

Before Indians are blamed for betraying Canada and before Canadians are blamed for misassessing India's nuclear behaviour, there is one point to be faced squarely. The 1956 Agreement did not define the term "peaceful uses". Rather than assume that Canadian ministers and officials did not know what Bhabha was doing, I would assume that Canadians involved in the policy process during 1954-58 had a sound perspective about the implications of the Indo-Canadian atomic relationship. In the other words, something more than Bhabha's word and Canadian assessment of it seems to be involved in our examination — with the wisdom of hindsight — of the 1956 Agreement. There is ambiguity in this Agreement on the question of peaceful nuclear explosions. It neither includes nor excludes PNEs because then PNEs were not real possibilities. The issue just did not exist in a technological or a political form. Surely we cannot blame Canadians — working in a specific policy focus — for failing to discuss things which were then *really* hypothetical? Thus, to argue that "Canada had accepted India's vague promises at face value without relating them to Nehru's earlier condemnation of the principle of international control and inspection of nuclear raw materials and production" (p. 25) is to cast stones at old and experienced diplomats. It assumes that the May 18 test is the first step towards a weapons program. I would like any Canadian to offer evidence that India is making a military effort in the nuclear field. Existing evidence points to research in ballistics and space technology at present and one is hard pressed to offer anything tangible to demonstrate a movement towards nuclear weapons. Editorial writers and trendy image-makers should thus look at the facts before condemning Indians or the naive Canadians.

Fourthly, I am perplexed by the reference to French views on nuclear weapons. Again, I must ask the authors to show that French views have been accepted by Indian decision-makers. The French logic assumes that there is a perceived nuclear threat. This assumption does not make sense in the Indian nuclear debate. It is a common mistake in the West to assume that India's nuclear policy is structured on the centrality of the China problem. Ambassador Trivedi's speeches (during NPT discussions), however, make it quite clear that China is not, in the Indian view, an immediate nuclear threat to India. On August 29, 1974, India's Deputy Defence Minister told the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) in Delhi "we do not expect any nuclear threat from China". True, since the May 18 test is a political rather than a military act, China enters Indian calculations, but the French analogy should not be pressed for the present. If Indians were really nervous about a nuclear China, it would be quite easy for the Indian Government to sell an anti-China rationale for the nuclear explosion. Security-oriented arguments somehow seem to have wider international constituencies.

Finally, on pp. 27-28, I am distressed to note the view that the distinction between a peaceful nuclear explosion and all others is difficult to sustain. This is not true. A distinction is emerging. On March 14, 1967, Soviet Ambassador Roshchin noted in the ENDC in Geneva: "The Soviet Union understands the interests of the non-nuclear countries in the use of nuclear energy in the future for implementing such major projects in the field of economic development as may require the carrying-out of nuclear explosions. . . . In doing so, *we bear in mind that the question of the procedure and conditions governing the carrying-out of nuclear explosions is a separate question that can be settled only on the basis of a separate international agreement.*" (my emphasis)

Article 5 of the NPT, of course, talks of peaceful nuclear explosions within the NPT framework. IAEA panel discussions during 1970, 1971 and 1972 recognized the importance of continuing and intensifying experimentation with PNEs. The Agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on Scientific and Technical Co-operation in the Field of Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, June 21, 1973, notes the need for satisfying increasing energy demands. Finally, the bilateral Soviet-American agreement of July 3, 1974, states:

"The provisions of this treaty do not extend to underground nuclear explosions carried out by the parties for peaceful purposes. Underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes shall be governed by an agreement which is to be negotiated and concluded by the parties at the earliest possible time."

Thus, the question arises: If PNEs exist for the super-powers, why does not the same logic hold true for non-nuclear-weapon powers? It seems there is a need for the repair crew of the NPT to renegotiate by making PNEs acceptable for all parties — irrespective of who signed or not. There is, of course, a need to discuss the rules of the game about export of nuclear-explosives technology, but, in view of the rigid posturing which the prolonged NPT discussions produced, it may be better to discuss such rules through private diplomacy without excessive public moralising which international conference diplomacy entails.

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