for a CTB.* The demonstration is sponsored by the APHA Peace Caucus and the New York City chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, and endorsed by the U.S. CTB Coalition, the SANE/Freeze Council and a number of other organizations.

For more details of how you can work for a CTB, please contact IPPNW (see the letter-writing campaign on pages two and three of this newsletter) or the U.S. CTB Coalition at: 1000 16th Street NW, Suite 810, Washington DC 20036, telephone (202)862-4956.

FUND RAISING APPEAL: FOR THE CTB DEMONSTRATION

As you have undoubtedly gathered from this newsletter, a demonstration in support of a Comprehensive Test Ban is planned for the APHA meeting. This demonstration is sponsored in part by the Peace Caucus. In so doing, we are committed to contributing support for the various activities and speakers needed for a successful demonstration. **WE ARE THUS ASKING FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THIS ACTIVITY IN PARTICULAR**, but also of the Peace Caucus in general, by contributing funds to the Peace Caucus. Of course, we also urge a show of your support by showing up at the demonstration.

An easy way to contribute is simply to renew your membership in the Peace Caucus. Although we keep only

sporadic contact with you through this newsletter, those of you who attend the APHA Annual Meeting know that we have kept an active presence at the meeting. We have over 300 names on our mailing list; if each of you would contribute just \$10 to renew your membership, we would have \$3,000 that could be used to support our annual program (We currently have about \$700 in our account). Please renew, and contribute as much as you can to the Peace Caucus. Contributed funds will be used in part to defray expenses related to the CTB Demonstration.

Membership fees and donations can be sent to the address accompanying the membership/renewal form on the following page.

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when we met with him for two hours on February 28, a basic principle of the Nicaraguan Revolution has been to "establish" democracy for the first time in Nicaraguan history, and to offer options and alternatives to the people. As a consequence, he said that the greatest test of the Sandinista Revolution -- its test of fire -- is for the Sandinistas to accept the results of the election and work to solidify the democratic advances achieved in the midst of 10 years of death, destruction and misery.

Now, in much more advantageous conditions than the Sandinistas had, UNO will be given the chance to resolve Nicaragua's desperate socio-economic situation,

There is much more to say -- and much more will certainly be said as events unfold. However, I would like to share what Father Uriel Molina, founder of the ecumenical Centro Antonio Valdivieso, told us was the role of the prophetic church people. It is to:

- denounce the evil that has caused so much death and destruction (the U.S. policy of Low-Intensity Conflict); and,
- announce that the crucified Christ is not dead, that the Nicaraguan people are not dead.

Moral support, as well as financial and material aid, is badly needed by the Nicaraguan people "ahora mas que nunca" -- now, more than ever. There is great concern that UNO will follow through on its pre-election threats to rid the country of internationalists, including most missionaries and solidarity activists. Addressing this concern, President Ortega told us that "...for the past 10 years, the Sandinistas have allowed all kinds of people to come and see what was going on in Nicaragua even though they eventually spoke *against* the Nicaraguan Revolution. Now, the Sandinistas are committed to keeping that same space open so that people in solidarity with the Nicaraguan Revolution will be free to enter and live in the country."

It is a time of great tension and uncertainty in Nicaragua, a time of potential violence and civil war, a time when common people fear a Panama-style U.S. intervention, a time when the mothers of the "heroes and martyrs" wonder if their sacrifice has been in vain.

Let us walk with the Nicaraguan people and help rebuild the Contra War-ravaged country. Let us insist that the U.S. immediately demobilize the Contras and commit itself to the Central American Peace Process -in Nicaragua and in the entire Central American region.

NOTE: This article, dated March 8, 1990, was written by Dr. Gottschalk immediately upon returning to the U.S.

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