

brownouts, and we will not be able to carry on our business.

The hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) made several points this afternoon.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. The hon. member for Wellington (Mr. Maine) has the floor.

Mr. Stanfield: I thought he was better in the dark.

Mr. Maine: Hon. members of the opposition get very excited about a blackout. The hon. member for Egmont was not happy that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) did not deal with several questions he raised. One of the reasons I think these were not dealt with was that they did not deal with this motion at all. However, let me respond to some of the questions the hon. member raised. He raised the question of terrorists, which has nothing directly to do with the problem of nuclear proliferation in the lesser developed countries of the world. Certainly it is a very unrealistic comment to make that a terrorist is going to come into possession of a nuclear weapon. Let us think about this for a moment.

Is a terrorist going to rush into Pickering and grab a fuel bundle which is radioactive? He would not get out of the plant before he would be killed, so if we were going to get any nuclear weapon at all, he certainly would not steal the material from a power plant and reprocess it. There is only one possible way he could get the material, and that would be to steal a weapon which is already made, and Canada does not make nuclear weapons. If he wants to steal a weapon, he would not steal it from this country or from the countries with which we are dealing.

Mr. Stanfield: Famous last words.

Mr. Maine: He would steal them from a country like the United States. If he was to steal them, there would not only be the possibility of a nuclear explosion, but also of a delivery system to go along with it.

An hon. Member: There go the lights again.

Mr. Maine: There is a lot of power in my remarks.

Mr. Epp: Give us more light and less heat.

Mr. Maine: It is unrealistic to think of a terrorist stealing a nuclear weapon just to blow it up in his own backyard. He would want to deliver the system, and by stealing a nuclear weapon from a country like the United States he would have the capability of both exploding the device and of delivering it. So the problem is not one of a terrorist in our country at all. It is a problem of a terrorist in the United States, which the Americans have to deal with, and it has already been conceded that it would be very difficult to stop the most determined efforts of terrorists to obtain a nuclear device in this manner. However, I am quite confident that several steps have been taken to try to ensure against this possibility.

Another comment made by the hon. member for Egmont was that plutonium contamination would be terrible if anyone were to come into the possession of some plutonium

and just spread it around. Plutonium is a chemical and there are many chemicals equally as toxic or much more toxic which are in everyday use right now. You have heard of some of the problems we have when we do have accidents—when a chlorine tanker is derailed or when a tanker of sulphuric acid is derailed and it is spilled, or when we have an ammonia leak. These chemicals, certainly in high concentrations, are just as toxic as plutonium. We live with these problems of chemical contamination. We have contingency plans to try to nullify any disaster that may result from an accidental contamination. Plutonium contamination is certainly no worse than some of the problems we deal with in everyday life in the chemical industry.

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A comment was made about sabotage and what a terrible threat it is. This is again extremely unrealistic, Mr. Speaker. There was Dr. Morton Shulman with his crazy idea of dropping three sticks of dynamite in at Pickering. That would do absolutely nothing. If you were able to get the dynamite to the actual fuel bundle itself the most you could hope to do is rupture the fuel bundle and thereby expose an increased surface of nuclear contaminant. The increased contamination in that area would be minimal and would not extend any further than the immediate environment of the fuel rod. The only way to create a serious problem of sabotage is to use an atomic bomb to explode these expended fuel rods. There would be more problems with the atomic bomb than there would be with the result of the sabotage. This is another red herring that the opposition has dragged out to confuse the issue.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Maine: There was another comment about the great stockpile of plutonium—

Mr. Epp: Do you understand it, Joe?

Mr. Maine:—and how we are producing more plutonium. The problem gets worse and worse every day, they say, because we have tons and tons of plutonium. But as I mentioned earlier, plutonium is the fuel of the future; our future energy. We need to store it now and use it when we have the technology to harness it. We are developing that now. Plutonium 239 has a half life of 24,000 years; plutonium 240 has a half life of 6,000 years, so by stockpiling it and protecting it, as we are doing, we will have the fuel to meet our future energy needs and any programs to harness energy in the future. Not only is it not a shame but it is very necessary that we produce and store this plutonium for our future energy needs.

The hon. member for Egmont made a comment about alternate energy forms available. Mr. Speaker, they are not available to be utilized right now. In the short term we are depending on electricity generated from coal and electricity generated from nuclear fission. This will satisfy our immediate increase in energy requirements. There are no other options. The sooner the people of Ontario and of this country wake up to that fact, the sooner we will come to grips with the whole energy conservation problem in order to satisfy the increased needs of the future.