

**May 1990**

**Greetings to the International Citizens Congress for  
a Nuclear Test Ban in Alma-Ata and Semipalatinsk,  
USSR from Sweden**

**Citation:**

"Greetings to the International Citizens Congress for a Nuclear Test Ban in Alma-Ata and Semipalatinsk, USSR from Sweden", May 1990, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Personal Papers of Matthew Evangelista, Folder: "Alma Ata Congress."  
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/300519>

**Summary:**

A first person account of the reasons behind a participants participation in the International Citizens Congress for a Nuclear Test Ban. The author writes that the physical deformities caused by nuclear testing, non-violence, and protection of the planet inspire them to fight for a comprehensive test ban.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan

**Greetings to the International  
Citizens Congress for a  
Nuclear Test Ban in Alma-Ata  
and Semipalatinsk, USSR  
24-27 May 1990**

**from the Action group for CTB of  
Karlskoga-Degerfors, Sweden.**

Our representative at the Congress is Curt Morsing, member of IPPNW in Sweden. Two years ago in consideration of global problems we started the action group for CTB in our home town, Karlskoga. In our town the industries produce explosives, guns and steel. They owed their success to the genius of Alfred Nobel. Today, however, the market for our products is weak and the high-tech constructional division moved out of town. In the future we will have to exploit another legacy of Alfred Nobel. His last will and testament was deposited in our town courthouse. In this he dedicated his fortune to the Nobel Prizes to promote science and humanities and as their common denominator the Nobel Peace Prize.

I come here of my own accord, as a world citizen. As all of you I am free, equal to anyone - a Moslem if you like. Thus were we born, not prisoners of any doctrine. Different cultures may have brought us up as Moslem, Jew or Christian, capitalists or socialists. Let's for these days forget the dogmas, searching to find an avenue to cooperation towards common goals.

I praise this precious planet where we dwell. Rich harvests come from fertile soils. Large herds of livestock graze the plains. Our libraries swell with wealths of culture and knowledge. Wonders of technical skills join all peoples of the world into one family that neither time nor distance can divide. Though minds of men for ever produce new miracles, to me, none is greater than those offered by life itself, free for all of us to use. My hope is that this congress will dedicate its efforts to putting those gifts to good use for everyone.

The planet earth is just a small part of a solar system, that is an infinitely small fraction of a galaxy, one of billions in a Universe we don't even know the size of.

Uncertainty provokes anxiety in most of us. Throughout history leaders exploited our insecurity. They made us follow, bolstering our confidence with the myth of superiority of race or creed and promised easy ways to paradise. We must resist. Uncertainty has to be endured.

Time, I perceive, is an eternal wave of uncertainty. The territory passed is History, and on the ridge are we all surfing towards the future. One thing only we know for sure. Death comes to us all. But the wave rolls on eternally, forever laden with your contributions of sorrow or delight.

Blessed and enchanting are these days when we are ruled by writers and poets. They will not last long though. We have to make good use of this parenthesis in history. Realistically we all know that men of action will regain power. We have to use this short spring-time morning to found a global order of men and women dedicated to the revival of spiritual values lost. We will need oceans of love and unselfishness to harness power, in order to stop production of superfluous luxuries and give priority to basic needs of mind and body. Wellbeing and happiness to all should be the produce of society tomorrow.

Pursuing this goal we have to gain and keep the confidence of our fellow men and women. We mustn't make them believe that we know our destination. We know, though, how they should behave towards each other and to nature, if they want a future. Nor shall we posture as men or women able to hold executive powers. We shall not envy those who do. But in eternal unity and opposition we will share the fate of mankind.

For a long time you were led astray by ego-centric leaders. You had to spill your sweat and tears to bring them wealth, barely keeping yourselves alive. Your harvest was disease and despair. Liquor and drugs was provided to alleviate your misery. Your country was

transformed into a radioactive, dry and poisoned desert.

The thin and precious web of life surrounding our planet may be unique in the Universe. Greedy men thirsting for gold, are changing this paradise into a stinking, poisonous heap of trash. We have to stop them before all life on earth is finally extinguished.

A fortnight ago I saw on TV Olzhas Suleimenov put his election address aside to make public the secret health statistics of the Semipalatinsk area. I learnt that this region was sacrificed for the noble purpose of defending the mother country of socialism.

Mahatma Gandhi in 1942 made a statement on the scorched earth tactics. Previously I didn't understand, but witnessing the devastation of your country, all of a sudden the meaning of Gandhi's statement was revealed to me.

It is a sin to poison food and wells, to slaughter herds and burn the crops and buildings. Love, pervading and nourishing the web of life tacitly forbids this method of defense. *"In the age of the atomic bomb strict non-violence is the only power that overcomes the fiendish devices of violence"*, was Gandhi's judgement.

Today we have learned that the "Socialism in one country theory" was erroneous. In retrospect we see, that your sacrifices were in vain. The moral of this disaster is that Gandhi's maxim, based on several thousand years of Hindu wisdom gives by far a better guidance for the future than predictions from the philosophies of recent times. A German doctor, Rudolf Virchow, founded the theory of modern medical science and the discipline of social medicine. In his opinion *"Politics is the highest form of medicine."*

Recent events in Kazakhstan is leading to an experimental test of Virchow's thesis. I have learned that you are suffering from two kinds of disease: cancers and malformations from radioactive poisoning and high blood pressure with its related illnesses.

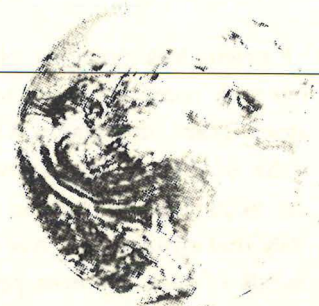
I believe your blood pressures reflect the stress and strain of your ill fortunes. Now, freeing yourselves

from the nuclear tests, you are relieved of your frustration. I predict this deed will turn into a better cure than was the drugs prescribed by medical authorities. I hope that this meeting will result in the same prescription for the whole world. Form test ban groups in every community on earth and join them by a solemn pledge to protect life.

The end of nuclear testing, though, is not the end of our mission. CTB is only the beginning of a dynamic process leading to a just and healthy future for all life on earth. We should gather streams and torrents of love and non-violence into a tidal flood that will submerge the filth, the hate and the injustice, disease, starvation and the poisoned trash and radioactive ashes that are the hallmark of destructive violence.

Now, in conclusion I beg you, take great care. Trust only those, whose eloquence is balanced by their actions. Words without deeds are dead !

So, let us unite under the banner of our beloved and lovely planet. Let us begin moving forwards for the survival and progress of species man.



● This only earth

