

the demand side for some time to come, and we would be better off for it socially. That is not going to happen, of course. We are not going to simply stop investing in energy supply, but we should at least redirect as much as we can at the margin.... Whether in the end we have to go nuclear or not, I think, is essentially a political question that will have to be faced, but we do not have to now. Global warming does not provide a rationale for a massive nuclear expansion. It provides a rationale for a massive increase in efficiency, and then we can decide the nuclear case on its own merits later.<sup>17</sup>

5.30 The question nevertheless arises as to whether increased use of nuclear energy should be included as part of Canada's longer-term strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions after the turn of the century. This is a question that does not at present arise in most other "like" countries; as we were told by our final witness, a Canadian who serves on the International Energy Agency in Paris:

Canada is one of three countries in the OECD that still has a nuclear program. It is probably the only country that is proposing to go ahead and continue to build nuclear, along with aggressive energy efficiency programs in the Canadian utilities....

The CANDU technology is excellent, and it is the only technology out there in the world other than the American PWR system.<sup>18</sup>

5.31 A dispassionate view of the role of nuclear energy in global warming control was provided by a witness with impeccable environmental credentials, Dr. James Bruce:

Instead of policies leading to ever more hydrocarbon use Canada must reduce energy demand and must change fuels to use more renewables, more natural gas, and, yes, where economically warranted, more nuclear...

Where the nuclear option looks to be a reasonable option from the economics of the situation, then I think it is probably preferable from the point of view of the world's atmosphere to building a fossil fuel plant.<sup>19</sup>

5.32 The costs of nuclear energy are still in dispute, as we were told by Mr. Haites:

There was an independent review done in Ontario that said the costs of nuclear, including the environmental cost of disposal and decommissioning, are quite competitive with thermo generation. Then, when you look at cost estimates produced in the States, they are three times as high. Frankly, that puzzles me as a non-expert. I do not know what the resolution is there.<sup>20</sup>

5.33 Other reservations about nuclear energy aside, when new energy supply must be considered, nuclear energy may or may not prove to be much more expensive than alternative fuels that can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions substantially. Some members of the Committee believe that nuclear power will be essential in meeting the world's future energy needs while limiting emissions, and that Canada's CANDU technology may have a major role. Other Committee members endorse the view expressed by witnesses that nuclear power will remain a high-cost mechanism for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.