

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

IMPLIED THREAT BY EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET IF CANADA CONTINUES DEMAND FOR NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Can the minister say what response, if any, Canada has made or intends to make to the implied threat made at a news conference at Brussels yesterday by the European Common Market energy commissioner that Canada's political and commercial relationships with the European Common Market countries will be damaged if bickering over the upgrading of our nuclear safeguards with the EEC countries continues?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have heard the news report of that particular statement but I have not yet had an opportunity today to get an official report on it. If that is the position being taken, then I very much regret it. In so far as Canada is concerned, I have made it perfectly clear that we will not resume the export of uranium or other nuclear-related products to the European community until such time as the countries to which we are making those shipments, or have made them in the past, are prepared to accept our nuclear safeguards policy as I outlined it in December. I think they understand our position clearly and it is regrettable, if these news reports are correct, that they have taken that posture. I will be able to report more fully on the official report when I get it later today.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE TO UPGRADE NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS—REQUEST FOR REPORT

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the minister's response to this unsolicited comment by the European Common Market energy commissioner and that he will make it known to members of the House. May I also ask the minister at the same time, as a further aspect of this matter, what approach has been made to the government of France in an effort to have France upgrade its safeguards arrangements to meet the standards outlined by the Canadian government both in December 1974 and December 1976; in other words, to allow inspection of all nuclear installations in that country, and to prevent the transfer by France of Canadian nuclear fuels and technologies to third countries which are not willing to meet Canadian standards? What specific approach has been made to France?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there have been two avenues of approach on this matter. Bilaterally I have talked to the French foreign minister and made perfectly clear to him and to the government of France what our attitude is and our hope that the government of France will accept the Canadian standards or their equivalent. In addition to that, Canada along with France—we are both members of the so-called

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“London suppliers club”—the United States and other countries, meet periodically and during those meetings the same kind of representations are being made. I presume that there will be another meeting of that group in the immediate future—that is, within a matter of weeks—and once again Canada will make its views known at that time and will urge other countries to meet the Canadian standards.

Miss MacDonald: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister state specifically what progress is being made in these negotiations with France? What seems to be the cause of the hold-up here?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Speaker, it would be difficult to identify very specifically what progress has been made. I can only say that since the kind of discussions I have referred to have taken place the government of France has made to my knowledge two separate announcements in which they have moved considerably toward a stronger safeguards regime. But, of course, in the last analysis it is up to the government of France to make the decision. I do know, as I suspect the hon. lady does, that other countries, including the U.S., are hopeful and are indicating to France, as we are, that it and other countries will improve their standards.

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● (1430)

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

INQUIRY IF POWDERED MILK IMPORTED IN 1976-77

Mr. Yves Caron (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

In view of the press release published in the March 25, 1977 edition of the Quebec City newspaper *Le Soleil* to the effect that the government is importing powdered skim milk from New Zealand, while we have enormous surpluses in stock here in Canada, could the minister advise the House whether there have been imports of powdered milk from New Zealand or other industrialized countries in 1976 and 1977? In case this information is not readily available, could he inquire within his department?

[English]

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, this was made through trading agreements with New Zealand. They have a long history of importing not skim milk powder but powder made from buttermilk. In fact, about two million pounds of that has been imported since that time per year. They were given that right at that time. We do not think they should have that right with the surplus problems we have in Canada, but that has been historically their market for years and years for this product.