

legally binding agreement with the recipient that he will not divert the materials or technology to non-peaceful purposes. I point out that Canada thought it had that legally binding agreement in every case in which a reactor has been granted. It has never prevented anything.

The other point is the inspection system. I hope I am not misconstruing the minister's words, but I believe he said that if the conditions laid down by Canada are not met, the remedy is that the international community will be alerted. Is there any remedy? Is there any other better inspection method? Who is going to do the inspection? Will it be the agency? Will it be Canadian people? Surely, there ought to be a better remedy than merely alerting the international community. In the case of India, the international community was alerted to what India was doing.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Chairman, a full reply to that point would take a little more time than I have at my disposal. May I say that the inspection is conducted internationally. If any country under inspection is reported to have some violation, the international community can act through the security council. The board of governors of the international agency report to the security council. The security council can consider the matter and propose whatever action it wishes. Further to that, the international community can act to withdraw the supply of materials that are required where that is appropriate or it can act to withdraw the supply of spare parts. These are the sanctions that are available, short of war, to the international community.

When discussing this question, I have never concealed that there are strong pressures and strong international sanctions that can be used. For example, in our case with Pakistan, we are the sole supplier of uranium. That is a very powerful sanction, if we wanted to use it. In other cases, a sanction may not be applied by Canada, but it could be by other suppliers. This is the only way, short of armed occupation, that you can be totally satisfied that there is no risk whatsoever. I have never suggested, and I do not think even the officers of the International Atomic Agency would suggest, and I have questioned them very closely on this, that there is a total annihilation of the risk under any system that has been devised to date.

In our own bilateral arrangements, we are extracting, under international inspection, the best safeguards. We think they are completely tight. The NPT and the exporters are moving in that direction. In the present circumstances, the best that Canada can do is to ensure that the materials which it provides are properly safeguarded and that its materials, equipment and technology will not be diverted for non-peaceful purposes.

● (2050)

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Chairman, would the minister permit a question? I do not want to take his time, but I am sure the committee would give the minister all the time he requires.

The Chairman: I was about to bring to the attention of hon. members the fact that any question asked of the minister is asked in his time. His time has just expired, unless the committee wishes to give him extra time to

answer questions. Is there consent to allow the minister to resume his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Chairman, I have a question regarding the suggestion I made this afternoon. I have talked to some of the scientists who worked with the International Atomic Energy Agency, and they say that the problem is not uranium but the plutonium that is in the spent uranium rods after the nuclear power has been generated. The ones I talked to think that the most effective control would be if the bilateral treaty required, first, that Canada be the sole supplier of uranium, and that Canada have control of the spent uranium rods and be able to recover the plutonium. The danger, of course, is that some countries may be lax about the disposition that is made of that plutonium. It might even be the case that a government was using it wisely but it got into the hands of terrorist groups. Has the government looked into this possibility, and if it has not, would it do so?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Chairman, I mentioned earlier the comments that the hon. gentleman had made and referred to his suggestion that Canada, in this case the supplier, should have sole ownership and control of the spent fuel, or the fuel rods, or whatever the technical expression is. We are presently negotiating to have included within our bilateral agreements a veto of control over the use of any spent fuel. We think that is an extremely important item in the agreement and we are working in that direction. It is not precisely the same idea as the hon. member's, but I think it has the same effect. If that can be achieved—and it is certainly our objective—we hope to do this not only bilaterally but multilaterally among other exporters.

I wanted to say a word about a number of the matters the hon. member for Greenwood and others raised, especially his reference to international economic development.

I think it would be unfortunate in this particular year if we failed to refer, at least in some brief words, to this whole question of international development. It is certainly a matter of gratification to me that all members of the House are now extending their interest in international development beyond the operations of the Canadian International Development Agency to cover some of the wider policy issues now under consideration throughout the world.

As hon. members may be aware, the government of Canada has undertaken, through an interdepartmental committee under the chairmanship of the undersecretary of state for external affairs, a comprehensive study of the economic relations between the developing and the developed world. I think it is a good thing that the House approved today the reference inviting the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence to examine the whole field of policy relating to international development, but particularly to focus attention upon economic relations.

This is a big question. It occupied the Commonwealth Prime Ministers to a great extent at their meeting. It occupied to a great extent the meetings of OECD and the