

PSR REPORTS



PSR is the U.S. affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, recipient of the 1985 Nobel Prize for Peace.

P H Y S I C I A N S F O R S O C I A L R E S P O N S I B I L I T Y

VOL. 27 NO. 2
SPRING/SUMMER 2005

Congress Responds to Recent Mass Shootings with Move to Relax Gun Laws

A 16-year-old student at Red Lake High School in northern Minnesota recently shot and killed his grandfather, his grandfather's companion, five fellow classmates, a teacher, and a security guard. This was the worst school killing in the United States since the Columbine massacre in 1999, in which two teenagers killed 13 people. In Atlanta, a 33-year-old man stands accused of killing four people while on trial for kidnapping and rape; he is alleged to have overpowered a deputy and stolen her gun, then used it to kill Fulton County Superior Court Judge Rowland Barnes, his court reporter, a sheriff's deputy outside the courthouse, and a U.S. Customs Agent who was working at his home. These killings dominated the headlines, but 28,000 Americans die of gun wounds each year in equally heartbreaking incidents that fail to capture national attention simply because they occur with such frequency.

Instead of responding with stronger laws to curtail gun injuries and deaths, Congress is hard at work weakening

the few protections that still exist. The Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (H.R. 800), currently under consideration in the House, would shield gun dealers and manufacturers from citizen lawsuits over unsafe gun design, negligence, irresponsible gun distribution, and deceptive marketing and advertising. In April, the House Judiciary Committee held a markup of this gun industry immunity legislation. The Committee considered four amendments:

- Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) offered an amendment that would have allowed lawsuits brought by minors under 16 years old. The amendment was defeated on a party-line vote, 9 to 16.

- Rep. Mel Watt (D-NC) then offered an amendment to make the legislation prospective only, so that victims with pending lawsuits would not have their cases dismissed. This amendment was defeated on another party-line vote, 10 to 18.

- Rep. Bob Wexler (D-FL) offered an amendment to allow lawsuits for damages resulting from the unin-

tentional shooting of any child under 18 with a firearm for which the manufacturer did not supply an approved safety lock. His amendment was defeated by a vote of 10 to 18. This was not a party line vote; Rep. Rick Boucher (D-VA), who was not present for the earlier votes, voted against the amendment.

- Finally, Rep. Watt offered an amendment that would have limited the immunity afforded by the bill to gun and ammunition manufacturers, and excluded dealers and trade associations. This amendment was defeated by a vote of 10 to 17, with Rep. Boucher again voting with the Republicans.

After a brief recess, the House Judiciary Committee considered and rejected several more safety amendments, including one offered by

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Not-So-Benign Neglect Threatens Success on Children's Health

Successful programs to protect our health from environmental threats are in danger of dying from "not-so-benign" neglect. The

1990s was a time of great progress, particularly for children's environmental health, stimulated largely by changes at the federal level. The

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) jointly sponsored centers of excellence for laboratory-to-bedside research on children's environmental health; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) began the first systematic program for biomonitoring levels of industrial chemicals in children and adults; for the first time, federal regulatory agencies were explicitly required to consider children's special vulnerabilities when setting regulations; and the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA) was unanimously passed by Congress to improve protection of children from pesticide exposures. Now, these programs have lost federal attention to post-9/11 priorities and corporate interests. Yet the effectiveness of these public environmental health programs necessitates that we not just maintain, but expand them. The story of the pesticide chlorpyrifos illustrates why.

Chlorpyrifos (CPF) is a broad-spectrum organophosphate pesticide

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Chlorpyrifos was withdrawn from use in homes and schools after studies linked the pesticide to neurological and developmental problems in children.

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The Sedan Crater at the Nevada Test site was created by a nuclear test exploded there in 1962. At 1280 feet across, the crater approximates the hole that the Administration's proposed bunker-busting "mini-nuke" could create.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



PSR Shows "Bunker Buster" Would Cause Widespread Civilian Deaths

A PSR team, led by national board member Peter Wilk, M.D., has produced a report on the devastating medical catastrophe that would result if the Administration were ever to use its proposed "bunker buster" nuclear weapon. The report, *Projected Casualties Among U.S. Military Personnel and Civilian Populations from the Use of Nuclear Weapons Against Hard and Deeply Buried Targets*, was published to coincide with the start of the Non-Proliferation Treaty conference in New York on May 2.

The new bunker-buster nuke, the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP), is a centerpiece of the Bush Administration's efforts to develop a new generation of nuclear weapons. PSR and our friends have worked for years to stop this program. Last year, Congress cut all funding for the program, but still it refuses to die.

This year, the President has requested a total of \$8.5 million for the

RNEP—\$4 million for concept work at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and \$4.5 million for an Air Force test of a new casing designed to help the bomb dig deeper into rock or concrete before exploding. The Administration has said they intend to request \$14 million for the RNEP next year. These millions of dollars would be used to study adapting the B83 bomb for bunker-busting purposes. An epic struggle is playing out in the defense authorization process in Congress, with both House and Senate zeroing out different portions of this funding. Continued pressure will be necessary until the final bill eliminates all funding.

The Bush Administration, from its 2002 Nuclear Posture Review on, has told half-truths about this new bomb, pretending it was a mini-nuke that could be used to destroy enemy targets without killing many people or

polluting the environment. But this massive weapon has an explosive yield of 1.2 megatons—about 80 times more powerful than the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima. Linton Brooks, head of the agency responsible for U.S. nuclear weapons, recently told Congress that the RNEP would be "destructive over a wide area." Now, as part of efforts to inform Congress, PSR has produced its report to explain just how destructive this bomb would be, over how wide an area. White House half-truths can be dismissed once and for all.

In the PSR report, Wilk lays out the policies that have led the Administration to pursue development of the bunker buster and examines the nature of the B83 bomb itself. He then explores the medical consequences that would result from the use of this weapon. The core of the report, with truly shocking conclusions, examines in

great detail two scenarios for the possible use of the RNEP. The hypothetical targets are Esfahan, in central Iran, and Yongbyon, in North Korea. Both these sites are of great concern to the United States because of the clandestine nuclear work being carried out there. The Esfahan site also contains tunnels, designed to be impervious to conventional attack, in which nuclear materials will be stored.

Using the Department of Defense's Hazard Prediction and Assessment Capability software, PSR staff generated models for these two attacks. In

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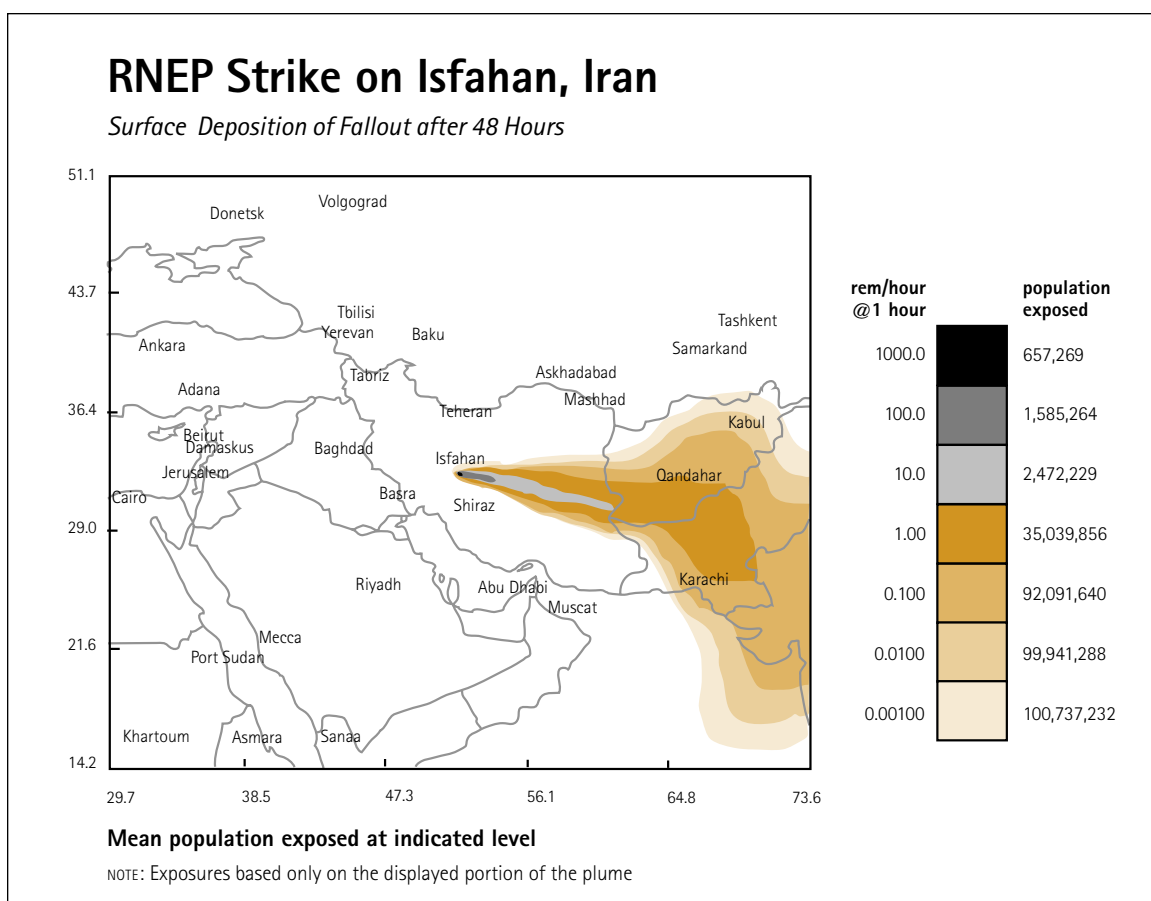
PSR Reports (ISSN-0894-6264) is the newsletter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, a nonprofit organization, committed to the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, the achievement of a sustainable environment, and the reduction of violence and its causes.

To receive PSR Reports regularly, we invite you to join PSR and support our work. Write to PSR, 1875 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 1012, Washington, DC 20009, or visit our website at www.psr.org.

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PSR Hosts NPT Panels in New York

Biographer of the Bomb and Former Ambassador Advocate Strengthened Treaty

As part of its activities at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in New York this spring, PSR hosted a panel discussion on May 12th that featured eloquent and moving arguments against current U.S. nuclear policy by author Richard Rhodes, whose works include *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, and Ambassador Thomas Graham, Jr., former head of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and long-time negotiator of treaties. The event was chaired by PSR Executive Director Bob Musil, Ph.D., M.P.H.

In an elegant and impassioned speech, Rhodes stressed the impossibility of preventing a nuclear attack. Whether we attempt to ward off an ICBM or a crude nuclear terrorist strike, he said, “the bomber, the missile, the truck, and the boat will always get through.” Therefore, he concluded, the only way to defend against nuclear weapons is through their abolition. Rhodes also heralded the principle of transparency and the need to make intrusive weapons inspections the norm.

Graham provided an in-depth history of the nuclear age, noting the many times the world has reached the brink of nuclear war and providing an overview of anti-nuclear treaties. He views the NPT as immensely successful, in that it converted the acquisition of nuclear weapons from a sign of national pride into an act contrary to the practices of civilization. He also stressed that the NPT’s central bargain—disarmament in exchange for non-proliferation—must be upheld to preserve political balance and strengthen the NPT. He provided several recommendations for the U.S., such as ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, toughening controls on the Iranian nuclear program, signing a No First Use protocol, and restrict-



ing access to the nuclear fuel cycle.

The ensuing discussion covered topics from legal prohibitions on the use of nuclear weapons to the utility of nuclear power (which both Rhodes and Graham support) to German plans to rethink nuclear cooperation with the U.S. Musil concluded by stat-

ing that, despite differing ideas about arms control and nuclear energy, we must work together to block those who favor increasing the nuclear arsenal. **PSR**

In addition to participating in the two panels described on this page, Martin Butcher, the director of PSR’s Security Program, worked with many nongovernmental organization (NGO) colleagues to produce presentations on nuclear arms and disarmament made during official conference sessions. PSR and IPPNW physicians also joined marchers at a May 1 rally calling on conference participants to assure that the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are never repeated.

These articles were adapted from pieces written by Hongwei Chen and Naomi Gingold of Reaching Critical Will, a project of the UN office of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. For their full coverage of the NPT Review Conference, visit www.reachingcriticalwill.org

PSR Board Member and IAEA Official Debate Nuclear Energy Bargain

PSR board member and internist Andrew Kanter, M.D., joined Dr. Tariq Rauf from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at a May 18 NPT panel, “Nuclear Terrorism, Nuclear Power, and Article IV” that addressed the viability, safety, use, management, and proliferation of nuclear energy.

Kanter’s presentation focused on why Article IV is a “bad bargain.” Article IV of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) states that countries that abide by the NPT and remain non-nuclear weapon states have a right to civil nuclear technology. Parties to the 2000 NPT Review Conference decided that this right is also contingent on the complete fulfillment of international non-proliferation safeguards obligations.

Using a computer simulation that takes into account location, climate, and weather patterns, Kanter described frightening scenarios that could result from a terrorist attack or accident at a nuclear facility. More than 23.3 million people would be affected if a nuclear power plant in Brazil had a coolant failure. Some would die instantly, some would develop varying degrees of acute radiation sickness, some would develop lethal cancers, and some would suffer from irreversible genetic consequences. If a small terrorist attack or accident were to occur at the Indian Point Power plant, about 30 miles from New York City, as many as

44,000 people would die instantly. Contamination of medical centers and the radiation exposure of medical personnel, police, and firefighters would render them unable to respond effectively to the disaster.

Rauf argued that Article IV is “a crucial part of the balance of the NPT,” noting that nuclear energy use, predicted to double by 2050, is a necessary requirement for global development. He opined that renewable energy resources have not been shown to have the capacity to replace the needed energy output of fossil fuels and that nuclear energy—a fuel that emits smaller amounts of CO₂ than fossil fuels—can easily fill the gap. Dr. Rauf also noted that the IAEA

“does not peddle nuclear energy” and is simply a safety mechanism established and circumscribed by its member states.

Rauf reminded the audience that when considering nuclear energy, one must balance the risks with the benefit. Kanter stated “You have to choose where to invest your future.” **PSR**



Kimberly Roberts and Molly Farneth of PSR with Dr. Tariq Rauf.

BUNKER BUSTER

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the case of Esfahan, the model shows that more than 3 million people would be killed immediately; in the four days following the attack, prevailing winds would carry the fallout over Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, exposing 35 million more people to serious levels of radiation (see illustration on page 2). In the case of an attack on Yongbyon, the results would be less devastating, but still appalling. Hundreds of thousands would die and more than 5 million people could be irradiated by fallout.

PSR and the Union of Concerned Scientists are working together on a campaign that will highlight the dangers of developing the RNEP and call for a permanent halt to this work. We have created a Flash animation for e-mail and Internet distribution that shows the effects of such nuclear weapons use. Contact the PSR chapter in your area (see the PSR website at www.psr.org) to join the campaign.

PSR’s report and the flash movie can be downloaded from www.psr.org and www.counterproliferation.org. **PSR**

EPA Finalizes Power Plant Mercury Rule

PSR Brings Suit to Protect Children's Health

The EPA has issued a new rule that allows power plants to discharge hundreds of tons of excess mercury for 10 to 15 years longer than the Clean Air Act allows.

Despite the largest outpouring of public opposition in agency history, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) formally announced in March a final “cap and trade” rule for mercury emissions from power plants that significantly threatens public health. The new rule will allow far more of this potent neurotoxin to

threaten children and other at-risk groups, unnecessarily delaying health protections while allowing polluting energy companies to reap the benefits of the Bush Administration's recalcitrance.

The mercury rule has already been challenged in court by nine state attorneys general and several major environmental organizations. To guarantee that the voices of our health professionals and our patients are heard by the judges deciding this case, PSR's national board of directors recently endorsed a recommendation by PSR's Legislative Director for Environment and Health, Kyle Kinner, that PSR challenge the EPA's flawed mercury rule in federal court. PSR will champion the rights of women of child-bearing age and young children to a healthy environment under the Clean Air Act. As lead plaintiff in a historic lawsuit with the American Nurses Association, the American Public Health Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics, we hope to force the EPA to establish strong mercury standards that protect public health and keep harmful neurotoxins out of the air.

PSR believes that EPA's mercury rule is deeply flawed and will allow hundreds of tons of excess mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants for 10 to 15 years longer than the Clean Air Act allows. In addition, the risk of toxic “hotspots”—an issue that PSR and other health organizations repeatedly cited in their comments to the agency—remains unresolved. Under the “cap and trade” scheme, energy companies in disadvantaged communities where ecosystems are already oversaturated with mercury pollution could buy pollution credits instead of reducing their local mercury emissions. This

is an unconscionable outcome for such a harmful neurodevelopmental toxin, which has been shown to build up in local watersheds and in the tissue of fish. EPA's own scientists have estimated that as many as 630,000 infants annually are overexposed to mercury *in utero*, and researchers at the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine have estimated that I.Q. impairments in young children linked to their exposure to power plant mercury emissions cost our economy billions in lost productivity every year.

Our children deserve our best efforts to get harmful mercury emissions out of the air as quickly as possible. The EPA has estimated that the power sector could reduce its mercury emissions by as much as 90 percent by 2008, yet the new rule gives polluters until 2025 or later to achieve smaller reductions, without fixing the hotspots problem. One week before the EPA's March 15th announcement of the rule, public health advocates and environmentalists successfully convinced members of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee to defeat a virtually identical mercury provision included in the Administration's broader “Clear Skies” initiative. The President's bill failed to garner a majority of votes in the committee and stalled for lack of support. Yet the Administration—ignoring the Senate and nearly 700,000 opposition comments submitted over the last 12 months—imposed a weak power plant rule that will delay significant reductions in mercury emissions.

PSR thanks its members for the outpouring of letters, comments, and advocacy efforts. We will need your help in the months ahead to sustain this fight to strengthen the Administration's flawed mercury rule. **PSR**



PESTICIDE LESSONS

Continued from page 1

that was one of the most widely used pesticides in U.S. households in the 1980s and 1990s. It was most commonly known as Dursban, a product used for termite control. Now, it is no longer used in domestic settings, and many agricultural uses have also been cancelled. Why? Because after EPA made a compelling regulatory case based on the combined data on childhood exposures and neurodevelopmental toxicities, the pesticide industry agreed to a rapid, voluntary withdrawal of the product from nearly all uses in and around homes, schools, and other settings where children would be exposed. A study published last year with data from before and after the ban was able to demonstrate an immediate improvement in prenatal development.

This major success story for environmental health illustrates the importance of having all the critical components in place for health-protective environmental policy: biomonitoring of human exposure, comprehensive toxicity research, and regulations based primarily on health standards.

Biomonitoring

Biomonitoring provides irrefutable proof and quantification of human exposure to a toxic substance by measuring the chemical or its metabolites (products formed when it breaks down) in human tissues. CPF metabolites are measured in urine, blood, amniotic fluid and meconium (a baby's first stool). Studies by CDC and numerous independent researchers yielded a number of important findings about CPF: many children are

exposed, usually at higher levels than adults; younger children have higher levels than older children; and exposures also occur in the womb. The higher levels measured in children—in urban, suburban, rural, and agricultural populations alike—prove that the unique behavior and physiology of children indeed result in their exposure to higher levels of environmental toxins than adults.

Research

We know from animal research that CPF interferes with proper development of brain structure, as well as normal cell signaling and DNA synthesis. We also know that damage to the immature brain occurs with exposures below the threshold for overt symptoms or biochemical evidence of poisoning in pregnant

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PESTICIDE LESSONS*Continued from page 4*

animals, and that these levels are equivalent to the exposures people experience during routine residential use of CPF. Animal studies also demonstrate that there are narrow, critical windows of development (as short as a few days), during which exposures can disrupt the structure and/or function of the brain, causing permanent, lifelong damage. Epidemiologic studies of pregnant women exposed to CPF through its standard domestic use likewise link biochemical evidence of maternal exposure—even at levels too low for evidence of toxicity—to decreases in gestational age, birth weight, birth length, and/or head circumference of their babies.

Health-Based Regulations

The Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 is the first law to impose a unified health standard for pesticide regulations. It requires EPA to provide a “reasonable certainty of no harm” to infants and children specifically. Because of its widespread use and compelling toxicity data, CPF was the first individual pesticide and organophosphates were the first class of pesticides to be re-evaluated under FQPA. At the same time EPA began the process of revising CPF regulations, it opened discussions with the producers of products containing CPF. The evidence on exposure and toxicity was so strong that the industry agreed to withdraw CPF from most of the applications which could result in excess pediatric exposures, without waiting for EPA to complete its revised risk assessment. Implementation of the new limits began in 2000 and will be complete by the end of this year.

Lessons from Success

The climax of the CPF story occurred when researchers at Columbia University published data in the July 2004 issue of *Environmental Health Perspectives* describing the effects of CPF exposure on prenatal growth. They found a dose-response relationship between increases in prenatal CPF



exposure (as measured in umbilical cord blood) and decreases in birth weight and birth length “similar in magnitude to those observed with maternal smoking during pregnancy.” Because their data span the time before and after the CPF phase-out, they were able to document significant changes that resulted from the suspension of domestic CPF use. They found that banning household use of CPF correlated with lower exposure levels in pregnant women and improved birth weights and birth lengths in their babies.

The “take-home message” from the CPF story is powerful. High-quality data on exposure and developmental toxicity coupled with health-protective laws and regulations are good for babies! What is good for babies is good for all of us. It makes sense to build on this successful model, but here’s the “not so benign” neglect. Biomonitoring continues at CDC, but information on a number of new chemicals has not been released to the public, and relatively few children, particularly under age six, are tested for most chemicals. Research continues, but the web page on the NIEHS/EPA research centers of excellence has not been updated since October 2003. EPA’s Office of Children’s Health Protection has been without a permanent director since Christine Todd Whitman was administrator. The federal interagency task force on children’s

environmental health has not met since October 2001. In addition, the Bush Administration has increasingly put economic standards before health standards as it interprets environmental laws and makes regulatory decisions.

If we are to have more successes like the CPF story, we must ensure that the components of health-protective environmental policy are maintained and strengthened. We must demand expanded biomonitoring, excellent science, and health-based environmental laws and regulations. At the same time, we must remember that when data are scarce, we must apply the Precautionary Principle (see box). If we do not, all of us—especially our future generations—may live to regret it. **PSR**

Remember the Precautionary Principle

The Chlorpyrifos success story is based on the resource-, data- and time-intensive model of regulating chemicals one at a time. Because we have a great deal of information on CPF, we are able to regulate this chemical with great confidence and scientific precision. This is the exception, rather than the rule; there are tens of thousands of man-made chemicals about which we know little or nothing. Although it is essential to preserve and strengthen biomonitoring and toxicity research, as the CPF case study demonstrates, whenever we lack sufficient toxicity and exposure data, we must exercise precaution by limiting exposures until we establish that these substances are safe. We cannot use the lack of data as an excuse to delay regulations. Precaution should be the default approach, especially when our children’s health is at stake.

Researchers at Columbia University were able to document a correlation between banning the household use of CPF and lower exposure levels in pregnant women—and improved birth weights and birth lengths in their babies.

Watch for PSR’s upcoming resource for clinicians on why and how to encourage parents to take steps to reduce the exposure of infants and children to pesticides, even in low doses.

GUN LIABILITY*Continued from page 1*

Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) that would have held gun dealers accountable if they knowingly sold to individuals on the federal government’s terrorist and gang watch list. Supporters of the Van Hollen amendment expected it to be approved, in part because of public outrage after the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported earlier this spring that 47 of the 58 suspected terrorists on the FBI watch list had been granted approval to purchase guns; Attorney General Alberto Gonzales responded by saying that current policy should be reexamined.

Astoundingly, the Van Hollen amendment failed by a vote of 10–20. The Judiciary Committee passed H.R. 800 without amendments, and the bill is now headed to the House floor.

Gun violence places an enormous burden on cities, counties, and taxpayers. Deaths and injuries inflicted by firearms cost the United States about \$100 billion every year. This includes hospitalizations, other medical costs, and lost productivity. Nearly one-fifth of the country’s urban trauma centers closed their doors between 1986 and 1991 as a result of the immense costs associated with caring for gun-violence patients.

If H.R. 800 passes, gun dealers

and manufacturers will be the only industry in the nation exempt from lawsuits. PSR will continue to work with the Brady Campaign to Stop Handgun Violence, the Million Mom March, the Coalition to Stop Handgun Violence, and other national and local groups to make sure gun dealers and manufacturers are held to the same public health and safety standards as any other industry. **PSR**

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Contact your Representative to voice your support for the regulation of firearms just like any other consumer product. Ask her or him to oppose H.R. 800.

CHAPTER PROFILE

PSR/Chicago's "Wounded in America" Makes Gun Violence Vivid and Personal

Wounded in America (WIA) is a powerful photography and oral history exhibition that documents the life-altering experiences of individuals who have survived firearms violence. This exhibit, compiled by photographer Robert Drea and writer Stephanie Arena, consists of 50 fine-art, black-and-white portraits of the survivors, photographed at the locations where they were shot.



These portraits are accompanied by first-person accounts of what transpired and how the incidents have changed the survivors' lives and, in some cases, the lives of those around them.

The survivors are as diverse as the firearms used against them and the circumstances in which they were shot. They are Latino, Native American, African American, and Caucasian. They are children who play the piano and attend camp, teens involved in a variety of activities, women arriving home from work or in committed relationships, and men taking care of on-the-job tasks. They reside in cities and towns throughout the United States. Collectively, they demonstrate the full spectrum of gun violence that plagues this nation. Through Wounded in America, their voices unite in a call to end this violence.

The PSR/Chicago chapter has worked with the Drea/Arena team to use the Wounded in America exhibition for community outreach and education. Most recently, Wounded in America was on exhibit at the Peace Museum, located in Chicago's West Garfield Park neighborhood, an area known for its problems with joblessness, substance abuse, violence, and lack of affordable housing. The show, which ran from March through mid-May, was an effort to reach the predominantly African American youth and their friends and family members who frequent the Garfield Park Fieldhouse, which houses the Peace Museum. As a chapter committed to educating the public about various forms of violence and its causes, PSR/Chicago aims to reach a younger audience and give them realistic images of the consequences of gun violence to counter the glamorized ones they encounter in popular music and culture and see on their own streets.

PSR/Chicago also recently exhibited Wounded in America to two other diverse audiences: in December 2004, the exhibit was part of the Medical College of Wisconsin's program, "Guns, Grief and Grace Revisited: The Wounded in America Speak Out," which commemorated the college's first anniversary of its Gun Violence Education Fund. In August 2004, WIA was part of the Minnesota College of Art and Design "Banned on these Premises" show, commissioned to bring attention to

the "sunsetting" of the 1994 federal assault weapons ban.

PSR/Chicago is currently discussing some exciting possibilities for Wounded in America. PSR/Sacramento is interested in hosting the exhibition to educate legislators and the general public while the state legislature considers bills related to firearms. In addition, the National Civil Rights Museum—housed in the former Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated—will host WIA from August 1 through October 31, 2006. During the show's three months at the National Civil Rights Museum, some 12,000 visitors are expected to view the exhibition!

The Chicago chapter is grateful to the funders who have helped to make Wounded in America accessible to physicians, healthcare workers, social workers, artists, students, youth groups, and the general public: the Medical College of Wisconsin, Pike's Peak Community Foundation, and Sisyphus Fund. Their support has enabled PSR/Chicago to acquire a powerful, timeless tool for educating diverse audiences on the importance of violence prevention, and conveying the message that even one bullet can have a devastating effect on many lives.

If you would like more information on Wounded in America, please contact Olga I. Delgado, executive director of PSR/Chicago Chapter, at (773) 989-4655 or at odelgado@psrchicago.org **PSR**

D.C. Gun Ban in Peril Once Again

The National Rifle Association (NRA) is attempting to roll back all of the federal and state gun control laws across the country. A particular focus of their efforts is the District of Columbia, where the NRA

is spearheading a campaign to reverse a 28-year-old ban on handguns. That ban prohibits possession of handguns not registered prior to 1976 and requires that other firearms, such as shotguns, be kept unloaded, disassembled, or equipped with trigger locks.

New bills are under consideration in both the Senate and the House of Representatives that would overturn this D.C. law. District residents overwhelmingly support their gun ban and have declared that a senator from Texas has no business playing games with the lives of their children and families. The city's Metropolitan Police Department points out that the District total of 198 homicides in 2004 marks the first time in nearly two decades that the annual homicide deaths dropped below 200 and a major decline from the gang- and drug-fed bloodshed of the 1980s and 1990s. District Mayor Anthony

Williams expressed his anger at Congressional leaders for their interference in a local matter: "I am incensed by any congressional proposal that uses District residents as pawns. I am incensed by any proposal that assaults home rule. And I am incensed by any proposal that is an insult to the memory of the people who have died in this city due to gun violence—in particular, the three children who have died from gun violence this year."

Similar legislation passed in the House last year and was introduced in the Senate. PSR worked with the Violence Policy Center, Consumer Federation of America, and the Coalition to Stop Handgun Violence to gather the names of organizations, associations, businesses, and residents on a petition asking the Senate leadership to withdraw their bill. Mayor Anthony Williams and City Council Chair Linda Cropp also sent a sharply

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Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (ABOVE) has introduced a bill to overturn the long-standing District of Columbia law banning handguns. D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams (RIGHT), city council members, and the citizens of the District support the gun ban.





PSR Chapter and Medical Student Leaders Gather to Share Successes, Strategies

A recent conference of PSR chapter leaders and one of Student PSR chapters brought activists from across the country together to present their best practices and discuss new strategies to confront the many challenges posed by the Bush Administration.

PSR's second annual Chapter Leadership Conference was held in early March with representatives from 26 PSR chapters, as well as national staff. Organizers included Kimberly Roberts, Rita Daniels, and Rasa Zimlicki from the national office, who received suggestions from chapter staff on issues for discussion at the conference. National and chapter staff gave presentations on program priorities and chapter organizing initiatives related to PSR's three issue areas: security, environment and health, and violence prevention. Participants discussed opportunities for collaboration, and special sessions were held on media work and crafting messages and on fundraising.

Highlights included presentations from Martin Fleck and Jeanie Sedgely on PSR/Washington's grassroots initiatives to clean up the Hanford nuclear site and nearby Columbia River, Barbara Laing on PSR/Colorado's gun-control legislation efforts, Angela Crowley-Koch on PSR/Oregon's plans for marking the anniversary of the Hiroshima bomb and the Shadow project (in which silhouettes are spray-painted on streets and sidewalks to simulate the shadows created

when citizens of Hiroshima were vaporized in their tracks by the atomic bomb), and Maria Valenti and Michelle Gottlieb on the Greater Boston and San Francisco Bay area chapters' joint Pediatric Environmental Health Toolkit project (described in detail in Winter 2005 *PSR Reports*). The second day was devoted to advocacy training and visits to Capitol Hill, where chapter staff discussed legislative priorities with congressional aides.

The Chapter Leadership Conference is valued by chapter and national staff alike for strengthening the bonds and cooperation that are so essential to our organization.

Also in March, Student PSR held its biennial national conference—this year entitled “Avoiding the Worst Case Scenario: A Survival Guide”—at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. Student PSR board representatives Chris Brubaker and Lisa Jacobson

and PSR Medical Campus Coordinator Katherine Lenard organized the meeting. In attendance were 80 students from 36 medical schools nationwide, along with members of the IPPNW-affiliated and student-run Nuclear Weapons Inheritance Project (NWIP), as well as current and former PSR and IPPNW board members. The goal of the conference was to give students tools for activism in many different situations, ranging from counseling patients on gun violence to lobbying Congress about energy policy to active but informative demonstrations about nuclear weapons. The conference focused on the parallels between domestic and

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BELOW (FROM LEFT): PSR Chapter Leadership Conference participants Olga Delgado of PSR/Chicago, Helen Crowley of National PSR, and Bob Dodge of PSR/Ventura County, CA; Martin Fleck of PSR/Washington; and Rita Bibb-Daniels of National PSR.

Depleted Uranium Risks Unknown Report by PSR Urges Caution, Further Study

In May, PSR's Security Program released a new paper on the health effects of depleted uranium. The report is called *DU: Health and Public Health Issues Arising From the Use of Depleted Uranium Munitions*.

Depleted Uranium (DU) is a heavy metal by-product of the enrichment of uranium. DU is mildly radioactive and extremely toxic. DU has civilian uses—for example, as ballast in commercial aircraft—but its best-known uses are in weapons and armor. DU's properties as a heavy metal give it great strength for its mass. As tank armor, DU gives much greater protection than regular armor.



Used as an armor piercing shell, it is more effective than ammunition made from other materials.

Health concerns about the military uses of DU go back to the first Gulf War. Populations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo have been exposed to DU as a result of military action in those countries. PSR physicians have long been concerned about the possible health effects resulting from DU use and its continued presence in the environment. Having published an issue brief on DU in 1998, PSR decided to produce a more detailed report to examine this issue.

Our report examines the military uses of DU and their potential health consequences, including cancers and damage to organs, such as the liver. We conclude that the dearth of studies on DU exposure prevents us from conclusively defining the health consequences, and that such studies should be undertaken. Applying the precautionary principle (see box on page 5), PSR recommends the withdrawal of DU ammunition and armor from service until such studies are completed.

PSR backs legislation introduced by Representative Jim McDermott (D-WA) in the last Congress that

Continued on page 10

AT LEFT: These 30 mm depleted uranium penetrators are fired by the U.S. Air Force's A-10 aircraft. The pencil-size rods of uranium, which carry no explosives, are intended to destroy enemy tanks.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY PHOTO

PSR 2004 Development and Financial Report

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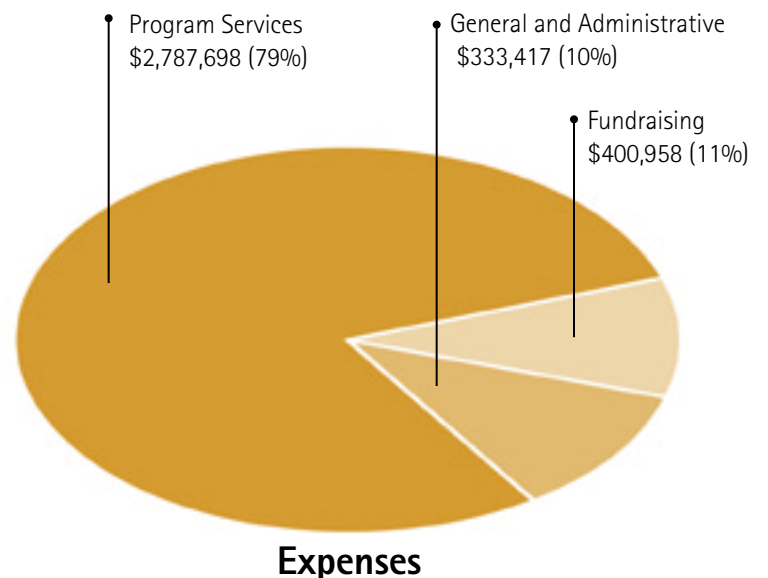
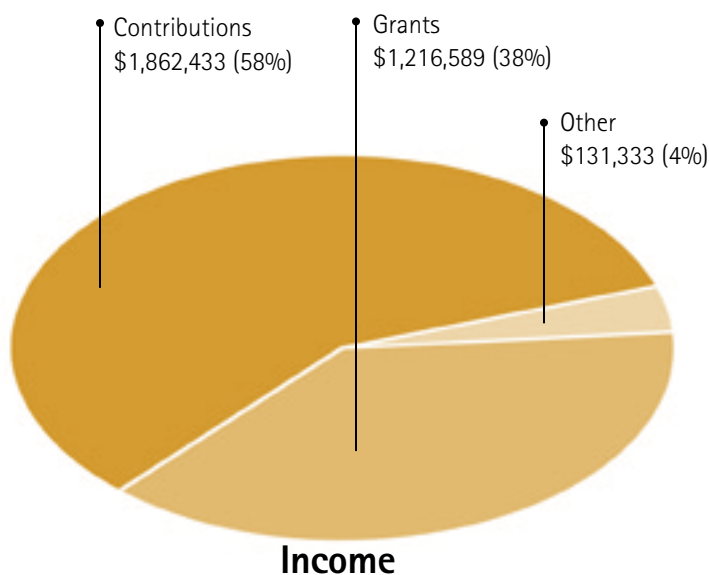
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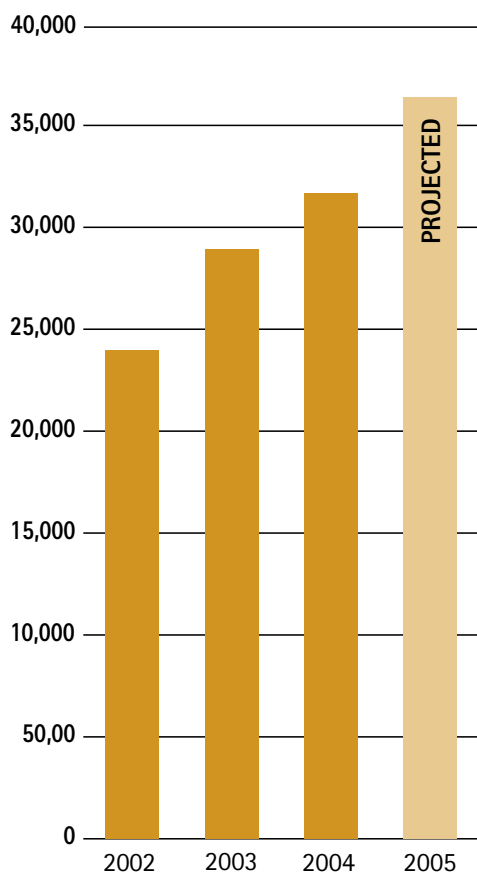
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Help Build PSR's Membership: Colleague to Colleague



John O. Pastore, M.D., FACC

Elsewhere in this issue you can read about the robust program activities of PSR, and in Bob Musil's message sense our excitement about some recent very important successes. As you peruse the issue, perhaps you'll share my heartfelt wish that more of our colleagues were members of PSR and question, as I do, why more of them are not!

Now, doctors as a group are reputed to be politically inert. Physicians are also alleged to be pre-occupied with a demanding profession that has become more difficult to practice for a variety of reasons that we all recognize and that I do not have to go into here. In my home state, the Massachusetts Medical Society has been in the habit lately of sending out a physician satisfaction survey. The results invariably show that many of us feel under duress and that the medicine we are practicing is not exactly what we thought it would be when we emerged bright-eyed and bushy-tailed from medical school.

So, one might ask, why is it surprising that the majority of our colleagues do not in fact join membership organizations like PSR? There may be many reasons, but I want to provoke you a bit with one answer.

They haven't been asked. At least not personally, by a close friend or colleague.

We send out excellent mailings that you and I find capture the essence of the great work being done by the staff and members of PSR. We hope some of our colleagues see those mailings, but that's my point. If your physician friends are like mine, there are probably many among them who would join PSR if they were asked or even courted in a more direct way.

No doubt many of our colleagues are conservative politically, and some like so much the Bush position on malpractice "reform" that they wouldn't consider joining a "liberal" organization, as we are sometimes characterized in the media. But, what's "liberal" or "conservative"

about SMART Security, or mercury in fish, or violence prevention?

We can't get everybody to join us, but we can get many more than we have so far.

I would like each of us to bring one new member into PSR this year. The lifeblood of this organization is membership, not just financially but programmatically, as well. Just think what PSR would look like five years from now if each of us took personal responsibility for recruiting one new colleague each year and then asked them to do the same!

I'd like to get your thoughts and suggestions on this proposal. E-mail me at jop2map@aol.com and we'll talk more about it.

Our superb staff stands ready to help, as does the physician leadership. But ultimately, the ball is in your court and mine.

John O. Pastore, MD, FACC
JOHN O. PASTORE, M.D., FACC

LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

Continued from page 7

international advocacy work and tools for use in both contexts.

Presentations included "Humor as an Activist Tool" with PSR board member Louis Borgenicht, M.D., and his son, David, author of *The Worst Case Scenario Handbook* (a book of practical advice for confronting a series of

humorously unlikely but dire circumstances); two workshops led by NWIP on global nuclear proliferation and how to present the effects of nuclear war to students; one on the hidden environmental health and security risks associated with fossil fuels, led jointly by PSR board member Kent Bransford, M.D., and Molly Farneth, PSR's energy security initiative coord-

inator and a former Scoville fellow; and a panel on science, policy, and activism in environmental health with PSR Past-President Michael McCally, M.D., Dr. Bransford, PSR Executive Director Bob Musil, and Molly Farneth.

Graham Allison, author of *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe*, was the keynote speaker at PSR/Chicago's Soul of Medicine Dinner, held in conjunction with the student conference. Dr. Allison spoke of the inevitability—and preventability—of a nuclear attack on the United States. Students and others reported leaving the conference with enthusiasm for PSR's work and with ideas for inspiring students on their campuses to take action. **PSR**



FAR LEFT: Student PSR members Lisa Jacobson and Alex Rosen.



NEAR LEFT: Author David Borgenicht with his father, PSR board member Dr. Lou Borgenicht.

Musil Named Woodrow Wilson Fellow

PSR Executive Director and CEO Bob Musil has been named a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow for the academic year 2005–2006. Musil—who, in addition to running PSR, is an adjunct professor in the School of International Service at American University—will join a group of distinguished lecturers made available by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and Fellowships to colleges and universities nationwide for one-week intensive stays intended to enrich the experience of faculty and students.

For information on bringing Musil to a campus in your area, either through PSR or the Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellowship contact Katherine Lenard, Medical Campus Coordinator at PSR, at klenard@psr.org.

DEPLETED URANIUM

Continued from page 7

calls for health studies on the effects of DU on U.S. military personnel, cleanup of training ranges, and an examination of the effects of DU on populations in other countries, including Iraq. PSR looks forward to working with Rep. McDermott to build support for this measure.

PSR's DU report is available for download at www.psr.org. **PSR**

GUN LIABILITY*Continued from page 6*

worded letter taking “exception to both the substance of the proposal and the inappropriate intrusion into what is viewed all across the country as a local matter.” Eventually, the Senate bill withered from lack of support.

This flurry of legislative assaults on the District’s gun ban is the NRA’s fallback maneuver, after their lawsuit to overturn the District’s gun ban on Second Amendment grounds was dismissed last winter. In a major victory for advocates of sensible gun laws, U.S. District Judge Reggie B. Walton ruled that the long-standing ban on the sale and possession of handguns in Washington, D.C., is constitutional. The Court concluded that “the Second Amendment doesn’t confer an individual right to possess firearms. Rather, the Amendment’s objective is to ensure the vitality of state militias.”

Defeating the new round of bills will prove more difficult, given the shift in the political climate brought about by the November elections.

Both bills have picked up momentum. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) has 28 bipartisan cosponsors for her legislation in the Senate, and Representative Mark Souder (R-IN) has 123 cosponsors for the companion bill he introduced in the House.

PSR and its allies will continue to educate congressional members about the health care risks involved in reversing the District’s gun laws. We will rally our physicians, nurses, health-care professionals, and concerned citizens to educate their patients about the healthcare risks of gun ownership. PSR will work with the citizens of the District of Columbia to preserve their right to take sensible precautions for their own safety. **PSR**

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Contact your Congressional representatives to voice your support for the District’s gun ban and the right of the citizens of Washington, D.C. to govern themselves. Urge your Representative to oppose H.R. 1288 and your Senators to oppose S. 1082.

Highlights of PSR in the News

Los Angeles Times: mentioned PSR as a member of a broad coalition opposing the Alberto Gonzales nomination for U.S. Attorney General, on the eve of his confirmation hearing. (1/5/05)

National Journal: published an item about PSR’s Smart Security resolution and quoted PSR Field Director Ira Shorr: “There are more productive ways to invest in security.” (2/5/05)

Dow Jones Newswire: ran a detailed story about the PSR-Heinrich Boll Foundation energy briefing featuring R. James Woolsey on Capitol Hill. (2/17/05)

Scripps-Howard News Service: published a story about PSR-funded research, “Mercury damage to babies costs \$8.7B.” (2/28/05)

Nation’s Health: PSR’s Legislative Director Kyle Kinner was quoted in a story about the administration’s “Clear Skies” legislative proposal: “For the administration to talk about rolling back current clean air standards is just extraordinary. Manufacturing and energy production are important in this country...we can do them more cleanly and with more emphasis on public health.” (3/1/05)

ABC World News Tonight: In a national television story about the Bush administration’s mercury rule, PSR provided statistics about U.S. mercury exposure: “630,000 babies each year in the U.S. are at risk of mercury toxicity and 1 in 12 American women who could become pregnant have heightened risk of mercury toxicity.” The statistics were attributed to PSR. (3/15/05)

Los Angeles Times: In a story about the administration’s market-based plan to cut mercury emissions by 2018, PSR’s Susan West Marmagas was quoted, “This rule flies in the face of the best science, the best experts and the public.” (3/15/05)

Providence Journal: published op-ed opposing the John Bolton nomination to the United Nations by PSR Board Chair Dr. John Pastore and Robert K. Musil. (3/30/05)

O Magazine: published a consumer piece about the health implications of mercury exposure featuring the PSR Healthy Fish, Healthy Families Guide. (4/05)

Air America’s “Ring of Fire”: Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. interviewed Robert K. Musil about the Administration’s “Clear Skies” initiative and the public health impacts of worsening air quality. (4/2/05)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: published op-ed opposing Bolton nomination to the UN by Robert K. Musil and Dr. Mary Zupanc. (4/11/05)

National Public Radio’s Morning Edition: National environmental reporter Elizabeth Shogren interviewed PSR’s Susan West Marmagas about the EPA’s CHEERS pesticide study controversy. (4/14/05)

INVEST YOURSELF**PLEASE CONSIDER...INCLUDING PSR IN YOUR WILL**

Leaving a bequest to PSR is a wonderful way to help continue the work you believe in so strongly. We suggest you check with an attorney or tax advisor to see how a bequest to PSR would fit into your estate plans. PSR’s Tax ID number and office address are listed below for your convenience. Please contact Elizabeth Pegram, Major Gifts Associate, by phone at (202) 587-5252 or by e-mail at epegram@psr.org, for more information.

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Many companies provide matching gifts for employee charitable contributions. Please check to determine whether your gift to PSR will be met, doubled or tripled by your employer. It’s a great way to make your gift go further to support PSR. Just include your company’s matching gift form with your contribution, and we’ll complete it, send it in, and let you know when your gift has been matched!

STAY ACTIVE

Would you like to be more involved in PSR’s advocacy efforts? A great place to start is PSR’s Activist Updates. Each of PSR’s program areas reaches out to members through Action Alerts and e-mail. To learn more about the Activist Updates, contact us here (information below) and be sure to mention what issues interest you most.

Coming to Washington, DC, and have an hour to spare? How about visiting one of your elected officials to talk about the issues of most concern to you? Contact the PSR office at least a week in advance, and we’ll help schedule a meeting, provide you with background materials, and possibly even accompany you on your lobbying call.

Contact your elected officials:

U.S. SENATE, Washington, DC 20510

☎ (202) 224-3121

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC 20515

☎ (202) 224-3121

THE WHITE HOUSE, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

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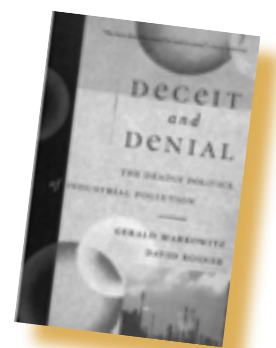
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To find out what we’re reading to keep up on the latest advances in our mission areas, log on to our web site and visit Bob’s Bookshelf. There, you’ll find reviews of books on violence prevention, security, and environmental health that inform us on the activities and research in our community.

Then click on the Amazon.com link on the main page to buy those books! Amazon.com gives us up to 10 percent of all sales purchased through the PSR web site. It’s a great way to improve your knowledge and support PSR!



Our featured title, *Deceit and Denial*, by Gerald Markowitz and David Rosner, tells the chilling story of the lead industry’s campaign to entice Americans to use their deadly products, despite evidence of serious health risks to workers and consumers. This exposé is full of startling revelations, provocative arguments, and disturbing conclusions—based on remarkable research and information gleaned from secret industry documents.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PSR Leadership



Robert K. Musil, Ph.D.,
M.P.H.

I am very proud that PSR has shown real leadership in opposing the nomination of John F. Bolton to be Ambassador to the United Nations. As I write, Mr. Bolton's nomination is in trouble only two months after every Washington realist and national media maven assumed that President Bush's pick of a hot-tempered right-wing ideologue to represent the United States to the world would sail through the Senate confirmation process. What happened? Call it leadership.

As in the case of the Iraq War, PSR opposed the Bolton nomination on principle. The UN Ambassador of the United States is absolutely vital to developing multilateral, cooperative approaches to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, global climate change, human rights, humanitarian assistance, and much more. Mr. Bolton, we believe, would be disastrous on every count. As with the Iraq War and nuclear weapons, many told us our opposition would be a waste of effort. Only a few other groups in the nation agreed with us. PSR, Global Solutions, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, the Open Society Policy Center, and just a few other groups took on the task of rallying citizens and the media in key states with senators on the Foreign Relations Committee who might possibly block the nomination.

PSR published op-eds, spoke to broadcast media, and put out e-activist alerts. We sent emergency funds to Wisconsin for a statewide campaign to convince Senator Russ Feingold, who had previously supported Bolton, that the President's nominee has a clear

Millions of citizens who previously knew nothing of [John Bolton] have been given new hope and confidence that someone will defend their country's best interests.

record of misleading Congress, torpedoing sensitive negotiations, distorting national security intelligence, and more. And we worked furiously behind the scenes to persuade senators who respect PSR.

These efforts, I am proud to say, emboldened members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, gave them fresh arguments, and ultimately caught the attention of the national media. With a classic media fire storm set ablaze, others found the courage to come forward with new allegations of Bolton's misconduct, harassment, and bullying.

Margaret Mead is often quoted as saying "Never doubt the power of a few determined individuals to bring about change." The Bolton battle is a classic example of that truth. Regardless of whether Bolton is ultimately dropped, blocked, or rammed through by the Bush Administration, millions of citizens who previously knew nothing of this man have been given new hope and confidence that someone will defend their country's

best interests. They can believe again that something can be accomplished in this chillingly conservative age. Millions more around the world will take heart to learn that opposition in the United States is not dead, that those who believe in international cooperation and international law, in ideas over ideology, in facts over fanaticism, may yet prevail.

PSR will continue to lead, by word and deed. That is why at PSR we have invested so much in future leadership, as well. We have brought some 100 leaders from our 63 medical student chapters together at the National Student PSR Conference in Chicago. We have brought chapter staff and leaders from around the country to Washington to trade strategies, develop skills, and to lobby. This spring, as I have spoken to medical students at ceremonies from Earth Day at the Harvard Longwood Medical Campus School to commencement at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine, I have conveyed the same message.

We thank our 32,000 members for standing with us, for speaking and acting out of principle and on behalf of the health and well-being of humanity, not its destruction. PSR believes each and every one of us can and will make a difference. Together, we can lead this great nation back to its highest ideals of democracy, justice, and peace.

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