

I must disagree, however, with the hon. member opposite in his suggestion that a partial test ban treaty is the appropriate vehicle for furthering our pursuit of comprehensive test ban treaties. This is clearly not the case.

The PTBT is a treaty which was negotiated at a time when the atmosphere surrounding arms control agreements was very different from that which we experience today. It was negotiated largely as a good intentions treaty without, for example, provision for the rigorous verification we would consider today so essential for a CTVT.

As well, two of the nuclear weapons states, China and France, are not even parties to the treaty.

In addition, it must be borne in mind that no amendment to the partial test ban treaty can come into effect without the approval of the original depository states, and here there is clear opposition. Canada has long recognized the futility of holding a special conference or a negotiation on a CTVT in the absence of support of the parties most directly concerned.

Meaningful arms control, including the progress on the comprehensive test ban treaty, requires that issues be approached in a forthright manner. In this case, however, proponents of the comprehensive test ban treaty are taking advantage of a legal loophole, the prescribed partial test ban treaty amendment procedure, to pursue an objective which they have been unable to achieve directly.

A partial test ban treaty amendment conference, instead of focusing on ongoing efforts where real prospects for real progress exists, runs the risk of wasting both time and resources. To some, it represents an irresponsible misuse of multilateral arms control and disarmament mechanisms. Its failure could undermine the confidence in the multilateral ACD process itself.

Indeed, the use of the terms of the partial test ban treaty to try to achieve the comprehensive test ban treaty, a procedure the original parties in the partial test ban treaty are not prepared to support and which was never the intent of the partial test ban treaty, could well lead some nations to be even more skeptical of our future multilateral ACD treaties for fear they might be similarly misused.

There is a further danger in the approach advocated by the hon. member. There are states which consider progress toward the CTBT objective to be an integral element of the non-proliferation treaty, or the NPT.

Several countries have indicated their intention of linking extension of the NPT in 1995 to the successful outcome of the partial test ban treaty amending conference.

Under these conditions, the holding of a partial test ban treaty amending conference prior to the next NPT review conference would threaten to politicize consideration of the NPT related issues, including the CTBT objective. Its failure might be used as a justification by some to weaken the NPT, or even pull out. Efforts to link the extension of the NPT in 1995 to the successful conclusion of the partial test ban treaty amending conference could pose a serious threat to the continuation of international support for an effective nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Of course, I well understand the reasons why many states have been moved to call for the conversion of the partial test ban treaty into a comprehensive test ban treaty. Their frustration at the modest progress achieved in recent years toward the comprehensive test ban treaty objective at the political level is one I share. However, this is not the approach needed in moving toward our goal of a comprehensive test ban. It is an approach I do not support.

It is the position of this government that nuclear disarmament efforts should focus primarily on a negotiated, balance reductions of nuclear arsenals. Progress in that direction, including the realization of a comprehensive test ban treaty, requires a step by step negotiation of concrete and realistic measures, based on a foundation of confidence and security.

Fundamental in this regard are U.S.A./Soviet bilateral negotiations on nuclear testing which have focused, as a first step, on the development of improved verification provisions for the threshold test ban treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions treaty. We have been pleased at the recent progress achieved in this regard, and hope this will lead to early ratification of these treaties and, following their implementation, the subsequent elaboration of further limitations on testing.

Fundamental, too, are multilateral efforts in support of the realization of a comprehensive test ban at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. Consideration of this subject in the CD for the past four years has been constrained by a disappointing failure to reach agreement on the establishment of an *ad hoc* committee, the major issue of contention being whether an *ad hoc* committee on nuclear testing should have a mandate to negotiate. However, it is here that we find the optimal