

there are risks—in sharing this technology with the rest of the world. The hon. member mentioned trouble spots. Of course there are trouble spots in the world. I wonder which parts are trouble free. Is there any part—the United Kingdom included, which has troubles with Northern Ireland—of which it could not be said that because of internal difficulties our most cautious policy would be to withdraw entirely from participating with that part of the national community.

Hon. members spoke about a moratorium. They were explicit: we should stop making available nuclear power reactors, nuclear materials including uranium, the fuel for power reactors and nuclear technology. Previously I presented the position to the House honestly. It was a statement of fact. The hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands said it was an indictment. If we were to cease our participation, sales of the CANDU reactor would be picked up by other countries. That is a fact. It is also a fact that whatever influence Canada has exercised, and continues to exercise—and it is considerable—in upgrading standards among the nuclear suppliers of the world would be less. The policy advocated by the hon. member would totally eliminate the considerable influence which Canada possesses at the present time.

● (1610)

I wonder whether hon. gentlemen opposite have thought through their proposals. They would affect indiscriminately the power programs of both industrialized and developing countries. Accepting the proposal they advance would constitute an abrogation of Canada's responsibility both in the field of international co-operation and in the area of adequate nuclear safeguards that would be part of our obligation under the NPT. Hon. members asked why this country did not join the NPT and take on these responsibilities. We have taken on these responsibilities, and one of them is to share our expertise and materials in this field with other countries of the world. Such a policy as advocated by the opposition would not only mean the cessation of sales of the CANDU reactor; it would have grave consequences domestically and internationally.

The power requirements of Canada's nuclear partners would be seriously jeopardized in the case of CANDU which in each instance is an integral part of the power program of those states. Pakistan is a good example. The hon. member for Northumberland-Durham (Mr. Lawrence) would presumably want us to throw our weight around in Pakistan. That is a possibility; we could cease co-operation and we could black out the city of Karachi by denying them their power source. That is a possibility which could be considered. In the case of uranium sales, the vital energy situation of some of Canada's most important trading partners, such as Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the United Kingdom, among others, would be jeopardized. I suggest, too, that a moratorium, if it is said we exclude uranium, would bring about a radical dislocation of Canada's uranium mining industry which, following the downturn demand over the past decade, is only now able to develop its full potential and play the important role in the economy of which it is capable.

I was in the House of Commons in the sixties when the bottom fell out of the international uranium market, resulting in the dislocation of the industry at Elliot Lake

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and a consequent need for immediate compensatory action on the part of the federal government. So if we cease to participate in these developments, if we cease to supply equipment, technology and fuel, the consequences would be both domestic and international. In addition, we would lose whatever influence we have as a partner in this business of upgrading general nuclear standards. It is a policy which I do not recommend to the House of Commons, and I doubt whether anyone on this side of the House will find much difficulty in voting against the ill-conceived motion put forward by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham.

Mr. Beatty: Your speech is bombing.

Mr. MacEachen: As long as it is not a nuclear bomb, I am all right. Hon. members opposite have been complaining about secrecy; they say they have been kept in ignorance and do not know what is going on. Mr. Speaker, on January 30 I tabled the agreements we signed with the Republic of Korea and with Argentina. I have also tabled a comprehensive statement on Canada's nuclear safeguards policy, the total background for the benefit of hon. members who wanted to be enlightened, who wanted to be in possession of more facts, who wanted to dispel the ignorance in which they have been so deeply immersed by members of the government. I notice that in the three speeches made, not a word was said about the safeguards policy; not a word was said about the agreements. No suggestion was made as to ways in which we might improve, if possible, the system of safeguards we have in effect.

The safeguards as reflected in those two agreements are extremely important. Hon. members clamoured for those agreements; they were clamouring for an opportunity to study them. Today we find ourselves engaged in a debate on the subject, and I have been waiting for some enlightenment as to means by which those safeguard agreements might be improved. None was forthcoming. Maybe hon. members across the way would like a moratorium on those, too. Perhaps they believe we should stop making these agreements and get out of the international field entirely. I want to tell them that safeguards are an extremely important aspect of the international non-proliferation system. There are others, of course. It must be recognized that proliferation is a political problem, one which stems from inequalities and imbalance within the international community.

If we want to succeed in the task of ensuring non-proliferation, we must cast the net wider. We must consider the causes of international tension and do something about the disparities which exist in the world. We must do something to bring about a better and more equitable international economic system. The safeguards constitute a system of legal commitments and a system of verification. The recipient state undertakes, legally, to observe certain pre-conditions and in particular commits itself not to undertake any explosive activity. In every negotiation in which we engage we attempt to add to the strength of this legal commitment.

As hon. members know, adherence to this legal commitment is verified by an international inspection system. Unfortunately, that system was downgraded by the hon.