

Disarmament ...

(continued from previous page)

program that would sabotage global nonproliferation efforts. Although lacking the scope of the RRW, the programs supported by the new NPR will lead to a performance upgrade of nuclear weapons, rationalized by Orwellian calls for improved “safety” and “reliability,” to better carry out their genocidal purposes. Moreover, the Administration subsequently has announced that it is still keeping open the option of starting-up a new nuclear weapons program such as RRW, while supporting a new “Prompt Global Strike” initiative aimed at complementing U.S. nuclear capabilities with an very rapid and lethal non-nuclear missile system. Together, these policies weaken disarmament efforts as they to seek to maintain U.S. global military reach and dominance well into our century, and minimize the “firebreak” between conventional and nuclear arsenals.

During the April Nuclear Security summit in Washington, D.C., and for most of May’s Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference at the UN (Rev Con), the U.S. focused almost exclusively on the real and latent proliferation hazards posed by North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs. For most of the Rev Con, the U.S. resisted efforts to establish a Nuclear-Free Zone in the Mideast, and to develop a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC), steps championed by PSR and our IPPNW affiliates, that would outlaw nuclear weapons in a manner analogous to the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. Finally, at the close of the UN conference, the U.S. signed on to a consensus document that included proposals for re-examining these issues in the future, effectively further delaying critical disarmament pledges made at prior Review Conferences that have been ignored for years by the NWS.

While pushing for strong sanctions on Iran, the Obama Administration has continued to be virtually silent on the critical proliferation dangers of its own unbridled promotion of nuclear power as “greenhouse solution” that has characterized its energy and climate change policy. Emblematic of this has been the Administration’s continued strong support of the commercially lucrative U.S.-India nuclear deal that would allow India, a non-Party to the NPT, to receive advanced civilian nuclear technology that would effectively free-up resources for India’s nuclear weapons programs that are off-limits for international inspection.

Under the deal, India would also be allowed to develop reprocessing technologies that could permit the diversion of plutonium to weapons programs. With recent reports indicating that China is prepared to support Pakistan in apparently less-extensive but parallel nuclear efforts, it appears that the dangers of nuclear weapons proliferation and related terrorist spin-off operations are likely to progress unabated in a very unstable part of the world. As reported in a December 2009 article published in *Scientific American*, even a regional nuclear conflict could have dire global consequences,

such as a global cooling that could lead to over a billion worldwide deaths from severe climate/crop disruption and malnutrition.

We are simply running out of time for half-measures based on strategies that don’t really amount to more than maintaining the illusory benefits of relatively short-term continued U.S. military superiority at the cost of addressing real global human needs, including averting the impending tragedies of global climate change or a planet blown to bits. It’s really time for the U.S., and our President to match the audacity of his “hope” with our deeds, and have our country finally truly lead a movement for nuclear abolition that can simultaneously open up so many other possibilities for planetary survival. ■

It’s really time
for the U.S. and
our President
to match the
audacity of his “hope”
with our deeds...

Physicians for Social Responsibility San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

2288 Fulton Street, Suite 307, Berkeley, CA 94704 • 510-845-8395 • fax: 510-845-8476 • www.sfbaypsr.org

VOLUME 2 • JUNE 2010

CHAPTER NEWS

Disarmament & Double-Standards

By Robert M. Gould, MD
President, SF Bay PSR

W e at PSR, as much of the world, welcomed the opportunities for substantive change represented by the election of Barack Obama, especially in regard to the President’s signal and eloquent oratory in support of a world without nuclear weapons. The follow-on “New START” agreement with Russia, while calling for only minimal cuts in deployed nuclear warheads, can still be appropriately viewed as what has been characterized as a “New Spring” that charts a new direction and momentum in arms control and the U.S.-Russian relationship. As such, PSR believes it is a priority to obtain the 67 Senate votes needed to ratify the new Treaty, and to hopefully parlay the results of that effort into the follow-on challenge to obtain U.S. ratification of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

However, in spite of the space afforded by President Obama’s leadership and vision, there remain significant obstacles in the way of translating hopefully successful ratification

campaigns into a world significantly safer from nuclear annihilation. The much-anticipated new Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) released by the Administration at the beginning of April 2010 moved notably away from the Bush Administration’s 2001 NPR embrace of a permanent role for nuclear weapons in U.S. foreign and military policy. However, the new NPR is still tied to the strategic doctrines of nuclear “deterrence” and “escalation dominance” that underscore an expanded and robust U.S. nuclear weapons modernization program at the Department of Energy (DOE) complex.

In fact, Obama’s proposed budget calls for a substantive increase in current nuclear weapons programs. This was ostensibly offered in part to placate conservative opponents of arms control and disarmament treaties who pushed throughout the last administration for an explicit new Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) nuclear weapons

(continued on back)



BALANCED MENUS

Throughout the month of March, Bay Area hospitals featured Balanced Menus as part of their National Nutrition Month activities. These facilities, including UCSF Medical Center, Sequoia Hospital, the San Francisco VA Medical Center, Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital and John Muir Health, have been at the forefront of this program since 2008. Implementation strategies highlighted in March included meat-free days, reducing beef, pork and poultry on cafe and patient menus, reducing prices on Balanced Menu items in cafes, as well as providing educational materials for patients, visitors and staff about the connection between meat production, climate change and environmental health. SF Bay PSR staff coordinated similar efforts in hospitals throughout the country as part of our work with Health Care Without Harm.

Check out our Balanced Menus activities and read the article below at <http://psrblog.wordpress.com> or contact Lena Brook at lena@sfbaypsr.org.

The Washington Post

March 23, 2010
Georgetown joins campaign to
bring a healthier menu to nation's
hospitals

At Georgetown University Hospital, the cafe's lunch specials have generally consisted of two meat dishes and one vegetarian offering. In the refrigerated case, sandwiches made with roast beef or ham and cheese were kept on shelves at eye level, for easy grabbing.

Early March, however, the cafe began offering more... sandwiches were moved...

PSR's Healthcare Leadership Institute

Training Providers to Speak Up for Human Health and the Environment

The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of PSR (SF Bay PSR) is one of the oldest and largest in the country, with a membership of over 4,000. In California, SF Bay PSR is a leading organization in providing scientifically credible advocacy on security and environmental health issues. Our members are considered experts on many different topics and are regularly called upon to speak in hospitals, at press conferences and symposia, and before policymakers. As a chapter however, we recognize that there is great potential to increase our education efforts to maximize the impact of the clinical voice.

Health professionals are recognized as trusted experts on health-related issues, not only in the clinic, but also in the community-at-large. Well-informed and prepared clinicians can dramatically influence and educate our communities and decision-makers. It is not enough to provide them with the scientific information about a particular subject so they become effective public speakers. It is about opening up a myriad advocacy avenues through which they can use their expertise and influence most effectively. These advocacy avenues include communicating important environmental health information to their patients and families, serving in local and state government, participating on hospital

GET INVOLVED!

If you have an interest in participating in the development of this exciting new program, assisting with teaching or training, or donating dollars to help make this program a reality, please contact Lucia Sayre, Co-Director of SF Bay PSR, at 510-845-1819 or luciasayre@sbcglobal.net.



sustainability committees, working with the media, and tapping into health professional networks and associations to promote effective public policy.

SF Bay PSR has a long history of peer training and involvement by members in advocacy and education. Our chapter delivers over 60 presentations per year from a speaker's bureau consisting of practitioners who volunteer their time for Grand Rounds presentations, expert legislative testimony in Sacramento, media advocacy, community events, and local and national conferences. SF Bay PSR members are responsible for facilitating the passage of over 15 resolutions in the past ten years through the California Medical Association and the American Public Health Association focused on improving environmental health of our communities and the healthcare sector.

To develop the skills of members to speak out on and advocate for solutions that impact our collective public health, SF Bay PSR is launching the Healthcare Leadership Institute this year. The goal of the Institute is to provide clinicians with the scientific information and advocacy skills that they need to become effective advocates on a range of issues in a variety of settings. Issue areas will include security, social justice, climate change, sustainable food in health care, and prevention of exposure to environmental toxins. ■

IN MEMORY: Dr. Richard Ricklefs (1916-2007)

The SF Bay Area Chapter and National PSR recently received a generous bequest from Dr. Richard Ricklefs, a longtime PSR member and chapter supporter. Dr. Ricklefs was born November 13, 1916, in Monticello, Iowa, and passed away in Arcata, California, on July 7, 2007, at the age of 90. He was a conscientious objector during World War II, met and married Elsie Gardner from the Humboldt Hupa Tribe, studied medicine at Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia, and returned to Humboldt County to practice medicine for more than 60 years to the Klamath-Trinity communities.



Dr. Fred Adler and Dr. Richard Ricklefs in Hupa in the Spring of 2007

Dr. Ricklefs was a dedicated member of the Quaker Faith. More than anything, he believed that his life should reflect his principles and in this he was an inspiration to his fellow Quakers. The SF Bay Area Chapter and National PSR will use Dr. Ricklefs' bequest for our program efforts, in this way hoping to extend his impact in the world.

To read a personal reminiscence of Dr. Ricklefs by another PSR member, Dr. Fred Adler, please go to the PSR Blog at <http://psrblog.wordpress.com>. ■

BEQUEST GIVING

Members who are intending to remember PSR in your will should designate clearly whether the gift should be given to the National office, the local chapter, or both. SF Bay Area PSR provides the following chapter bequest language: "I bequeath (amount or remainder interest) to Physicians for Social Responsibility/ San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, a not-for-profit institution having its offices at 2288 Fulton Street, Suite 307, Berkeley, CA 94704-1449." If you or your attorney have any questions, please feel free to call the PSR office at 510-845-8395.

Sacramento Chapter Update

The Sacramento chapter held its 6th Annual Scholarship Essay Contest Dinner Finals on May 2. High school seniors from Sacramento and surrounding counties submitted 148 entries based on the Native American saying: "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children." Nine finalists presented their essays at the dinner event. The 1st place winner was Parinaz Fozouni (\$2500 scholarship), 2nd place winner was Austin Lillywhite (\$1500 scholarship), and 3rd place winner was Keaton Boyle (\$1000 scholarship). The other six finalists each received \$750 scholarships. Please go to www.sacpsr.org for the names of the other finalists, to read their essays, and to view the event.



The top three finalists were chosen by a panel of distinguished judges: Environmental Council of Sacramento president Dr. Alex Kelter; Sacramento area educator Dr. Carl Mack; Pesticide Watch director Paul Towers; Sacramento County Public Health Director Dr. Glennah Trochet; and Grammy Award-winning Native American flutist Mary Youngblood, who also performed during the evening program.

Thanks to everyone who helped make the 2010 PSR/Sacramento Scholarship Essay Contest a success, and, especially, to all the students who entered the contest. Special thanks to Media Edge for filming the event and to Steve Walker for the sound system engineering. ■