

NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS MUST BE BANNED

Only recently, yet one more, extremely dangerous aspect of nuclear experimentation has come to light: in the boreholes and galleries of a base in Nevada, the United States of America is developing lasers excited by nuclear explosions with a view to employing such devices in the "star wars" in the compilation of plans for which the country's strategists are now busily engaged.

In a word, the continuation of nuclear testing constitutes a source of increased tension and military threat and deepens the mistrust between peoples.

It is for that precise reason that the Soviet Union has, from the very onset of the nuclear age, consistently called, as it continues to call for the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests. It must be said that the efforts of the Soviet Union and of all peace-loving forces to that end have not been in vain. In the early 1960s there was concluded a multilateral treaty that is now in force which bans the conduct of nuclear tests in three media. Under a treaty dating from 1974, the USSR and the United States agreed to limit the yield of underground explosions of nuclear weapons to 150 kilotonnes. A Soviet-United States treaty of 1976 also introduced stringent rules with respect to underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. Substantial progress was made in trilateral talks (involving the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom) concerning the complete and general banning of nuclear-weapon tests, that is, their banning in all media: in the atmosphere, in space, under water and under ground.

Unfortunately, the 1974 and 1976 treaties have yet to be ratified, but that is not the fault of the USSR. Nor was it because of any initiative on our part that the tripartite talks were broken off.