From Phyllis Sch1afly for U.S.A. TODAY

January 6, 1991

Say NO to a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

It used to be that, when we talked about nuclear test ban treaties, the only players were the United States and the Soviet Union. That isn't true any more. Mikhail Gorbachev may be more interested in holding out his hand for U.S. aid and loans than in pressing any buttons, but nuclear war making capability is proliferating rapidly. To be meaningful, any comprehensive test ban treaty would have to include the likes of Saddam Hussein and other Third World nations.

George F. Kennan accurately said that "the most serious fault of our past policy" is "the belief that it should be possible to suppress the chaotic and dangerous aspirations of governments in the international field by the acceptance of some system of legal rules and regulations."

Just ask yourself. Do you believe it is possible to suppress the dangerous aspirations of Saddam Hussein by some "legal rules and regulations," either promulgated by the United Nations or arranged by treaty? Saddam's aggression is certainly not, unique in history.

Saudi Arabia was a harmless, peaceful country, minding its own business, drilling oil and making money. It has discovered that the essential requirement of any society is the ability to defend itself against envious and power-hungry neighbors. Isn't Saudi Arabia lucky that it could call on big, strong Uncle Sam to defend it? But who will defend us?

Cycles of folly ebb and flow through history, and the ultimate in foolishness is reliance on treaties. In the Kellogg-Briand pact of 1928, 60 nations renounced "recourse to war" and agreed that the "settlement or solution of all disputes… shall never be sought except by pacific means." The result was euphoria, disarmament, and Hitler.

During the years prior to World War II, in the interest of "safety" and "economy," our country failed to test submarine torpedoes with live warheads. When we suddenly found ourselves in a vast naval war with Japan, our submarine crews went into combat with torpedoes that did not explode on contact with enemy ships.

A comprehensive test ban treaty urged by the anti-nuke agitators would make the same mistake. It would prevent us from keeping our strategic deterrent forces current.

Let us never forget that we tried a comprehensive nuclear test ban in 1958, naively thinking that the Soviets were cooperating. But they secretly raced ahead in nuclear development for three years and broke the moratorium in September 1961 with the largest series of nuclear tests in history. Nikita Khrushchev then secretly sent his offensive nuclear weapons to Cuba, causing the Cuban Missile Crisis.

To paraphrase an old saying, if a nuclear test ban fools us once, shame on the cheaters. If a test ban fools us twice, shame on us.