

The Indian Nuclear Tests: Causes, Consequences and Portents

Achin Vanaik

On May 11, 1998 India became the sixth entrant into the club of declared nuclear weapons powers when it carried out two underground tests. This was followed by three more on May 13 and, as was to be expected, on May 28 and 30, Pakistan followed suit by testing and declaring itself as the seventh nuclear weapons state (NWS). For 34 years (since China's explosion in 1964) no other country, which included a number of nuclear capable states, had crossed this threshold. On the contrary, not only had a number of advanced industrialized countries such as Switzerland, Sweden, Canada, etc. decided not to take this route but after the end of the Cold War three actual nuclear weapons powers — Belarus, Kazakhstan and most importantly Ukraine (with the world's third largest arsenal) — decided to give up this status.¹

Three nuclear threshold countries also decided to go in for complete renunciation, namely South Africa, Argentina and Brazil. The reasons for renunciation differed from country to country but the end result was a testimony to the fact that nuclear weapons were not considered important to their respective conceptions of "national security." Moreover, even a cursory survey of what has happened in the field of nuclear restraint and reductions since the end of the Cold War confirms the emergence of a hesitant, weak, uneven but nonetheless new and genuine momentum of global nuclear disarmament which clearly had influence on recent renunciators. It is not the least of the effects of India's decision to go nuclear that it will now greatly harm this momentum possibly leading to its eventual reversal.

The general political context of slow (often painfully so) progress on the nuclear weapons issue indicates at least on prima facie ground that India's claim that the enduring hypocrisies of the existing NWSs finally "drove" an India whose "patience" with the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament eventually ran out, is simply self-serving hypocrisy. Equally spurious are arguments that changes in the external security environment propelled India to do what it

did. Since it is widely recognized that Pakistan would not have gone openly nuclear unless India did so first, raising the Pakistan nuclear bogey has limited but still undeniable value — it remains one of the better ways of selling the Indian case to a general public. This is also why it has been so important to raise the "China threat" as such a crucial explanatory factor despite the fact that India-China relations have been steadily improving over the last 15 years to the private dismay of Pakistan.²

In this regard the Sangh Combine — the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Rashtriya Svayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and other minor affiliates — through its official spokespersons as well as through sympathetic ideologues has made it a matter of policy and mission to promote this line of justification. The first official explanation for the tests was not made to the Indian public but was presented in a letter to the U.S. President Clinton where the Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, explicitly cited the China factor. Since then the BJP-led government has periodically, as is to be expected, sought to play down this factor and declare its interest in improving India-China relations claiming that the tests were not carried out with China in mind. And of course, such disclaimers have been interspersed with claims about the very opposite as well. In fact, something of an orchestrated media campaign was undertaken in which the community of "strategic experts" played a very big role.³

Here, the China-Pakistan nuclear and missile relationship came in for systematic misrepresentation and exaggeration.⁴ This approach also found strong resonance among sections of the U.S. Right who see China as the future great rival of the U.S. and favor preparations for a "containment" policy which might require support from (among others) a stronger, perhaps nuclear, India. Clearly Mr. Vajpayee's letter was written expressly to cater to this sentiment. In reality, the U.S. has yet to evolve a dominant, long-term policy vis-à-vis China. The U.S. Rights approach is one perspec-

tive among others in an overall political context in which the essential nature of the U.S.-China relationship is one where the latter's posture is, and will remain, defensive.⁵ The U.S. has more possibilities and options with regard to shaping its perspectives towards China than just the most conservative form of "containment" and much will depend on ways in which China, the general Asian, and global political situation evolves in the coming years and decades.

What is of interest here is the convergence of views of the US Right and the ideologues of what is, after all, a reactionary, right-wing, authoritarian political force in India with external ambitions that must necessarily perceive China as a rival. The Sangh Combine's projection of possible future rivalry with China and the need to prepare for it is part of an ideologically-rooted vision of India's future global role which has very different foundations from the conventional pragmatism (balance of power, shifting alliances) of the standard thinking that shapes the mind-set of the average Indian Realist "strategic expert" who supported the government's decision to go nuclear. This is an ideological vision which would, if possible, actively work for the collapse of Pakistan. It imagines the establishment of a zone of Indian dominance that is not confined to the supposedly natural geographical or political context of South Asia but can extend northwards, eastwards and westwards to Central Asia, Southeast Asia and the Middle East as part of a larger project of making India a truly global power. The point is not that this is likely or at this stage a practical perspective for guiding foreign policy behavior and practice or even a longer term foreign policy "hidden agenda." But it is an ideologically rooted ambition and hope for which the development of India as a major nuclear weapons power is considered a *sine qua non*.⁶

This ambition is but the external dimension of an overall political and ideological project being undertaken by a ruthless political force of a kind that has never threatened Indian society and polity as seriously as it does now, and the character of which is still being underestimated by ideological opponents and neutrals alike. The primary factor behind this dramatic shift in India's nuclear policy is the determination of the Sangh Combine to impose its particular vision of not only what constitutes the cultural essence of India and Indian nationalism but to reshape the *total* agenda of Indian nationalism and its discourse — of what constitutes the Indian nation, national security, national interests, national (and therefore) international "greatness," etc. To perceive this government's decision to go openly nuclear in a manner that abstracts it from this domestic political and ideological dimension and to see it purely or even primarily in the usual "geopolitical" terms of "strategic balances," "external threats," "challenging the nuclear dominance of the other NWSs," etc., is to miss the most *fundamental* dimension of the whole issue.

It may be convenient and comforting for anti-nuclearists in the West and the U.S. in particular to separate the domestic issues from the supposed external concerns. Convenient, because it precludes any need for them to understand

deeply or seriously the changes that have taken place domestically in India over the last 15 and more years — the integral connection between a changing elite nationalism, rising Hindu communalism and growing nuclear belligerence. Comforting, because the laudable and legitimate preoccupation of Western anti-nuclearists to attack the primary culpability and hypocrisy of their governments in regard to the nuclear issue leads them to interpret the Indian decision as also something of a timely rebuke to the other NWSs. This is a grievous mistake. A failure to adequately understand how we have arrived at where we are will make it that much more difficult to properly understand whom we have most to fight against, or how best we are to go about doing this.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Debate

The ability of the Sangh Combine to pursue and carry out such a transformation of the entire discourse on the nuclear issue is due primarily to the same political-ideological factors and circumstances that have enabled it to change the general field of elite self-perceptions, attitudes and beliefs in a strongly pro-Hindutva direction. But specific help was given to it by the public debate that took place through most of 1995 and all of 1996 regarding the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and whether or not India should sign it. This was the most intense and prolonged public discussion pertaining to any nuclear-related issue since Independence. India's opposition to the CTBT was motivated overwhelmingly by the fear that acceptance of it would degrade, technically speaking, its position of simply keeping the option open but neither exercising it nor foreclosing it. Forswearing testing for good meant that it would never be able to develop a nuclear arsenal beyond a very crude level even if it did decide to go openly nuclear later on.

The government's adoption of a rejectionist position although it went against all efforts to promote global nuclear restraint was shameful; the CTBT formulations too could have been stronger. The CTBT was nevertheless a genuine and worthy restraint measure. However, even more appalling is the incredible deceit and distortion that has marked the dominant tone, style and character of the whole debate.⁷ The CTBT was painted as an American-led plot aimed at perpetuating a discriminatory global regime of nuclear-haves and have-nots which would have no significant restraining effect on at least the USA because it allowed for laboratory computer simulation and subcritical testing, i.e. testing of nuclear materials that do not set off a nuclear chain reaction and therefore don't produce an explosion.

Indian opposition to the CTBT, portrayed as a wonderful act of defiance and courage, particularly against the USA, was not followed by other non-nuclear weapons states (NNWSs). Why countries like Iran that supported and assented to the CTBT needed lessons in "anti-American imperialism;" or why the more gung-ho, pro-imperialist Republican party and other strong US Right in-

fluences within the civilian, scientific (the weapons laboratories) and military bureaucracies were opposed to the CTBT were questions that were never seriously addressed let alone answered. The CTBT was repeatedly portrayed as primarily a “trap” set by the NWSs led by the USA to “catch” threshold states like India. Obviously the NWSs were aware and supportive of the non-proliferation dimension of the CTBT but they were also well aware of its powerful restraining effect on their own qualitative development of nuclear weapons — which is precisely why in every NWS there was strong opposition to the CTBT from certain defense, political and scientific quarters.

But having portrayed India as avoiding a trap by its refusal to sign the CTBT the question that logically followed was obvious: why should India legally speaking avoid the trap but then by not testing and going openly nuclear act as if it would always remain within the trap? A powerful rationale for going on towards further testing was thus built into the very nature of the discourse that was so deceitfully articulated and accepted. Furthermore, such was the approval surrounding the “national consensus” (essentially an elite consensus but nonetheless a strong one) that it was clear to the discerning that the center of gravity on the nuclear question had swung decisively to the right. This not only laid down the ground for a move to go openly nuclear but indicated that such a move would probably enjoy very considerable elite and media support. This, of course, was exactly what happened when the BJP ascended to governance in a coalition dominated by them. The BJP in its previous incarnations was, incidentally, the only party which had an official position since the early 1950s (well before the emergence of the Sino-Indian rift or Pakistan as a nuclear-capable state) that it would exercise the option if it ever came to power at the Center.

Shortly after coming to power, the BJP gave the go-ahead to prepare for the tests. It now transpires that it had thought of doing this during its brief 13 day sojourn at the Centre in 1996 but that the period of rule was simply too short. The previous governments — the United Front and the Congress had considered testing as well, according to their own official statements. Certainly there was a preparation for carrying out a test in the summer of 1995 by the then Congress government. But these preparations were apparently detected by the USA and pressure was brought to bear on New Delhi not to proceed. That such a test and possibly one by the later United Front (UF) government had also been considered, indicated both the pressure of the CTBT negotiations (there was speculation that the 1995 test would be a prelude to India signing the CTBT) and the way in which a new kind of Hindutva-influenced elite nationalism had institutionalized itself. That neither the Congress “or the UF went so far as to actually test also indicated, given their official position of ambiguity, that such a dramatic change of course could not easily be carried out without a minimum of political and ideological preparation by these political forces at least among their staunchest support bases.

Up to the very eve of the tests the dominant position, overwhelmingly so, of both the formal political establishment (the spectrum of political parties) and of the “strategic community” of experts, media-people, retired diplomats, bureaucrats, defense personnel, etc. was still one of ambiguity rather than of resistance to testing and the open declaration of nuclear weapons’ status. This majority “middle ground” was literally destroyed overnight by what was, in effect, a violent political coup by the BJP. Without any warning, public debate or even consultation with its political partners the BJP decisively changed the decades long established parameters of debate and policy on the nuclear issue.⁸ Those who had occupied this middle ground had literally no choice but either to endorse, with or without qualifications, the decision or to attack it.

The Left after initial confusion did the latter but still believes naively that the old position can be restored. The other opposition political parties produced weak endorsements with qualifications and criticisms of various kinds questioning, for example, the timing though not the principle. Most members of the “strategic community” endorsed the decision and found themselves arguing that this act should be seen in terms of “national security” and not be reduced to partisan politics, i.e. rejecting the view that there was an integral connection between the basic politics and ideology of the Sangh combine and this decision. This amazing ostrich-like head-in-the-sand posture persists to this day and has been displayed by any number of people who are otherwise secular, and by many who are otherwise deeply disturbed by the communal politics of the Sangh. In short, the Sangh Combine has once again outflanked its rivals and opponents.

The Indian Left and the Nuclear Question

The tests took the Indian Left (from the mainstream to the Maoist far left) completely by surprise. It is important to understand why this was the case. The Indian Left has never categorically opposed the Indian bomb — they supported the posture of ambiguity and considered it to be stable. But Indian ambiguity was not so much a policy as the expression of a non-policy and as such was always unstable. Moreover, Indian ambiguity was always more unstable than the Israeli and Pakistani forms of nuclear ambiguity and therefore it was clear that of these three the first to go nuclear if it did so, would be India. The Indian Left were among the most “sincere” of those committed to ambiguity in the country. That is to say, they were among those most determined not to go forward towards exercising the nuclear option (even if by keeping the option open they were theoretically allowing for its possible exercise under certain conditions) and among those most confident that India would not break from this position. In brief, having decided that nuclear ambiguity was both a politically viable and sound, indeed meritorious, position they rendered themselves effectively incapable of properly understanding the essentially unstable character of the Indian posture.

The difference between the Israeli and Pakistani position on one hand and the Indian one should, on reflection, be obvious. Both Israel and Pakistan were prepared to, and did, spell out the concrete conditions under which they would move towards total renunciation of such weapons whereas India was consistently unable to do this barring the general (and from a practical diplomatic and policy perspective quite meaningless and ineffectual) demand that there must be complete global disarmament. The Israelis said they would give up their threshold status as part of an overall Middle East Peace Settlement. As long as this was not achieved they would not do so but there was also no reason for one to fear that they would go openly nuclear as long as no other rival Middle Eastern state went openly nuclear. Pakistan's position was also clearly enunciated repeatedly. They would renounce nuclear weapons if and when India did so. Their nuclear diplomacy and policy perspective (though not their preparations for developing a nuclear capability) were clearly reactive to India. They would never make the first move to go openly nuclear.

The relative coherence that characterized the Israeli and Pakistani postures of ambiguity was quite absent in the Indian case. The "China factor" was constantly invoked to explain why India could not accept regional disarmament of itself along with the "Pakistan factor," its other cited security threat. But simply keeping the option open without exercising it could not be the basis for the development of a meaningful form of nuclear diplomacy that would address its supposed security fears and threats. Since China neither regarded itself as a nuclear threat to India nor saw an India, which was nuclearly capable but unarmed, as some kind of threat to itself, it had no reason to consider engaging in nuclear diplomacy of any sort with India.

On its part, ambiguity alone could not enable India to sit down with China to carry out any kind of nuclear bargaining process. To do that, it would have to have a "minimum bank" of bargaining chips, i.e. a certain level of development of a nuclear arsenal which China believed was a threat, thus pushing both countries to emulate the arms control diplomacy of the USA-USSR in an earlier period. Since ambiguity could never provide this "minimum bank," India could not hope to, or dare to, engage in serious nuclear diplomacy with China to address "mutual threats." The reiteration of the supposed Chinese nuclear threat, therefore, only served as an utterly negative, irritating, and increasingly unconvincing, diplomatic-political ploy to justify why India should not foreclose the option. The preservation of a posture of ambiguity was less adventurist, less dangerous than going openly nuclear and therefore a much preferred option. But as a policy which was supposed to "adequately" address the "nuclear national security concerns" of the country it was always an incoherent non-sequitur.

When over time a combination of factors and changes emerged which promoted a shift towards overt nuclearization, then the always unstable "middle ground" of Indian nuclear ambiguity was simply blown apart, and is now impossible to resurrect. The tragedy of the Indian Left is that

it still clings to the idea that the restoration of a posture of nuclear ambiguity is necessary, desirable and feasible! This refusal to understand its past mistakes means that the Left, even as it is today the most important political force opposing overt nuclearization in India, can still play into the hands of the most aggressive sections of pro-nuclearists in the country. This is clearly evident in regard to the issue of the CTBT. While this Left wants a permanent end to future testing by India (and Pakistan) it continues to oppose the CTBT. It fails to understand that not only were its criticisms of the treaty misguided and misleading, reflecting among other things a perverse anti-Americanism/anti-imperialism not shared by the overwhelming majority of either the international left or the international anti-nuclear movement (whose record of opposition to nuclear weapons everywhere is both more consistent and more honorable than that of the Indian Left) but that there is simply no substitute (national or otherwise) to the CTBT to either ensure or monitor impartially such a permanent ban!⁹ If India carries out further tests (and a section of its hawks inside and outside this government and the Sangh Combine recognize that to build a sophisticated nuclear arsenal of the kind they want, testing must continue) then it will almost certainly guarantee the collapse of the CTBT and the resumption of explosive testing by China, Russia and the US. The political consequences of such a development would be nothing short of disastrous.

The deeper causes for this general failure of the Indian Left to adequately address the nuclear question are to be found in three areas, very briefly touched upon here though they deserve much fuller investigation and analysis. The first pertains to a general weakness in Marxism and not merely a particular weakness of certain Marxists or the Indian Left — the question of morality and, more specifically, the issue of means and ends. Though Marxist political discourse is full of moral rhetoric and passion and the practical behavior of Marxists is invariably motivated by deep moral commitments, Marxist theorization of this dimension and much of the institutionalized practice of Marxist-inspired organizations, whether in or out of power, has in this respect been seriously flawed. The "underdevelopment of politics" and insufficient sensitivity to "rights discourse" have been well known and widely recognized consequences.

Regarding the means-end question, an instrumentalist "class" relativism (morally condemnable actions by the bourgeoisie would not necessarily nor always be so when carried out by the working class or its representatives for the sake of the revolutionary struggle) has been an all-too-frequent and dominant motif. The judgment of means or methods used is generally subordinated to the "larger" issue of who is using these means and for what purposes.¹⁰ This general approach creates problems enough when the means involved are conventional weapons and the circumstances and conditions surrounding their use are at issue. It becomes quite untenable in the case of nuclear weapons when the means are *by their very nature* so awesomely evil

in their portent and effect as to render unjustifiable their use, or potential use, for any conceivable purpose. This is so for whomsoever — left or right, revolutionaries or reactionaries, socialist regimes or capitalist regimes — would seek to harness them in this way.

Nuclear weapons throw up profound moral questions which cannot be disguised or wished away by pretending they are just like other conventional weapons — they cannot be encompassed within the framework of “normal” means-ends relationships. If torture is a near-absolute evil, not to be condoned in any circumstances, the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is as much an evil and is even nearer that terrible limit of “absoluteness” of evil. Marxists, with good reason, have never been pacifists. But there is no escape from an unconditional nuclear pacifism. That is why many from the general pacifist tradition (be its sources religious or otherwise) or, as in India, from the Gandhian tradition, have been far more morally sensitive to the issue of nuclear weapons and to the inherent immorality of all (nuclear) deterrence discourse.

The second and third failings are those of certain Marxists rather than of Marxism. In Europe and the USA, because of the felt danger of a nuclear war during the long decades of the Cold War, an intense debate about the relationship between Marxism (and Marxists) and nuclear weapons emerged. Because of this many Marxists came to realize not only the special moral problems posed by them but also came to realize that such weapons could not properly be fitted into the conventional framework of international politics, e.g. “the worldwide struggle against imperialism,” that had hitherto guided Marxists and Leftists. Such an approach leads inevitably to notions of the good bomb versus the bad bomb, the anti-imperialist or red bomb versus the capitalist bomb or even to notions of the anti-imperialist or “progressive nationalist” nuclear weapons capability of India — hence the Left justification and support for India’s posture of nuclear ambiguity.¹¹ This means that Indian Leftists, like a number of Marxists elsewhere, have been inconsistent opponents of nuclear deterrence, willing to defend implicitly or explicitly its value for some periods and in some cases, e.g. the behavior of certain regimes in Russia and/or China at some times.

Consistency is not in itself necessarily a virtue. But here it is a decisive failing. The crucial defining axis on the nuclear question between a “progressive” and a “counter-progressive” position is not anti-imperialism versus imperialism but whether or not one categorically rejects deterrence as the rationalization and justification for the production, possession and deployment of nuclear weapons. This is not just a moral stand it is also a political-strategic one because it rejects the claim of some Leftists-Marxists that the deterrence factor in a “good” or “red” bomb has been efficacious at least on some occasions. As in all arguments about the efficacy of deterrence we are dealing in counterfactuals, so there is little possibility of decisive confirmation or refutation of either of the opposing points of view. But it is certainly possible for consistent opponents of deterrence

to put forward more plausible explanations for why “imperialist” bombs were not used against “progressive” regimes than by resorting to arguments about the deterrent value of the red bomb or of the red nuclear umbrella.¹² It is the reluctance of the Indian Left to jettison fully its belief in deterrence that prevents it from being as honorable, as consistent, and as reliable a proponent for nuclear disarmament as it should and could be.

This reluctance is, of course, connected to a larger problem which goes beyond the specific terrain of nuclear weapons. It pertains to the general framework of understanding of global politics held by the Indian Left. This Left is either Stalinist or Maoist in origin. Even in the case of those sections of the Indian Left which have moved away from a rigorous commitment to these traditions there has still been no conscious, comprehensive and explicit theoretical-historical re-evaluation of this Stalinism and Maoism of a kind that has led to an official rejection and repudiation of Stalinism or to a more balanced understanding of Maoism, the ways in which it was similar to, and different from, Stalinism.

For the mainstream Left comprising the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM) there is the peculiar fact that a prolonged practical experience of operating within a bourgeois democratic framework has pushed them into a situation where, domestically, they have now become among the central political anchors for the preservation of a meaningful, if still incomplete, structure of democratic rights. They are among the most important *democratic* forces in the India of today. In this respect their Stalinist legacy counts for little practically. Much the same can be said of sections belonging to what is loosely called the Maoist tradition of “Marxist-Leninist” Communist parties. Even those Maoist groups more contemptuous of the structures of bourgeois democracy, insofar as they fight with and on behalf of some of the most oppressed sections of Indian society, obviously continue to play a progressive role of sorts.

It is not in the area of domestic political discourse and practice but on the terrain of the international that the debilitating legacies of Stalinism and Maoism, their inherently contradictory character (progressive *and* reactionary) still persists most strongly. The defining principle of this international dimension of Stalinism-Maoism is “socialism in one country.” This is, in effect, the distorted Marxist version of conventional Realist thinking with its key notions of “balance of power,” “shifting alliances,” etc. Nuclear politics is essentially grafted on to this prior Realist framework of understanding of the international arena thus giving rise to supposedly central notions of the necessity of maintaining *nuclearized* balances of power through the operation of the principle of deterrence. In brief, the Indian Left’s failure to adequately, comprehensively and explicitly come to terms with the legacy of Stalinism and Maoism has a powerful negative resonance with respect to the nuclear question specifically, and more generally, to a range of international issues.

The Effects of Going Nuclear

In discussing the consequences of India going nuclear and becoming a nuclearly-equipped power with at least the ambition to play a major global role, it is best to avoid the kind of uncontrolled speculations that are the stock-in-trade of Realist thinking. The issue is not whether some of these lines of speculation might not emerge as actual eventual outcomes at least for some actors and for some periods in the future. It is that such speculations are by their very nature uncontrolled because the foundation of data, knowledge of relevant relationships and analytical depth that they should rest on, is lacking. International Relations, contrary to the ridiculously crude schema of Political Realism, is so complex an area of investigation (only good macro-history and good macro-sociology demand comparable levels of inter-disciplinary expertise or collaboration) that it is hardly surprising that Realism is unable to intellectually grasp, let alone shape through policy, so much of what happens eventually as the unintended outcomes and unanticipated consequences of an enormously complex array of intersecting forces.

Political Realism is thus the haven of utter mediocrity. Speculative scenario building regarding possible shifts in regional and global balances and alliances, projections of possible shifts in the ambitions and perspectives of the supposedly great players in the supposedly great game of global hegemonic activity, etc. is the beloved pastime of smugly complacent and self-satisfied Realist-inspired “strategic experts” who really have nothing to be self-satisfied about. Such pretentiousness masquerading as serious thinking should simply be left to them.

What one can be better engaged in is in pointing out some of the major, highly plausible and highly probable consequences of India’s decision to go nuclear, some of which are visible already. There are five major consequences:

1) The imposition of economic and technological sanctions and the emergence of a degree of international political isolation.

This is the most immediate and visible effect but also the one least likely to endure for long. The caveat here is that sanctions will hurt the longer they are in place, the stronger and more widespread they are. The indirect effects of sanctions, i.e. its effect in dissuading private foreign investments are in many ways more damaging to the Indian economy than its direct effects via curtailment of government to government economic, commercial and financial dealings. This is particularly so since the Indian economy, after the 1991 New Economic Policy shift in accordance with the precepts of neo-liberalism, is crucially dependent on foreign private investment to sustain the overall growth process. Sanctions on transfers of advanced and dual-use technologies will obviously hurt. However, there is no common front with regard to imposition of sanctions with countries like France and Russia quite willing to engage in

major government sponsored deals with India.

Moreover, how long sanctions last depends on what political concessions India will make. Certainly, New Delhi’s earlier anticipations have failed. It really believed that after a short passage of time, its claim to a permanent seat in the Security Council of the United Nations would be strengthened; that it would achieve *de jure* nuclear weapons status as well as recognition and acceptance as such by the other NWSs. This has not happened and is not going to happen. It is not just the NWSs but the non-nuclear weapons states (NNWSs) in their overwhelming majority which are opposed to any such extension of recognition (let alone a Security Council seat) as it would amount to rewarding countries for going nuclear. However, India can take a decisive step towards ending this isolation and getting sanctions removed if it is prepared to accede to the CTBT. And though this is not a certainty, it is now a definite possibility. It is the one thing that all the NWSs and the overwhelming majority of the NNWSs are agreed upon.

Since accession to the CTBT does not prevent India from going ahead with weaponization and eventual deployment (although it would reduce the sophistication of any established weapons system) it is conceivable that the current Indian government, or a subsequent one, could come around to accepting this as the minimum, unavoidable price it has to pay for ending its international isolation. The pressure on India to take this course will grow if, as is likely, Pakistan decides to sign the CTBT. It has now prepared the ground for doing this by formally delinking (for the first time) its attitude to the treaty from India’s and is no longer making its accession to it contingent upon India doing the same.

2) The future of the India-Pakistan relationship and the India-Pakistan-China triangle.

A nuclear dimension has been added to the existing levels of enduring hostility and tension between India and Pakistan, though pro-nuclearists on both sides will now repeatedly insist that relations will improve between the two countries and that the prospects of even a conventional conflict will diminish to vanishing point. Pro-nuclearists will endorse reliance on the magical qualities of nuclear deterrence to prevent not just nuclear conflict but even serious non-nuclear conflict. This is not only inverted logic — nuclear and military preparations express political tensions whose causes lie elsewhere and cannot therefore help to resolve those underlying causes of tensions and by sustaining and generating hostilities they only exacerbate those tensions — it ignores the crucial historical reality that this part of the world is now the only region where a hot-cold war between the two countries has persisted for over 50 years.

The classic paradox in seeking stable nuclear deterrence is this: the conditions that are thought to make it necessary to apply deterrence guarantee that it will be unstable, while the extent to which nuclear deterrence can be genuinely stable is the extent to which it is unnecessary! Britain and

France can have a stable nuclear deterrence vis-à-vis each other precisely because it is unnecessary. Thus any hopes that India and Pakistan will avoid a nuclear arms race is illusory. Only if overt weaponization by India is prevented will this be avoided. But the logic of having these tests is precisely to declare India a NWS at least in a de facto sense and to go on to build what will be called a minimum deterrent capacity which is openly deployed and activated. Nuclear weapons once produced and deployed in South Asia will shift the terrain of nuclear diplomacy decisively from nuclear disarmament to nuclear arms control which is about the management of arms competition, not its elimination. It is about managing the pace and pattern of an arms race and not about halting the race and retreating to full disarmament. That only becomes possible if political tensions are decisively reduced in other areas, e.g. if the Kashmir issue is somehow resolved. Here the analogy one must keep in mind is that it was Gorbachev's determination to end the Cold War that led to the reduction of nuclear weapons (to a halt and then to a retreat from the ongoing nuclear arms race, but not to its elimination) and not the development of a nuclear arms race that led to a reduction, let alone end, to the tensions of the Cold War. Arms races being the symptoms of inter-state hostility cannot be the "main solution" or even a "positive input" to the problem of inter-state hostility.

Moreover, the basis for a more enduring and stronger Pakistan-China political-nuclear relationship is now being created precisely by India going nuclear. It makes more sense for both these countries to explore ways of connecting in the face of an India which regards one explicitly as a threat and the other implicitly or potentially (and in some important circles this is stated explicitly) as a political-strategic-nuclear threat. Something of a self-fulfilling prophecy is now at work. The best way to ensure that China becomes an actual strategic-nuclear threat is to behave as if it is one. Once the next Rubicon of open deployment of a nuclear weapons system is crossed by India the region is set on a path of deteriorating nuclear insecurity rationalized by pro-nuclearists, of course, as the advancement of Indian and regional nuclear security!

3) Before May 11, 1998 there was the hope that of the two key stumbling blocks to preventing a decisive transformation for the better of the India-Pakistan relationship, namely Kashmir and the nuclear question, a resolution of the second through common renunciation of nuclear weapons (in whatever form, e.g. a South Asian nuclear weapons free zone or NWFZ, bilateral agreement for mutual and simultaneous renunciation, etc.) would not only in itself dramatically improve bilateral relations but also be a very significant input into weakening the intractability of the Kashmir problem. Now the situation has changed in a number of significant ways. Denuclearizing of the region has become far more difficult than ever before. The tensions over Kashmir and the difficulties in resolving it have become qualitatively greater even as the urgency of resolving this primary flashpoint for the eruption of conventional and

now nuclear conflict, has become ever more urgent.

One effect of India going nuclear, clearly quite unanticipated by Indian decision-makers and their supporters, was the internationalization of the Kashmir issue. It has always been fundamental to Indian policy on Kashmir that its region of control be treated primarily as an internal issue while the whole of Kashmir be treated as a bilateral issue between itself and Pakistan. Pakistan's policy has been to internationalize the Kashmir question even as it has sought to deny any independent Kashmiri representation as distinct from a form of "third party" Kashmiri representation which would be effectively under its control. Now that the Kashmir issue has been nuclearized the diplomatic position of India has been undermined in a fundamental and enduring manner. There is no way that it can plausibly argue that a nuclear outbreak over Kashmir or even the possibility of a nuclear conflict over Kashmir can be seen or left as a purely bilateral or South Asian issue. Pakistan has already fully perceived this fatal flaw in the diplomatic policy framework of India on the Kashmir issue and will make every effort to capitalize on it. Its efforts to internationalize the issue will not only be more convincing and persuasive but successful.

The Indian side will try to claim that the institution of responsible control mechanisms especially with regard to nuclear weapons will obviate the need for any extra-regional references. Not only is such an argument fallacious, but with a Pakistan determined to internationalize the issue it will be ineffectual. Moreover, the Pakistani declaration that it will not accept a No First Use agreement with India because it sees the need for its nuclear deterrent to offset India's superiority in conventional forces makes it even more difficult to establish a framework of nuclear diplomacy that can be used by India to persuade others that Kashmir be left as a purely bilateral or regional concern. Of course, practical control mechanisms to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear conflict or even a conventional war (with chances then of escalating to the nuclear level) through accident or miscalculation, say through a misreading of "enemy" intentions and behavior, must be established. These will include not simply proper mechanisms of communication between the two sets of nuclear decision-makers but also of control over the way nuclear-related decisions are to be authorized in each country. There may also be the need for internationally authorized mechanisms to be put in place so as to prevent (even conventional) war through accident and miscalculation. The sooner the Indian side realizes that the diplomatic framework now is no longer one of insisting that Kashmir be perceived as a bilateral issue but of how to intervene in an unavoidably internationalized discourse to best secure its interests, or even to resolve the Kashmir dispute, the better. One recent suggestion of real worth, whose time may come soon enough, is the idea of having a United Nations force patrol the Line of Actual Control in Kashmir between India and Pakistan. This would please Pakistan because it internationalizes the issue. It could be acceptable to India because it makes it that much more diffi-

cult for cross-border insurgency to take place.

4) Indian, and then South Asian, nuclearization represents the single most serious setback to the new and real momentum of global nuclear disarmament (and not just arms control) that emerged during the phasing out, and then after the end, of the Cold War. That momentum has been halting, uneven, hesitant, and suffered setbacks at times. But it existed. We will have to wait and see whether it has been so badly damaged as to be reversed or rendered incapable of further forward movement. That will probably still depend on what kind of disarmament and arms reduction steps are taken by the dominant five NWSs, and also whether other nuclear-capable states take the Indian and Pakistani route in the near future. The question of how to recharge the general global momentum for nuclear disarmament, not to mention arms control, in this changed political context now becomes of paramount significance.

5) The fifth major impact of India's going nuclear can only be outlined here although it is, in a certain sense, perhaps the most important. It is the way in which the decision to go nuclear fits into, and further promotes, the general ideological-political agenda of the Sangh Combine. To detail this would require entering into a more general discourse on the overall project of the Sangh Combine and the danger this represents for Indian society and polity as a whole. Suffice it to say for the moment, that it is not the immediate political-electoral gains for the Sangh that constitutes for it the most important domestic consequence.¹³ It is the undeniable fact that the long term direction of Indian politics and India's relations to neighbors, to China and the general international political arena has now been decisively configured in a manner which is in accord with the general thrust and ambition of Hindutva. As with secularism, but in some ways with less possibility of effective resistance or reversal by opposition forces, the Sangh Combine has altered some of the *basic parameters* of discourse on matters of foreign policy and "national security" regardless of whether the BJP remains in power. No political party except the Left (and it cannot hope to be in power at the Center except in a coalition where it will be electorally and politically greatly outweighed) is seriously committed to the full reversal of the path that India has now taken on the nuclear front.

What Is To Be Done?

Here there are two inter-linked dimensions. South Asian anti-nuclearists cannot any longer ignore the question of regional nuclear restraint and even disarmament measures in the name of pursuing a "general or non-selective agenda of global nuclear disarmament." This agenda is usually taken to mean focusing only on halting and reversing the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons by the dominant five NWSs. Of course, more general perspectives concerning global disarmament have to be pursued but alongside them will have to be South Asian perspectives to address the new situation. Let us take the regional, South Asian perspectives first.

Here the longer term goal must be the denuclearization

of the region. If possible this could be part of an overall schedule for global nuclear disarmament. If not, then separately, thereby preceding and promoting the achievement of global nuclear disarmament. The transitional measures and demands that can be formulated (and pressed for) in pursuit of this goal necessarily depend on the political character of the particular period to which they pertain. That is to say, they may be confidence-building, restraint and/or reduction measures which may be partly of a wish-list nature but should also have some degree of feasibility in that the prevailing political relationship of forces allows some chances for their attainability. Given that Pakistani nuclear behavior will be reactive to India's — i.e. it will openly deploy only after India does — it is imperative that all measures of effective restraint to maintain the current firebreak (i.e. having tested but not yet having weaponized and openly deployed nuclear armaments) be strengthened. The time horizon here is very short — a year or two at most. There is no point in making transitional demands today whose value and purpose become meaningful only in a changed political context, such as after the explicit weaponization and open deployment of a weapons system.

So far the mainstream Indian Left parties are the only ones of any significant weight to have made these demands for restraint and also insisted that there be no preparations of any sort to prepare for future weaponization, a command-control-communications-intelligence system (C³I), deployment, etc. Of course, for some time practical and open deployment is ruled out although not the preparations for it. It is possible that a non-BJP government might be inclined to delay or postpone the date of open deployment and activation of a weapons system but still maintain the momentum of preparations for it. Nonetheless, in the present context this would be a gain and opens up a space for greater pressure to be exerted to stop preparations as well. In other words, the best way to maintain the existing firebreak between testing and open deployment is to work for the fall of the current BJP government.

For a variety of reasons which cannot be entered into here, the fall of this government in the short term is eminently feasible. Of course, that this might be a prelude to the subsequent return of the Sangh to power at the Centre with even greater weight and force cannot be forecast. But a small window of opportunity may very likely emerge and it will be up to the Left political parties and other forces in Indian civil society, such as the emerging anti-nuclear peace movement, to make use of this breach if, or more likely when, it comes, and widen it as much as possible. That is why the existence today of a clear-cut pole of opposition, which is categorically against these tests and opposed to further testing and weaponization, is so important.

What about measures of restraint and disarmament applicable in other parts of the world or ones of a more universal nature?

The CTBT is clearly a universalist measure of this sort and the time for an Indian decision on it is running out.

President Clinton's visit to India in November is probably contingent on some prior agreement being reached between India and the USA in which the crux of the matter will be India's acceptance or rejection of the CTBT. If India refuses to accede by that time, then not only will the center of gravity of Indian discourse on the nuclear question once again shift to the right but it can also set off a global dynamic leading to the unraveling of the whole CTBT regime even as a moral norm.¹⁴ This would have tragic consequences and truly signal the end (and reversal) of the post-Cold War momentum of nuclear disarmament. That the Indian Left, a major ally in the effort to prevent India from further weaponizing, could turn out to be a major culprit in the process of preventing an Indian adherence to the CTBT out of its ill-informed and mistaken opposition to it, would be a sad irony.

The fissile materials cut-off treaty or FMCT is another universal restraint measure on which efforts are being made to start negotiations. However, unlike the CTBT it does not constitute a serious restraint on the five dominant NWSs since the NWSs already have produced more than enough weapons-grade fuel so cutting off further production is no sacrifice. Unless, of course, the issue of stocks is brought up, including what to do about the materials inside warheads. Reductions according to START II and III, if implemented, will raise this problem in an acute form. This is what the NWSs as well as India so far, have firmly refused. The limitations of the FMCT relate to the demand by NNWSs to link the negotiations (which could take years even presuming they start soon) to the institutionalization of some sort of multilateral body empowered in some way to discuss, if not yet negotiate on, global disarmament measures. China, France and Britain are prepared to give this proposal some kind of sympathetic hearing. Whether India will do remains to be seen.

But more directly, on the issue of stocks, India has a vested interest in prolonging the FMCT negotiations for as long as possible so that it can accumulate enough of a stockpile of weapons-grade fuel so as to ensure the possibility of its having a nuclear arsenal of warheads. Thus its attitude to the question of the FMCT is that it cannot afford politically to adopt an intransigent attitude against it which might only exacerbate its current isolation and send wrong messages to NWSs and NNWSs alike. But on the other hand, India would not like its early implementation or the incorporation of clauses demanding a timebound reduction of existing stocks into the FMCT. The best approach for India is simply to trust to the possibilities for procedural delays and prolonged negotiations before having to decisively clarify its attitude to the FMCT. Interestingly, it remains to be seen whether there will now be a change in the Pakistani position on the FMCT. Hitherto, Pakistan, unlike India, had rightly insisted that reductions of stocks must be brought into the negotiations. But now, since it has been forced to go nuclear, Pakistan may well feel that it has everything to lose by not being able to accumulate enough weapons-grade materials for an "adequate" arsenal unless it

plays the same kind of diplomatic game as India — opposing the discussion of stocks, trying to present a reasonable face but actually pursuing the hidden agenda of blocking and delaying the finalization of the treaty for as long as possible.

Apart from the CTBT and FMCT, it is vital that the START treaties are ratified and implemented, that the pressure for the establishment of new nuclear weapons free zones — a Central Asian NWFZ is now almost certain — especially one in Central Europe. It is maintained, if achieved, this would significantly undo the great damage that has been caused by NATO enlargement. Similarly, efforts must be made to establish a Nuclear Weapons Convention, to develop and refine "model" disarmament treaties and verification measures, to press for the de-alerting and de-targeting of missile deployments. Again, it is also necessary to press for the separation of warheads from missiles in the NWSs and the placement of these warheads in national depositories that are transparently accountable; and to propose and pursue a host of other measures and proposals of both an absolute and incrementalist kind.

In short, it is vital to sustain and strengthen the momentum towards restraint and disarmament *despite* the blow inflicted by the tests carried out by India and Pakistan. In this respect, it is particularly important that the hawks in the other NWSs who have no interest in nuclear arms reduction or moderation do not win out. There are no serious arms eliminators in the "nuclear weapons establishments" of the dominant five NWSs but after the end of the Cold War, the balance between arms racers and arms moderators willing to move significantly downwards towards low levels of armaments (though not to zero level), partly in response to public expectations in a post-Cold War political context, shifted in favor of the latter. Arms-racing hawks have been strengthened by the Indian and Pakistani actions but they have still not achieved the dominance they once had and continue to crave. In this sense, one of the great gains of the end of the Cold War — the emergence of a new momentum of *actual* disarmament and not just arms control — still remains in place even if now much more fragile. There is still a great deal worth struggling for and possibilities exist to do so effectively.

Notes

1. Belarus and Kazakhstan would have found it difficult to resist Russian claims over the missiles sited in their territories but in the event their willingness to let Russia have and withdraw them avoided any problems. But it was still their decision as sovereign nations not to contest possession and to accept total renunciation. In the case of Kazakhstan a particularly powerful factor in spurring renunciation was the widespread anger against the use of parts of the country as a test site for repeated underground explosions that have had severe and enduring negative environmental effects.

Ukraine's decision to give up nuclear weapons for US financial largesse was very much its own and Russia, while relieved, had no decisive input into the making of this decision.

2. In Winter 1996, President Jiang Zemin of China visited New Delhi and then Islamabad. He shocked his Pakistani hosts by publicly declaring that Kashmir was an issue to be sorted out between India

and Pakistan. This was a shift from China's earlier tilt towards Pakistan and many Pakistani commentators correctly recognized that the overall outcome of Jiang's visit to the region was an important political shift distancing China from Pakistan and thereby favoring India. After the recent tests, the Chinese have reverted more aggressively than ever to supporting the internationalization of the Kashmir issue, which is Pakistan's diplomatic stand.

3. The Prime Minister's Office endorsed the Indian defense minister, George Fernandes's irresponsible China-bashing in the run-up to the tests (including the false allegation that the Chinese had recently set up a helipad in the north-eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh) with the clear purpose of providing an anti-China rationale for the forthcoming tests. Other 'strategic experts' sought to make a case about the 'Chinese threat' precisely because the tests needed such a rationale since this kind of justification was neither self-evident nor particularly plausible.

4. There have been three kinds of nuclear relationships. a) Nuclear alliances of which the USA-UK and the 1950s China-USSR connections are the closest historical approximations. b) A nuclear patron-client relationship of which the USA-Israel tie-up is the closest approximation. c) Forms of nuclear co-operation for mutual economic-commercial-technological-political benefit. All other relationships other than those cited in the first two categories have fallen into this third category. This includes the China-Pakistan relationship. The political dimension in this nuclear relationship has obviously followed the changing character of the overall political context surrounding the China-Pakistan link — more important before the decline of Sino-Soviet enmity (with its corresponding impact on the complex USSR-India-China triangle) and increasingly less important thereafter.

In 1995, a Chinese delegation officially met its Indian counterpart led by Congress leader, Sharad Pawar. The issue of China's nuclear-related and missile-related technology and equipment transfers to Pakistan was directly raised. Not only did the Chinese insist (as they had done earlier) that none of these transfers violated the norms of the relevant international treaties prevailing but that they would be willing to supply India with each and every item sold to Pakistan, if India so desired.

5. The USA repeatedly interferes in what China considers its internal affairs — e.g. on human rights issues, arms transfers to Taiwan (the supply of F-16s which took place despite the strongest objections from the mainland). The USA often does this with success. However, there is no question whatsoever of China being able to do the same in relation to the USA. Even on trade and investment, China needs the USA more than vice versa — the USA remains a continental economy where external trade and investment flows are dwarfed by comparison with domestic economic activities and their proportional relevance for the general character of the US economy.

6. Three articles appearing within a fortnight, each by a major ideologue of the Sangh Combine, revealed a calculated attempt to raise the China bogey as a longer term rationale for the necessity of a counter-strategic and "civilizational" force which would have legitimate regional and global "interests." Arun Shourie, "Pak Bomb is, and has been, a joint venture" *Pioneer*, June 3, 1998; K.R. Malkani (Vice-President, BJP), "India, China & the Bomb," *Hindustan Times*, June 3, 1998; Mohan Guruswamy (key member of the BJP's Political Affairs Committee), "Aksai Chin for Starters," *Indian Express*, May 18, 1998.

7. There were five main lines of criticism, all of which were fundamentally mistaken or presented in distorted form.

- The CTBT must be linked to a time-bound schedule for disarmament if it is to be worthwhile.
- The CTBT is discriminatory.
- The CTBT is fatally flawed, i.e. effectively worthless in its supposed restraining effect on qualitative advancement of nu-

clear weapons for all or some of the existing NWSs, most notably on the USA because by only banning explosive testing it allows sub-critical testing, computer simulation and research on direct fusion weapons.

- The CTBT is another building block in the "hegemonistic" or US-led "nuclear imperialist" design to maintain "nuclear apartheid" between nuclear-haves and have-nots. The central pillar in this imposed regime of nuclear imperialism or hegemonism is the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to which the CTBT is linked as a necessary corollary.
- More specific criticisms have been made of different parts of the CTBT like the Article XIV Entry-Into-Force clause, or the issue of on-site-inspections, powers of the first (1999) review conference, etc.

8. The BJP claimed that the need for secrecy precluded it from telling its alliance partners about the tests. However, they could easily have been told and sworn to secrecy even after being confronted with the undemocratic coup of the BJP on its own deciding to carry out the tests. Moreover, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which is supposed to be a non-political body separate from the BJP, and is also not democratically or electorally accountable in any way to the Indian people, was clearly privy to the decision to test. This is hardly surprising to anyone who knows the intricate and integrated way in which the Sangh Combine operates. It is confirmed not simply by the repeated instances of RSS interference and involvement in the policy-shaping and policy-making of this current government but by the fact that within an hour of the government's public announcement that the tests had taken place (3:00 PM on May 11), the *Organiser* — the main journal of the RSS — hit the stands with a cover story commemorating, applauding and emphasizing the contemporary relevance of the 1974 Pokhran test! This was no coincidence.

9. No Indian government, barring one dominated by the Left, will give the kind of legally formalized assurance of a permanent end to tests that can be relied upon. The current moratorium is far from this. Moreover, there is no way that any national monitoring mechanism, which will also be fully transparent to the Indian public, will ever be set up.

10. Thus, on the question of individual or group terrorism, the revolutionary Marxist position has been to criticize this on strategic-tactical grounds, never on moral ones. Thus terrorism is criticized as the "weapons of the weak", or "reformism of the gun," i.e. as an ineffective form of substitutionism which derails the effort at mass mobilization/activity that alone can overcome or transform the "system" or "structure" of political rule.

11. This pleased neither the consistent anti-nuclearists nor the pro-nuclearists. The former were alienated because this posture concedes some decisive merit to the notion of deterrence. It was received critically, when not contemptuously, by the latter because for deterrence to apply certain plausible conditions of existence of a weapons system are required which a posture of ambiguity is simply incapable of fulfilling. This ambiguity neither criticized deterrence consistently or effectively nor accepted it wholeheartedly. Not surprisingly, many Indian ambiguists or others who supported this posture in some way, played around rather desperately with notions like "non-nuclearized deterrence," "technology deterrence," "recessed deterrence," etc.

12. Such would be the claims, for example, that from 1948 and the first Soviet bomb, the USA was deterred from using nuclear weapons against the USSR and even against Soviet-supported countries, e.g. Vietnam. This ignores the fact that the USSR (ringed by US air bases) only developed the capacity to hit US territory after Sputnik and the late 1950s development of long range ballistic missiles. Throughout the 1948-1958 period, it had no effective deterrent capacity against the USA despite its possession of the bomb. In 1948 during the Berlin air-lift crisis there was no Soviet counter to what we now know

was contemplated — the targeting of 20 Soviet cities by three bombs each to be dropped by planes. In the Korean war, even though Mao may have felt grateful to the Stalin bomb, British and US archives (Atlee flew to meet Truman to dissuade him from listening to those telling him to drop the bomb over the Yalu River on China) clearly show that concern over international opinion and subsequent political repercussions, not fear of the Soviet nuclear deterrent, was the decisive restraining factor. As for Vietnam, one of the problems with the nuclear umbrella argument is that all such umbrellas are irredeemably leaky. It is stretching things too far beyond the limits of plausibility to believe that any NWS, e.g. the USSR, will seriously risk committing suicide to save another state from nuclear annihilation.

The single most powerful restraining factor on the USA's use or threat of use of nuclear weapons after 1945 is the virtual impossibility of being able to justify such an action even to its own public, short of those circumstances in which the USA's own survival and *last-resort* self-defense are at stake. The horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has not been entirely in vain. There has been some qualitative advance *universally* in the average political consciousness of people regarding the nuclear question and this remains one of our most priceless political assets.

13. After the Pokhran II tests, there were Lok Sabha bye-elections in different parts of the country. The outcome was mixed with no overall gain or loss for the BJP suggesting the electoral irrelevancy of the tests themselves.

14. Unless the CTBT comes into force it remains only a moral (albeit still important as such) norm. The Entry-Into-Force clause (Article XIV) insists that India and Pakistan also be signatories before the treaty can come into operation. This provision was included at the insistence of Russia, China and UK *not* of the USA which in fact opposed it and sought to persuade Russia and China (the UK was not a problem and would have followed the USA's dictates) to resile from this demand. The USA failed in this effort and gave it up since the Russians and Chinese were adamant. The USA reasoned quite correctly, that even if it did get the provision overturned, India would still not have acceded to the CTBT though this would have risked Russia and China staying out. It was clearly more sensible to have the latter two countries in the CTBT for the sake of the authority and relevance of the treaty itself.

This Article XIV is by its nature undemocratic and unfair to India and Pakistan. But more importantly, it was unfair to the treaty itself which should have been allowed to come into force as quickly as possible, leaving objecting non-signatories to rethink their position and join later if they so decided.
