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SALE OF URANIUM

The Government is prepared to negotiate bilateral agreements with friendly governments covering co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and, in particular, the supply of natural uranium for such uses.

This announcement was made in the House of Commons February 18 by the Rt. Hon. C.D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce. Full text of Mr. Howe's statement was as follows:

"On May 25 last I advised the House that the Government was considering bilateral agreements which would permit the sale of uranium to friendly governments or their designated purchasing agencies. I pointed out that such arrangements must be made with due regard to safeguards as to the end use of the uranium supplied and the end use of any special fissionable materials which might be produced from the uranium supplied. In these circumstances it seemed desirable that the final determination of policy with respect to safeguard provisions in bilateral agreements should be deferred until the proposed statute for an international atomic energy agency had been discussed and agreed upon.

"The House will recall that the Statute for the International Atomic Energy Agency was considered at a general conference in New York which was attended by representatives of all of the member countries of the United Nations. Agreement was reached at the conference on a statute for the International Agency, and the Statute has been tabled. Article XII of the Statute contains the control provisions which are designed to prevent the diversion to other

than peaceful uses of any materials, equipment or information which may be supplied by the International Agency. These control measures may also be invoked in the case of bilateral agreements where the parties concerned request such action by the Agency.

"The Government is now prepared to negotiate bilateral agreements with friendly governments covering co-operation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and, in particular, the supply of natural uranium for such uses. These agreements will contain control provisions similar to those contained in Article XII of the Statute for the International Atomic Energy Agency. The inclusion of such control provisions in bilateral agreements is consistent with the support which Canada gave to Article XII of the Statute for the International Atomic Energy Agency at the New York meeting. Except for the control provisions, sales arrangements concluded under bilateral agreements will be on a normal commercial basis. Eldorado Mining and Refining Limited, the Government's designated purchasing agent for all uranium produced in Canada, will be responsible for negotiating the sales contracts. While the amounts of uranium which can be made available under bilateral agreements at present are not large because of existing contractual commitments, it is believed that these quantities will be sufficient to meet the current requirements of those governments which have indicated an interest in obtaining uranium from Canada.

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