

Private Members' Business

multilateral vehicle for moving the process forward in the direction of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing.

The Conference on Disarmament represents the best vehicle for long-term consideration of nuclear weapons testing. Although this issue remains stalemated in the CD, Canada will make every effort to break the current impasse over the establishment of the *ad hoc* committee, perhaps based on a modification of the East Block compromise proposal put forth by Czechoslovakia's former representative to the CD, Ambassador Vejvoda.

In any event, we are pleased at the technical progress already achieved by the CD group of scientific experts relating to seismic verification to which Canada has contributed.

This does not of course mean that Canada will play a role in the upcoming partial test ban treaty amending conference that is in any way less than constructive. Canada was opposed to the convening of such a conference, for reasons which I have outlined here today, and which we have made clear to the superpowers in different multilateral fora. However, as this conference will take place, Canada will attend and endeavour to contribute to a realistic outcome.

Canada will not, as the hon. member has suggested, support a partial test ban treaty amendment attempting to turn the partial test ban treaty into a comprehensive test ban treaty. However, a partial test ban treaty amending conference which helps clear the air regarding a comprehensive test ban, and which represents no threat to the non-proliferation treaty, could have a beneficial effect in paving the way for a mandate in the Conference on Disarmament. This is a worthwhile and realistic goal, and one which Canada will strive to realize.

In closing, we believe that the government in order to achieve genuine progress in the area of arms control and disarmament should pursue energetic initiatives that have a realistic potential to foster progress toward our goals.

Our strong and active support for negotiating an open skies regime, which has been considered at the Open Skies conference in Ottawa, demonstrates this government's energetic and determined efforts to seize the opportunities that arise for real progress.

• (1430)

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the motion of the hon. member for Notre-dame-de-Grace for opening a debate that is very rarely heard in this House, not just the immediate subject, but the whole subject of nuclear disarmament.

His motion states:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government, as a signatory to the 1963 partial test-ban treaty, should support the recent initiative made by 39 signatory countries to convene an amendment conference of all signatory countries to the treaty to convert the said treaty into a comprehensive test ban treaty which would prohibit the testing of all nuclear weapons.

This move has the support of 116 countries, which is a good majority of the United Nations. Unfortunately, some of the heavyweights have not supported it. The point of such a conference as is being proposed is to bring the public opinion of the whole world, or of two-thirds of the world or more that are represented in these countries, to bear on the heavyweights that are resisting the idea of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

It has been the dream of hundreds of millions of people around the world that we would arrive at a reasonable decision to stop the use of nuclear weapons, to decide that we will never use them and, therefore, to decide that we will never produce them, to decide that we will never research their production, and to decide as a key decision, that we will never test the production of any new nuclear weapons.

When I was a soldier in the Canadian Army at Barriefield in August of 1945, being reorganized to go to the Pacific, as we thought, we heard about the bomb dropped on Hiroshima and then the bomb dropped on Nagasaki, then, of course, we heard about the peace which was coming anyway without those bombs. They were not directed so much at Japan as they were directed at the Soviet Union. The Japanese happened to be the target, that is all.

We have heard a great deal more in the last 40 years about these bombs almost always in the context of a grim