

Following the explosion that occurred in India in May, 1974, Canada suspended its nuclear co-operation with India. It did so because in our view the carrying out of that explosion was in clear violation of the understanding that had been reached between Canada and India. In my view, no amount of argumentation can conceal the fact that the Indian government knew perfectly well that any kind of explosion would be contrary to the understanding that had been reached between Canada and India. That is clear to me.

The other argument has been put by India to the effect that you can have an explosion for peaceful purposes. We claim that the technology required for a so-called peaceful explosion is the same technology that leads to nuclear weaponry. No valid distinction can be drawn between an explosion for peaceful purposes and an explosion for weapons' purposes. That is our position, and it has continued to be our position up to the present time, although studies apparently have been launched, or are proposed to be launched under the auspices of the NPT respecting the suggestion that you can have an explosion for peaceful purposes.

We suspended our nuclear co-operation with India. The power reactor is not completed, but the shipment of materials has been suspended. Under the agreement with India that we entered into, we have an obligation to complete the shipment to the reactor, both of material and fuel. That is the obligation that is now in suspense. It is suggested, I believe, by the Honourable Member very clearly, that at this stage Canada should put into a permanent state its suspension of co-operation with India. That is a possible line of policy. But I ask the Honourable Member, has he considered the risk that might result if India then allowed the safeguard system at that reactor to disappear entirely?

They have, at the present time, on that reactor a safeguard system and part of our objective, if we continue our relationship with India, would be to upgrade the existing safeguards on the RAPP reactor. That is a question Honourable Members have to consider, and it is a question that I am presently considering. We have no intention of staying permanently in India. The purpose of our negotiations is to get out, and get out we will. The question is, do we get out now, or do we get out when we complete our current obligations; and in completing our current obligations, are we doing more for the non-proliferation system; and if we do get out now, do we leave that RAPP reactor unsafeguarded? Basically, this is one of the main questions that is now under consideration.

The Honourable Member has asked me to come clean with the House. I should like to put before the House some of the questions I am presently considering before making a final recommendation to my colleagues as to whether we ought to complete this particular aspect of our co-operation with India prior to terminating it altogether, because that is the total objective of our policy in the long-run.