

FORGING A STRATEGY FOR THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

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Following the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998, a peace movement has begun to emerge in both countries. If this movement is to become a powerful force, however, it will have to be more clear about some of the issues which continue to divide anti-nuclear campaigners. Three basic issues are: (1) *How valid is the notion of deterrence?* A section of the peace movement has traditionally maintained and evidently still believes that minimal deterrence is a valid policy, although many others reject the notion completely. (2) *What demands should be made in relation to the CTBT?* In India, the BJP originally said that it would not sign the treaty in its present form on the grounds that it is 'discriminatory'¹ and there seems to be widespread agreement with this position even among those who oppose weaponisation; only a small number of anti-nuclear activists, notably Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik², have argued consistently that India *should* sign. More recently, the government has indicated it may sign on certain conditions. The position of the Pakistani government is similarly ambivalent, but peace activists in Pakistan have been more consistently pro-CTBT. The issue clearly demands much greater seriousness than the cavalier manner in which some commentators brush it aside,³ totally inappropriate when taking a decision on which millions of lives may hang. (3) *What demands should activists pursue in order to develop a mass movement opposed to nuclear weaponisation?*

These issues need to be debated if the peace movement is to evolve a coherent strategy. This paper is intended as a contribution to the debate.

Nuclear Deterrence or Nuclear Disarmament?

My arguments proceed from the general principle that the actual use of nuclear weapons is not justifiable *under any circumstances*, because these weapons inflict death, destruction and hideous suffering on large numbers of innocent people and there is no defence against them. Even tactical weapons, despite their smaller scale of destruction, affect non-combatants, and, by lowering the threshold between nuclear and conventional weaponry, considerably increase the risk that conventional conflicts will escalate into full-scale nuclear war. I do not therefore engage with those who can actually conceive of the maiming and killing of innocent women, children and men on grounds which they regard as compelling; such advocates of nuclear genocide are surely beyond the reach of rational ethical argument.⁴

The only logical "if immoral" argument for nuclear weapons is that given by President Truman to justify the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki: namely, that their possession by a country is a means of achieving global political dominance. This also seems to

be the rationale for the long-standing RSS commitment to India becoming a nuclear weapons power. As a BJP functionary said, 'It was not a nuclear test but a test of our nationalism... We stood for it all our lives'.⁵ This kind of nuclear nationalism is independent of threat perceptions and driven by a quest for global grandeur. However, this rationale is rarely acknowledged; instead, the development of these weapons of mass destruction is most frequently justified in the name of 'deterrence'.

The first thing to note about the so-called theory of deterrence is that it is scarcely a theory in the scientific sense, but merely a doctrine legitimising the possession of nuclear weapons with the claim that they prevent nuclear war. To test this claim the best we can do is to look at various situations and consider the evidence.

It is well known that the USA has considered or threatened the use of nuclear weapons against various targets, including the USSR, China, Cuba, and Vietnam. Can we be sure they would not have carried out the attacks if they had not been threatened with retaliation by the USSR and later China? Given that the US had already used nuclear bombs against civilian populations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we cannot rule out the possibility. Again, it has been suggested that if Japan had possessed the means to carry out retaliatory nuclear strikes on US cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki would not have been bombed. We don't know if this is true, but it could be. All we can say is that when the USSR and China first developed nuclear weapons, it was in the context of explicit nuclear threats against them.

However, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence cannot account for the fact that nuclear weapons have *never* been used after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, not even in the context of bitter conflicts between nuclear weapons states (NWSs) and countries which are not covered by any nuclear umbrella (e.g. the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, or the USA and Iraq). It seems more plausible to suppose that the real deterrent has been not the possession of a nuclear arsenal but the unremitting efforts of peace activists "foremost among them the Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors" to educate people about the horrors of nuclear weapons and convince the world that their use is a crime against humanity. 'Moral deterrence' is more consistent with the limited evidence we have and based, moreover, on a more humane conception of human nature which does not have to assume that people would go around committing the most heinous crimes against helpless, innocent persons, were it not for the fear of punishment.

Deterrence might be an understandable reaction to an immediate threat of nuclear attack. However, if we stand by the initial assump-

tion that the actual use of nuclear weapons is unjustifiable under any circumstances, then this response can only be a bluff: i.e. we say -If you kill thousands (or millions) of innocent people in our country, we will kill thousands (or millions) of innocent people in yours, but we do not intend to *do* any such thing. However, bluffing cannot be a long term strategy; it may work once or twice, not more. In the long run, either both sides will have to move towards disarmament, or a -credible deterrent must be built up. The latter is what happened in the course of the Cold War.

A deterrent will be credible only if those who possess it are prepared to *use* it. Thus there is a logical contradiction at the heart of the arguments of those, like K.Subrahmanyam, who opine that nuclear bombs will bring peace between India and Pakistan⁶: peace and security presuppose mutual confidence that the weapons will never be used - but in that case, why invest so massively in a completely useless exercise, since these weapons cannot act as a deterrent unless one believes that they *will* be used under certain circumstances? Conversely, if they are to act as a credible deterrent, each country *must* believe that the other is ready to use it, and must therefore be constantly ready to respond in kind, which is hardly a situation conducive to a sense of security or an attitude of peacefulness!

The latter situation is what seems to have followed the two sets of nuclear tests, with political leaders of each side *publicly talking about using nuclear weapons on the other*. Soon after the tests, Vajpayee declared that India was now a nuclear weapons state and -would not hesitate to use its weapons to defend its security; P.K.Iyengar, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, said that -the low yield devices in particular have given the army immense firepower for local area warfare', and 'if you put a nuclear weapon on a missile, it costs peanuts compared to arming an aircraft...Missiles are the most cost effective way of fighting a war next time'; and one columnist wrote about India creating 'tactical, low-yield weapons that can actually be used as mortar, fighter and submarine shells in war'.⁷ Not to be outdone, Pakistans External Affairs Minister Gohar Ayub Khan appeared on television after the Pakistani tests, talking about a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan which would occur so rapidly that it would be impossible to determine who fired the first missile. Meanwhile, terrorism in Kashmir and border clashes intensified⁸. 'Peace at N-point' doesn't seem to work.

In fact, India was under no threat of nuclear attack when it tested; not even proponents of the -deterrence and -national security arguments claim that it was. The argument is, rather, that it could, at some indefinite future date, be subjected to nuclear blackmail or attack unless it has a deterrent. So we are not talking about a desperate bluff to avert an impending nuclear attack but, rather, a long-term policy. Some cite China as the main threat, others cite the USA; in fact, potentially, *all* NWSs are a threat: that is precisely why anti-nuclear activists demand global nuclear disarmament. If security from nuclear blackmail or attack is the real aim, then that is surely the most obvious way of achieving it. Put like this, it becomes evident that the demand for a 'deterrent' implies *abandoning the goal of nuclear disarmament*. This is clear from the pronouncements of

Subrahmanyam: 'Once a country goes nuclear it is difficult for it to retrace the steps'; India has become a nuclear weapon state and that is an irreversible process'.¹⁰ This at least is an admission that one cannot travel in two opposite directions - towards armament and towards disarmament - at the same time!

Adopting -deterrence as a long-term policy thus involves living in the readiness to commit genocide. In the case of India and Pakistan, such a situation would, for obvious reasons, be especially devastating. Indians would have to consent to the possibility that their state will kill friends and relations across the border, and for Pakistanis *vice versa*. It is hard to imagine most ordinary people in either country being prepared to accept this or its psychological consequences.

The prospect of a nuclear attack on China - the other neighbour cited in Prime Minister Vajpayees letter to President Clinton as prompting a nuclear deterrent on the part of India - is no less horrifying. We are talking about people who share many of our own problems and aspirations, including beautiful children with their wide-eyed, trusting curiosity about the world. What kind of person could seriously contemplate subjecting these innocent people, who have done us no harm, to the fate suffered by the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

Moreover, far from ensuring South Asias security, deterrence has led from a position of relative safety to the brink of nuclear war. Deterrence against China was the pretext for India going nuclear, although China had never threatened India with nuclear weapons. The 1974 Pokhran test initiated the arms race with Pakistan, and the tests in May 1998 have exacerbated this to the point where even a stray incident might trigger a nuclear exchange. As one senior columnist pointed out, -India may have 80 bombs to Pakistans eight, but in nuclear war, there are no winners'.¹¹ The large number of people expressing similar sentiments testify to the dramatic increase in fear and insecurity following the tests. One of the most powerful protests was this one: 'As school students, we are deeply shocked at the nuclear tests conducted by both India and Pakistan, and by the nuclearisation of the subcontinent... We would like to know whether we are to enter the twenty-first century in an atmosphere of peace and amity, or an atmosphere where the possession of weapons of mass murder is a matter of pride...and whether we are condemned to a future in the shadow of the mushroom cloud'.¹²

In fact, nuclear weapons do not even guarantee 'national security' in the narrow sense of state security. The massive nuclear arsenal of the Soviet Union did not prevent it from falling apart and almost certainly *contributed* to its disintegration by withdrawing too much of the national income for military expenditure. Indian ultra-nationalists hope that the same thing will happen to Pakistan as a result of an arms race with India,¹³ ignoring the fact that the same logic could lead to the disintegration of India herself, especially if she gets into an arms race with China in an attempt to ensure second-strike capacity (even minimal) against a country whose nuclear programme is far more advanced.

Moreover, the doctrine of deterrence assumes that nuclear weapons somehow come custom-built for use as deterrents and nothing else.

This is nonsense, of course. A weapon is a weapon and can be used for whatever purpose its owner wishes.¹⁴ The US claims its nuclear arsenal is a -deterrent but has used it on dozens of occasions to threaten and blackmail other countries; likewise no sooner had India conducted the tests than politicians like L.K.Advani and Madan Lal Khurana started threatening Pakistan.

Let us leave the last word in the argument over deterrence to the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who, arguably, are the only people on earth who have suffered the catastrophic consequences of *not* having a deterrent. According to proponents of deterrence, one would expect them to be the most strident in their demand that Japan *should* have a deterrent to prevent any repetition of the pain and horror they went through and, indeed, are still suffering. But in that case why has the Japanese peace movement, led by these *Hibakusha* (survivors), consistently and passionately demanded -Zero Nuclear Weapons? Dr Mariko Kitano explains:

I am the grand daughter of a survivor of Nagasaki, and I bear the scars of that living hell in my deformed feet, one eye that cannot see and a left hand that only lies motionless at my side...How can any sane human being believe detonating nuclear devices provides security...? Is sitting on a ticking time bomb a position of security...? Is sitting on the brink of nuclear war a secure position to be in? I think not...Why do you think Japan never entered the arms race? Because we experienced the horror of nuclear energy in our homes; we saw our loved ones charred in front of our eyes; our houses crumble like sandcastles. Neither India nor Pakistan have seen the sightless eyes of a newborn in Hiroshima and Nagasaki who till this day is born with defects through no fault of his own.¹⁵

A statement by eighteen Japanese scientists on Hiroshima Day 1998 makes the point even more strongly: "The logic of nuclear deterrence has been used by both India and Pakistan to justify their acquisition of nuclear arms...We regard this...as an unparalleled insult to the victims of nuclear war and to their unrelenting pleas for nuclear disarmament over the past half century. And on Nagasaki Day, the mayor of the city said on behalf of its citizens that -the tests by India and Pakistan led to "deepening our emotional wounds and our pains".¹⁶ If, as the evidence suggests, moral deterrence is what has prevented the use of nuclear weapons for the past fifty years, then conducting nuclear tests and legitimising nuclear weapons with the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is indeed an insult and injury to the survivors of these two nuclear attacks. Anti-nuclear activists cannot adopt the doctrine of nuclear deterrence in any form without undermining their own cause.

The CTBT as a Step Towards Global Nuclear Disarmament

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has been denounced as a measure which is being pushed by the five NWSs to perpetuate their nuclear hegemony. Since such objections have been discussed in detail elsewhere,¹⁷ I shall merely add a few points:

(1) Unless it is recognised that the CTBT places significant restraints on the NWSs, it is impossible to understand the struggle taking place around it in the USA. Strong right-wing resistance in the Republican-dominated Congress and Senate have prevented ratification of the CTBT, and measures like the Stockpile Stewardship Program and keeping the Nevada Test Site in readiness indicate that the nuclear establishment hopes for its collapse. On the other side, anti-nuclear groups have been campaigning to secure ratification. The Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers, consisting of 17 anti-nuclear groups, has been 'focused on achieving difficult near-term measures that will lead to a nuclear free world...The Coalition and many other grassroots groups across the nation are now heavily involved in working for Senate ratification of the CTBT'. Their press release condemning Indias nuclear tests pointed out that: -Earlier this year, the President called on the Senate to approve the CTBT in 1998. However, Senator Jesse Helms, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, so far has refused to hold hearings on the Treaty. He suggests that the US should resume nuclear testing.¹⁸

Another press release by anti-nuclear groups after Pakistans tests notes that the CTBT 'remains bogged down in Congress by a small group of powerful Republican Senators... "Nuclear disarmament activists have been pushing this treaty for over 40 years, but the opportunity to stop testing might slip away if the U.S. doesnt ratify now," said Gordon Clark, Executive Director of Peace Action, the nations largest peace organisation.¹⁹

Peace Action, which began as a movement protesting the nuclear weapons tests of the 1950s and now has forty thousand members across the USA, has been 'pushing the US Senate very hard to ratify the CTBT...We always keep "steps" like the CTBT in the framework of nuclear weapons abolition...Peace Actions largest project for the next several months will be bringing peace issues into Congressional elections. In particular, activists will be distributing voter guides which state the positions of candidates on issues such as the CTBT...We recognise the responsibility we have as citizens of the nation with the largest nuclear weapons arsenal...The level of public distaste for nuclear weapons remains strong. A poll last year showed 87% of Americans supporting nuclear weapons abolition.²⁰

The other reason why the pro-nuclear lobby in the US are staunchly opposed to the CTBT is that the international monitoring of nuclear activities which is mandatory under the terms of the treaty, is construed by them as a breach of their national sovereignty. 'Just as India has refused to sign the CTBT, the Republican-dominated US Congress has refused to ratify it. In both countries hawks and doves...are in conflict and in both countries the hawks do not like "national security" to be hemmed in by any international agreement.²¹ From the standpoint of anti-nuclear activists, on the other hand, this is another important reason for supporting the CTBT, since without international monitoring and control global disarmament will be impossible.

There are indications that a similar struggle is going on in China, which has also signed but not ratified the CTBT, with some sections 'reserving the option of resuming nuclear testing,' and others 'work-

ing to ratify the CTBT', which would cut off that option.²² The former have gained strength from India's and Pakistan's nuclear tests and refusal to sign the CTBT: Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan is reported to have said that China did not have serious problems in signing the CTBT, 'but the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan have changed the situation'.²³

(2) There are benefits of a ban on testing, even on its own. Underground nuclear explosions contaminate the earth by releasing massive amounts of radioactivity, some of which leaks out into the atmosphere, ground water, earth and rock. The American film *Dark Circle*, which is about campaigns of local residents against a nuclear bomb factory and a planned nuclear reactor, shows that nuclear weapons kill even when they are not used: workers in the factory or power plant, residents in the vicinity of the test site, reactor or factory, personnel carrying out the tests, all suffered a much higher than normal incidence of brain tumours, leukemia, and other forms of cancer; newborn animals and babies were much more liable to suffer from birth defects.

Greenpeace International, which staged protests against the Indian and Pakistani tests in places as far apart as London, Prague and Mexico City, strongly contested the governments' claim that there was no radioactive release into the atmosphere from the Pokhran tests, citing official reports on underground tests in the US, former Soviet Union and France to show that serious radioactive contamination of the atmosphere and ground water as well as earth and rock took place; they demanded that India should sign the CTBT unconditionally.²⁴ Greenpeace cannot be accused of double standards, since they have opposed the nuclear programmes of all countries equally strongly; indeed, one of their activists was killed in the course of protests against the French tests.²⁵ Their protests and recommendation to sign the CTBT therefore carry weight, as coming from a genuine commitment to peace and protection of the environment.

Moreover, in less advanced countries like India and Pakistan, the dark circle of death looms even larger. P.K. Iyengar's calculation that nuclear weapons are cheap ignores the costs of delivery and command and control systems, which are extremely high, and also makes the naïve assumption that having nuclear weapons reduces the need for conventional weapons, whereas in all nuclear weapons states the opposite has been the case.²⁶ The millions of rupees expended on the nuclear programme are at the cost of the many thousands of people who die every year for lack of basic necessities like water, food, shelter, sanitation and health care.

(3) The Japanese peace movement is in favour of the CTBT. At a meeting in Bombay in June, Ken Sakamoto, Secretary-General of Gensuikins Hiroshima branch and a member of the Japan Teachers Association, said that the CTBT is a small but important step towards nuclear disarmament. Yasuhiko Taketa, who survived the bomb as a young boy, said that the nuclear weapons states are partly responsible for the Indian tests, because of their refusal to disarm so far; but just as the Indian tests were a step backward, the CTBT, despite minor loopholes, would be a step forward. It is hard to see anyone denouncing Taketa, who has spent his entire adult life

campaigning for global disarmament, as an agent of US nuclear hegemony! The reason why the Japanese peace movement supports the CTBT is, rather, that unlike Indian -experts who make authoritative statements about the treaty on the basis of considerable ignorance and even hearsay, they know what they are talking about. And unlike our hawks in doves clothing, they are genuinely committed to global nuclear disarmament.

Those in India who oppose the CTBT, including the Left Parties, should be aware that they are aligning themselves with the US hawks against the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ironically, those who oppose the treaty in the name of 'anti-imperialism' actually end up supporting the most imperialistic sections of the US ruling establishment!

(4) It has been argued that signing the CTBT will perpetuate a situation of nuclear apartheid, therefore we should not sign the CTBT unless the NWSs agree to a time-bound programme for disarmament. This was the stand taken by Arundhati Ghose at the Conference on Disarmament, and at first sight it seems an appealing argument, because everyone is sick of the hypocrisy, double standards and cynicism of the NWSs who want to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons to other countries while maintaining their own deadly arsenals. It sounds fair to say to them, -Unless you disarm yourselves, we are going to arm ourselves. But let's look a bit more closely at the logic of this argument.

A struggle against apartheid is a struggle against oppression and for equal rights. If we claim something as a right for ourselves, we cannot deny the same right to others. Thus if we claim that we have a -right to a nuclear arsenal, we are implicitly conceding that the NWSs have a -right to their arsenals too. Conversely, if we deny that anyone can ever have the 'right' to oppress others or engage in mass extermination, we certainly cannot claim that *we* have the 'right' to do that! So under cover of taking a hard line on disarmament, the 'nuclear apartheid' argument in fact confers legitimacy (as a 'right') on these weapons of mass destruction.

Again, what is the real purpose of linking a concrete arms control measure like the CTBT to a demand which we know from the start will *not* be met? A possible analogy is a trade union rejecting a collective agreement which limits management rights to restructure the enterprise unilaterally, on the grounds that it does not contain a time-bound commitment to the abolition of capital as such. It might have been seen as a bargaining tactic, viz. that you demand more than you expect in order to get more than what the other side is offering, if India had cooperated with the non-aligned nations and other non-NWSs to draft and push through a tougher CTBT, and had signed it in September 1996. But, -despite its rhetoric about wanting tough nuclear disarmament language in the treaty, India had refused to work with its non-aligned colleagues to strengthen the treaty's preamble by confronting Britain, France, and the United States with a coordinated nuclear disarmament proposal. This failure to cooperate with non-aligned nations on an issue of mutual interest seemed to confirm the view in Geneva that India was less interested in getting a better treaty than with pandering to an ever more strident sector of domestic opinion that wanted New Delhi to demonstrate

its nuclear capability and to keep all of its nuclear options open.¹²⁷ This view was dramatically confirmed when India went ahead and conducted five tests in May 1998.

One is under no illusion about the hypocrisy of representatives of the USA, which has the biggest nuclear arsenal in the world and has conducted thousands of nuclear tests, when it condemns Indias weapon tests. But now the government of India has equally lost the moral right to criticise US nuclear policy. -By joining the nuclear club, in fact, if not in form, India has diluted its stance on disarmament; today it sounds as hypocritical as other nuclear powers do on the subject. Or as a CND spokesman put it, 'it is sad to see India using the same sort of rhetoric and justification that Britain has over the past 30 years.'¹²⁸ India has joined the oppressive nuclear regime as an oppressor, and has thereby lost the right to speak for the oppressed.

(5) Again, it has been said that "India will not sign the CTBT under duress; we cannot subscribe to it when a gun is put to our head and we are informed that either you sign this piece of paper or else..."¹²⁹

What a paradox that India should have to be pressurised to sign a treaty which she herself proposed to begin with and supported for forty years! Indias previous support for the CTBT and global disarmament stemmed from the countrys espousal of both non-violence and non-alignment. From the spiritual legacy of the Buddha all the way to Gandhi, the philosophy of non-violence has been an important part of Indian culture and identity, and the nuclear weapons programme is a *direct attack on this tradition*. Another aspect of Indias post-Independence political project was embodied in its freedom struggle and position of leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement: the struggle against national oppression and great-power domination. Nuclear weaponisation represents a radical departure from this tradition too. The ethos of solidarity with the oppressed people of all nations is being replaced by a callous disregard for the lives of those who have no desire to have a nuclear arsenal, and a refusal of solidarity with or from them; the aim now is not to oppose oppression and big-power domination but to join the oppressor states and become one of the big powers. This, however, is largely an official stance.

Despite the consensus claimed in favour of the tests, it became increasingly clear in the following weeks that many ordinary people felt a deep sense of loss, although most of them kept their feelings to themselves for fear of being branded 'anti-national'.

The inhabitants of Pokhran and Khetolai responded with applause when the Japanese peace delegation visiting the area called for abolition of nuclear weapons and tests. The response was the same when novelist Arundhati Roy announced, "Im willing to sign any nuclear non-proliferation treaty or nuclear test ban treaty thats going, at a conference in Chennai."³⁰ So exactly whose India is it that has to be bullied into signing the CTBT? Certainly not the India of Mahatma Gandhi, who uncompromisingly opposed nuclear weapons and advocated unilateral disarmament, nor of Jawaharlal Nehru, whose efforts to achieve a test ban can still succeed if they are not sabotaged by his successors, nor of millions of peace-loving Indians, who want the abolition of nuclear weapons and tests once they

know about their effects. The India represented by these social and political sectors would in fact demand that the USA, Russia and China ratify the CTBT without delay, so that the world as a whole can progress to stronger nuclear disarmament measures.

What Next? Demands and Strategy

Once it is established that the possession of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan leads to a high risk of nuclear war, the obvious solution is denuclearisation of the subcontinent as an urgent necessity. Discussions need to be initiated in the peace movement on the most practical suggestions for achieving this. One proposal is campaigning for South Asia to be made into a nuclear-weapon-free zone under the supervision of a number of non-nuclear weapons states (non-NWSs), and this deserves serious consideration. Two types of objection are likely to be raised, (a) principled and (b) practical. The former consists of the argument that it is discriminatory to denuclearise South Asia while other parts of the world retain nuclear weapons. This is like saying that even if you suffer a high risk of fire, you should not acquire fire-fighting equipment unless your neighbours " who are likewise at risk, but less so " do the same. Or arguing that we must condemn our children to live in the shadow of the mushroom cloud in order to prove that we can be just as genocidal as any other nation. The simple answer to this objection is that it is in our own interest to avoid the brutalisation, fear and insecurity that mutual deterrence implies.

(b) The practical objection is that this is not a realistic goal. But what alternatives do we have? George Fernandes and others have declared their intention of going ahead with weaponisation, and Pakistan will inevitably follow suit. Given the levels of mutual fear which have been generated, there is no way in which isolated peace movements in each country could gain mass support for unilateral disarmament. The suggestion of a nuclear-free zone at least has the advantages that (1) it will mean a *joint* campaign in India, Pakistan and other countries of the region for *bilateral* disarmament, (2) a neutral monitoring system will be set up to ensure compliance, and (3) there are already such zones in Latin America and the Pacific, and we can draw on their experience.

Simultaneously, there needs to be a campaign to push both governments to sign and ratify the CTBT unconditionally. It is possible that the BJP, for its own pragmatic reasons, may agree to sign. If so, the other political parties, including those of the Left, should be pressurised to *ratify* this decision. If the BJP refuses to sign in the end, the Opposition parties should come together and form a secular government which will sign and ratify the treaty with the support of some of the BJP allies. The pressure of sanctions has forced the Pakistani government to reconsider its stand on the CTBT, and if the Indian government is likewise willing to sign, this would certainly curb the arms race even if the denuclearisation campaign does not at first succeed.

What will happen if India neither signs nor agrees to bilateral denuclearisation? It is likely that nuclear lobbies in the NWSs will take Indias refusal as an excuse to sabotage the CTBT, resume testing, and go ahead with producing new and more deadly weapons. The India-Pakistan arms race will increase insecurity and

poverty in South Asia. An India-China arms race will put intolerable strains on the Indian economy. The entire momentum towards global nuclear disarmament will be lost. Millions more people will suffer as a result of nuclear tests, accidents, weapons production. Are those who oppose regional disarmament and signing the CTBT willing to take the responsibility for all this?

Many people who opposed the Indian nuclear tests have nonetheless bought into some arguments of the hawks. This large middle group, which includes the majority of the Left parties and sections of Congress and the UF, *have to rethink their stand* " unless they want to go down in history as politicians who opposed global nuclear disarmament. Secondly, the overwhelming majority of people in India do not have the information to make up their minds, and it is the duty of those who have access to that information to make it available to them, without distorting or concealing anything.

Notes

1. 'The Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee categorically dismissed all speculation that India would succumb without protesting the provisions of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. "There is no question of India accepting this discriminatory treaty. No one should have any illusions on this score". (India will not succumb: PM, *Economic Times*, 16/5/98); 'Vajpayee said, "...taken as a whole, the CTBT is discriminatory..." ('Ours will never be weapons of aggression: PM', *Business Standard*, 16/5/98)
2. See, for example, Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, *Testing Times: The Global Stake in a Nuclear Test Ban*, Dag Hammarskold Foundation, Sweden, 1996
3. A good example is GPDs statement, -The CTBT is discriminatory_ Politically it was wrong to sign the treaty. It still is. (One Part Wisdom, Three Parts Coward! *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30/5/98, p.1294)
4. I myself favour a position of non-violence, having seen so many instances where the adoption of violent means " which are also necessarily undemocratic " completely subverts the noblest of ends; but my argument does not presuppose such a position. It is compatible with recognition of the right to armed self-defence against armed aggression, using conventional weapons and avoiding attacks on non-combatants.
5. 'Govts hands not tied over CTBT', *Business Standard*, 13/5/98
6. 'Peace at N-point', *Sunday Times of India*, 31/5/98
7. 'Vajpayee declares India as a nuclear weapons state', *Economic Times*, 16/5/98; 'N-arms to take pressure off defence budget', *Business Standard*, 19/5/98; -No stop-and-go for nuclear science', *Economic Times*, 19/5/98; David Devadas, 'Hardtalk', *Business Standard*, 21/5/98
8. See, for example, 'Post-Colombo, Indo-Pak relations touch a new low', *Economic Times*, 9/8/98, and many other reports
9. E.g. K.Subrahmanyam admits, in so many words, that 'India did not go nuclear because of any immediate military threat'. ('Understanding China: Sun Tzu and Shakti', *Times of India*, 5/6/98)
10. 'Tests in national interest: experts', *Economic Times*, 12/5/98; 'The reluctant N-power', *Economic Times*, 13/5/98
11. Swaminathan Aiyar, 'Now let the bombs ensure peace', *Economic Times*, 29/5/98. So much for Defence Minister George Fernandes idiotic boast that 'the Pakistani tests were "nowhere near" the explosions conducted by India (*Economic Times* 1/6/98)!
12. Letters to the Editor, *Times of India*, 22/6/98
13. This was publicly stated by one of them at a meeting at the YMCA, Bombay, on 24/6/98
14. See E.P.Thompson, 1982, *Zero Option*, Merlin Press, London
15. Letter from Nagasaki, June 1998)
16. Appeal by eighteen Japanese scientists, 6/8/98; 'Obuchi deplores India, Pakistan for nuclear tests' *Times of India*, 10/8/98
17. See Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, 'Why India Should Sign CTBT: Returning to Our Own Agenda', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 19-25/9/98
18. Communication from Daryl Kimball dated 18/6/98; Press release dated 11/5/98
19. Press release dated 28/5/98
20. Communication from Tracy Moavero.
21. Gail Omvedt, *The Hindu*, 20/6/98
22. 'China reserves option for nuclear tests', *Economic Times*, 3/6/98; -Stop India now, China tells world, *Business Standard*, 15/5/98
23. 'China takes tough stand against Indian N-tests', *Times of India*, 10/8/98
24. 'Greenpeace says tests to affect environs', *Business Standard*, 15/5/98; 'Greenpeace blasts India over nuke tests', *Business Standard*, 18/5/98
25. The Greenpeace film 'You Cant Sink a Rainbow';
26. 'N-arms to take pressure off defence budget', *Business Standard*, 19/5/98; 'No stop-and-go for nuclear science', *Economic Times*, 19/5/98
27. Rebecca Johnson, 'The In-Comprehensive Test Ban', 1997; See also Praful Bidwai, 'CTBT: To Be or Not To Be', 1996 (both on the Internet)
28. Arun Kumar, 'This smile is maya', *Economic Times*, 13/6/98; 'Peace groups lambast West for double standards', *Business Standard*, 15/5/98
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