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### **Empty Promises**

Sir,

Mr K. Subrahmanyam in his article "Extending NPT" (March 29) has very rightly pointed out that the assurances being given by the nuclear weapon powers now are as negative and meaningless as those of the past. Such assurances cannot be otherwise. Apart from the fact that no country can ever be expected to risk a nuclear attack on itself for the sake of another, unless its own interests are also involved, treaties and agreements between nations are generally not worth the paper on which they are written; specially when they are made between powers that are unequal.

The crux of the matter is that there is more to possessing nuclear weapon capability than what is ostensibly being made out to be. Mao Tse Tung's famous words that political power grows out of the barrel of the gun were at a time when no nuclear weapons existed. It is this power that now grows out of the barrel of the nuclear gun that the gang of five are striving for, while hiding behind the façade of anxiety for international peace. Vague and meaningless assurances are being deliberately given by the nuclear weapon powers for keeping their options open. The blatantly discriminatory nature of the NPT should make it quite obvious that proliferation of nuclear weapons is being opposed not for any concern for survival of mankind but for restricting the monopoly to the five.

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