

*Private Members' Business*

amendment conference which is to be called late this year or early in 1991.

• (1400)

Some members of this House and some members of the public might not be familiar with this issue, so I think I should explain what the partial test ban treaty is and why it is so important.

The partial test ban treaty was signed in 1963 by President John Kennedy and Secretary Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union, and originally it was a treaty to deal with radioactive fallout. It was also seen as a means to stop the development of new nuclear weapons. According to the partial test ban treaty, the countries that signed the treaty pledged themselves not to test nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, under the sea, or in outer space. This meant that the only place left for the testing of nuclear weapons was under ground. Of course, since the signing of the treaty, all testing of nuclear weapons has taken place under ground.

That does not mean that testing has not taken place, as most of you know. As a matter of fact, there have been over 1,000 tests of nuclear weapons since 1963, all under ground. Unfortunately, these tests have led to the proliferation of new types of nuclear weapons.

In the 25 years or more that have passed since the treaty was signed, there have been over 1,000 under ground nuclear explosions. Through that testing, the superpowers developed the hydrogen bomb in the 1950s, which increased by ten times the power of the original nuclear weapon. Through this kind of testing they have also reduced the size of the warheads so that one missile now can fire 14 warheads at one time. China and India have developed their nuclear weapons underground and so on.

In 1963, with the partial test ban treaty testing was abolished in the atmosphere, under water and in outer space. By leaving that particular avenue open, testing nuclear weapons underground, we have had a massive proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In this motion we are asking the government to support an amendment to the partial test ban treaty, which would make that treaty into a comprehensive test ban treaty and consequently ban the testing of all

nuclear weapons. This is extremely important not only for the environmental consequences of testing but also to stop the development of new nuclear weapons. It is concluded by experts throughout the world that, if you could stop the testing of nuclear weapons, you could stop the development of nuclear weapons. This becomes an extremely important step in bringing about the end of nuclear weapons.

I want to point out that when President Kennedy and Secretary Khrushchev signed the partial test ban treaty in 1963, their intention was to pursue a comprehensive test ban treaty. The partial test ban treaty in 1963 was all they could agree upon at that time. But if you look at the preamble of that original treaty in 1963, it said it was a first step toward the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time. That is in the preamble of the 1963 partial test ban treaty. They foresaw that one day they would end all nuclear testing. That was the goal of all United States administrations from the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s up until the administration of President Reagan. Unfortunately, under the presidency of Mr. Reagan, negotiations toward a comprehensive test ban treaty were halted in 1982. Nevertheless this has been the ongoing goal of many governments throughout the world, churches and peace groups who have been working for years to get a comprehensive test ban treaty.

When many peace groups saw how little progress there was in moving toward the comprehensive test ban treaty contemplated in 1963, they began to look for other methods of achieving that goal. It was Parliamentarians for Global Action who, a few years ago, noticed that in the Article 2 of the partial test ban treaty there was a provision for amending that particular treaty. This organization went about to try to get enough countries which were signatories to the treaty to activate the amendment process. Their purpose was if they could get an amendment conference called under the partial test ban treaty they would then propose that certain clauses of the treaty be amended to make it into a comprehensive test ban treaty. They decided to take this route because they had been so totally frustrated over 25 years in getting a new treaty which would be called a comprehensive test ban treaty.

According to the rules set up in the partial test ban treaty, it required one-third of the signatory nations to