

7-13-2001

# Trends. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: Philosophy Without a Stone

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## Recommended Citation

Editor (2001) "Trends. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: Philosophy Without a Stone," *International Bulletin of Political Psychology*: Vol. 11 : Iss. 2 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol11/iss2/4>

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## International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Title: Trends. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: Philosophy Without a Stone

Author: Editor

Volume: 11

Issue: 2

Date: 2001-07-13

Keywords: Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, CTBT, Nuclear Weapons

Opponents of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)--an international treaty that would ban most conceptions of nuclear weapons testing--deny that its ratification and activation would present a moral, ethical, and legal impediment to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. They deny that the CTBT would prevent a potential nuclear power from covertly developing a nuclear weapon. They deny that the CTBT is verifiable. They deny that the CTBT would allow nuclear powers to maintain the integrity of their nuclear stockpiles.

CTBT supporters assert that the CTBT would have consequences converse to those propounded by CTBT opponents. Supporters also assert that not effecting the CTBT would lead to the consequences that CTBT opponents ascribe to CTBT implementation.

How does a novice to nuclear weapons policy resolve such strong differences of opinion? There has not yet been an experimental social psychology test--field or laboratory--of these matters with appropriate congruence to the parameters at hand. The reliability and validity of empirical generalizations from other treaties are supported or attacked based on these generalizations' compatibility with preconceived support or opposition for the CTBT--not by the various canons or counter-canons of scientific interpretation. Various logical analyses can support myriad positions on the CTBT--a reality that exposes the weakness of logic as a tool of conflict resolution, much as logic proves ineffective as a primary, secondary, or tertiary intervention when confronting paranoid delusions and True Beliefs. That leaves one's faith in one's substantive beliefs and in various epistemological procedures that may or may not have anything to do with the advent of these beliefs but that are believed to be these beliefs' foundations.

Farther afield, many religious believers believe that one achieves eternal life, salvation, and/or heaven via one or some combination of the following: the grace of God, the very sincerity and deepness of belief in God, and good works. Other believers believe that there is nothing to achieve or that what is to be achieved differs considerably from the above. Still other believers believe in manipulating their own religious beliefs and those of others for secular and material goals. In all of this, beliefs are infrequently changed. However, when change does occur, it often is totalistic and leads to a person's death and rebirth.

Closer to home, CTBT supporters and opponents may ultimately be contentious believers in nuclear weapons theology and may experience similar dynamics to those of believers in formal religious systems and in closely held cognitive fragments. And controversy over nuclear weapons policy is, indeed, a life and death matter--not only concerning the fate of the planet but of individual identities as well. Is it tragic or merely ironic that the latter fate often is perceived as more timely, pressing, and prepotent in effects on behavior? (See Cioffi-Revilla, C. (1999). Origins and age of deterrence: Comparative research on Old World and New World systems. *Cross-Cultural Research: The Journal of Comparative Social Science*, 33, 239-264; Fox-Cardamone, L., Hinkle, S., & Hogue, M. (2000). The correlates of antinuclear activism: Attitudes, subjective norms, and efficacy. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30, 484-498; Herr, C. F., & Lapidus, L. B. (1998). Nuclear weapons attitudes in relation to dogmatism, mental

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representation of parents, and image of a foreign enemy. *Peace & Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 4, 59-68; Sass, L.A. (1998). Schizophrenia, self-consciousness and the modern mind. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 5, 543-565; Shanker, T., & Sanger, D.E. (July, 7, 2001). White House wants to bury pact banning tests of nuclear arms. *The New York Times*, pp. 1-4.) (Keywords: Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, CTBT, Nuclear Weapons.)