

Senate votes down treaty

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claiming polls show most Americans favor such a ban – first proposed by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1958.

The treaty has been signed by 154 nations but must be ratified by all 44 of the world's nuclear-capable countries to take effect.

Thus, the Senate vote was an enormous blow.

Graham Johnson, director of the University of Nebraska Environmental Resource Center, said the rejection of the treaty would be harmful to U.S. international relations.

"Of course they'll have to keep talking about (the treaty)," he said. "There will be all kinds of international pressure put on us."

Navy ROTC member Ryan Aleson, a senior mechanical engineering major, said he agreed with the decision to reject the treaty.

"By not having (the treaty), we maintain our sovereignty and the option to test (weapons)," he said. "We have shown we are responsible by not

testing, but we need to maintain the option."

The United States has not tested a nuclear weapon for the past seven years.

Andrew Faltin, a senior philosophy major, said he supported the Senate's action.

"It's fine," he said. "(The treaty) will resurface when we have the technology to enforce it.

"Passing the treaty now would be like passing a law saying we'll give food to the poor when we have some food."

Supporters warned the price of outright rejection would certainly be international condemnation – and could even increase pressure on emerging nuclear powers like Pakistan and India to conduct more tests.

America's top European allies – Britain, France and Germany – had called on the Senate late last week not to reject the pact. China earlier this week said U.S. ratification would lead other countries to follow suit.

But opponents claimed the compliance with the treaty could not be

verified and argued that it would do little to stop terrorist organizations or dictators from developing nuclear weapons.

President Clinton had made ratification a top second-term priority and was the first world leader to sign the pact in September 1996.

In a last-ditch effort to delay action, Democrats tried to block a move toward a final vote. They lost on a straight 55-45 party-line vote.

The vote would have denied the traditional right of the Senate majority leader to set the agenda for voting.

The treaty was the first on arms control ever rejected by the Senate and only the sixth time this century the Senate has rejected any treaty.

Meanwhile, in a speech at the University of Maine, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the United States has no plan to conduct nuclear weapons tests, whatever the outcome of the Senate debate, and would discourage other nations from testing.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

State area codes may see changes

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Hand said there are about 750 prefixes available per area code.

As of September, there were 120 prefixes left under the 402 area code, and some companies give out up to 38 new prefixes a month.

"(We need to) slow down the demand for new (prefixes) and more efficiently use the ones we have," he said.

According to www.uswest.com, new area codes are being given out across the country, not just in Nebraska.

The many choices in service providers and an increase in technolo-

gy, such as fax machines and cellular phones, are causing the decrease in prefixes, the Web site said.

Hand agreed. Those services use up prefixes because they use so many phone numbers, he said.

The Public Service Commission is looking for a solution that will be the easiest to implement and will have the least impact on communities.

"It's a lot of hassle for people in Nebraska," Hand said.

According to the U.S. West Web site, an organization called the Numbering Plan Administrators for the United States keeps track of available prefixes in each area for the telecommuni-

cations industry.

The administrators assign new area codes before existing ones run out.

The decision on what plan to implement is up to the Federal Communications Commission, but Hand said the Public Service Commission has petitioned the FCC for more jurisdiction.

Hand said the FCC has allowed other states to decide what's best, and he hopes it will do the same for Nebraska.

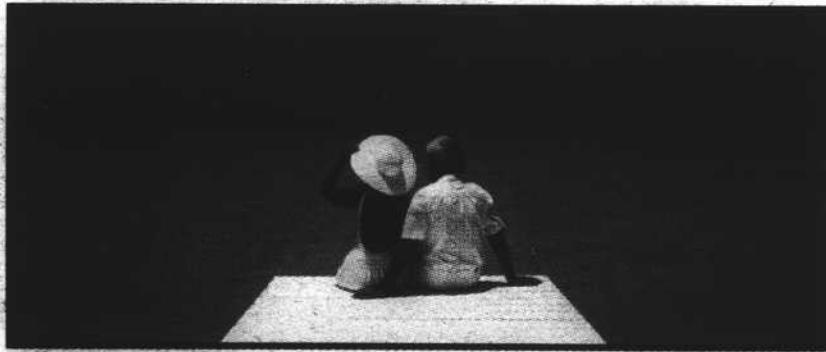
"The demand for telephone numbers has changed," Hand said. "It's a little unpredictable what's going on right now."

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Jupiter's moon may support life

from the bottom of the oceans.

Other researchers reported in a recent issue of the journal *Science* that Europa probably could not support life because any oceans beneath the frozen surface could barely support single-cell organisms let alone complex species. They said a layer of ice at least 6 miles deep blocks the sun's life-sustaining energy from the water.

Scientists have also reported finding evidence of frozen sulfuric acid on Europa's surface.

Sulfuric acid is an extremely corrosive substance found in battery acid on Earth, as well as in the dreaded acid rain, and the discovery gave them pause at first, one of the Galileo scientists, Robert Carlson, admitted. Then he talked things over with astrobiologists, who said sulfur can be a source of food for microbes.

"It's not as bad as I thought. In fact, it might be good," Carlson said as he discussed his findings Wednesday, midway through the annual convention of the American Astronomical Society's Division of Planetary Sciences.

A group of scientists from the University of Arizona presented an analysis of Europa's geology that suggests conditions in the moon's watery crust change slowly enough for some forms of life to adapt and evolve.

With so much tantalizing evidence pointing to the conditions for life on Europa, scientists are eager to learn more. The Galileo spacecraft will make several more passes by Europa before funding runs out next year.

Genetic engineering tool could aid plants

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physiological responses – at a molecular and cellular level – to the amount of light it detects.

Because of these findings, researchers say plants may be able to use and process light better, which makes the plant stronger. Also researchers might be able to counteract a plant's evolutionary trait of shade avoidance.

Shade avoidance refers to a plant's fight to see the sun. By counteracting shade avoidance, plants will use more of their energy to produce seeds and extend their roots than to compete with other plants for light, Kwon said.

For two years, Song and Yong Kook Kwan, who now works in Kwangja, Korea, focused on the chemistry aspect of research, while Gitsu Choi, of the Kumbho Life Science Laboratory in Korea, worked on the genetics aspect.

After Kwan's doctorate work in Nebraska, he returned to Korea, where he is currently doing research.

The three men found a protein called nucleoside diphosphate kinase,

or NDPK, which recognizes a specific quality of light and triggers a final response through light detection.

Song, who has been working on plants' responses to light since 1970, started this research by inspecting how plants respond to light waves.

Plants have small quantities of a pigment protein called phytochrome, or Pr, which detects light in red wavelengths, Song said. The combination of phytochrome far-red absorbing, or Pfr, and Pr produces a photosynthetic light for plants, Song said.

This quality of light is recognized by NDPK. Plants need red light to change phytochrome from Pr to Pfr, Song said.

One contributing factor to weak plants, especially those in shade, is that plants have a small window of time, between about 9 or 10 a.m. and dusk, when both Pr and Pfr are present in the light.

Kwan said a similar research has been used on animal cells to help produce the drug Viagra.

Song, Choi and Kwan's findings were published in the Oct. 7 edition of *Nature*, an international weekly journal of science.

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