In the interim, nuclear fuel waste continues to be stored safely and economically in water filled pools or dry storage canisters at the Canadian nuclear reactor sites. The safe storage and containment of the small volume of nuclear fuel waste at these sites can continue for 50 years or more.

In March of this year, the Minister of Natural Resources obtained approval from her cabinet colleagues to negotiate, with major waste stakeholders, a policy framework including organizational and financial options, for the disposal of all radioactive wastes in Canada including nuclear fuel waste.

A Discussion Paper was prepared by Natural Resources Canada and released to the major stakeholders to get their views on a policy framework for radioactive waste disposal. The Minister of Natural Resources is planning to return to Cabinet later this year with the results of these discussions and negotiations, and with proposed options for the policy framework. This initiative will respond to the Auditor General's Report.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

REPORT OF AUDITOR GENERAL ON FOREIGN SERVICE TRAVEL DIRECTIVES—GOVERNMENT POSITION

(*Response to question raised by Hon. Richard J. Doyle on May 25, 1995*)

The issue of the travel irregularities was the submission of travel claims by employees that falsely requested reimbursement for expenses not actually incurred by the employee. Following a comprehensive investigation, praised by the Auditor General for its thoroughness, those employees making such false statements were disciplined. An active audit program, implemented since then, has ensured that such false statements are no longer made and will not be made in the future.

Media reporting on this issue was very imprecise. In a letter dated May 18, 1995, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Corporate Services Branch of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade responded to the many inaccuracies reported in the media.

NEW DIRECTIVES ON FOREIGN SERVICE TRAVEL DIRECTIVES—REQUEST FOR PARTICULARS

(*Response to question raised by Hon. Richard J. Doyle on May 25, 1995*)

The Foreign Service Directives are negotiated with the Public Service Bargaining Units once every three years. Foreign service directives 45 and 50 were changed during the last negotiations which were completed in June 1993. Negotiations for the next review will commence during the fall of 1995, and are expected to be completed by 1996.

Foreign Service Travel Directives 45 and 50 read as follows.

FSD 45 – Foreign Service Leave/Option

In addition to leave entitlements under your collective agreement or compensation plan, Foreign Service Leave gives you an extra 10 days of leave each year as a premium for service abroad. (This leave is accumulated at the rate of 10/12 days per year.) This leave may be utilized with SBM approval in three different ways:

1. taken as leave after accrual or carried over from year to year;

2. accrued credits may be cashed in, in part or in full (although you should be aware that this dollar value is taxable), on the basis of your salary in effect on the preceding March 31, or;

3. any time you are assigned abroad or in conjunction with relocation travel to or from a Post, 10 days of accrued leave may be traded in exchange for a transportation entitlement to reflect 85% of one full adult return economy air ticket (Y) based on the return fare from your mission to the Headquarters city. When there is no "Y" fare, 100% of the "Y2" fare shall be used. The accountable advance shall be accounted for in full on completion of all travel for which the advance was issued, or one year from the date of issuance of such advance, whichever is earlier.

FSD 50 – Foreign Service Vacation Travel Assistance

Entitlements

FSD 50 applies to you and your accompanying dependants at the mission. Where educational facilities at the mission are not compatible and you have dependants attending school away from the mission but not in Canada, those dependants are also eligible for benefits. Employees are given an option to claim:

1) a transportation entitlement which is fully accountable based on full (Y) economy class fare Post/Ottawa/Post; or

2) a non-accountable foreign service vacation travel allowance of:

– 90% of full (Y) economy class fare for those posts for which a stopover would be authorized for relocation travel,

– 80% of full (Y) economy class fare for those posts for which a stopover would not be authorized, or

– where (Y) fare is not existent, the allowance is based on 100% of the Y2 fare.

Please note that employees must travel and although the benefit is non-accountable, may be required to provide evidence that travel has occurred!