

material and then breaks a bilateral agreement on the subject.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we would like to see more attention paid to the dangers associated with the transportation and disposal of nuclear materials. The dangers to the environment from plutonium, a substance which must be buried for 25,000 years before it is safe, cannot be exaggerated. It has been estimated that there are over 100,000 people in the world today with the expertise to build an atom bomb, which needs only 11 pounds of plutonium to construct one in the 20 kiloton range; and one must view the danger of a terrorist group getting their hands on a nuclear device as very real indeed. Canada has a responsibility also to develop safeguards against these eventualities.

Some years ago Albert Einstein said: "The splitting of the atom has changed everything, except our modes of thinking, and therefore we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe". It is time we took a closer look at those modes of thinking. The safeguards the government has proposed should be viewed carefully in this light. If, in operation, they do not prove effective enough, Canada must not hesitate to suspend and reconsider its entire nuclear program.

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, with a lot of the doubts expressed by the last speaker, I am entirely in agreement. The government was presented with an agonizing dilemma in connection with the export of nuclear technology, facilities and material, and has come out with a policy of procedure to negotiate for the sale of reactors wherever it can. The dilemma arises out of the fact that nuclear technology has two purposes—peaceful uses in providing energy, and non-peaceful uses, such as the manufacture of strategic nuclear weapons which threaten the world and humanity with the unspeakable horror of nuclear war.

There is every reason in the world why Canada should do its best to provide nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to countries which now lack the know how. But we must be aware that the most efficient power producing nuclear reactors will, as a by-product, convert natural or enriched uranium into plutonium. And the conversion of plutonium into nuclear weapons presents no great problem. The plain fact of the matter is that as civilian nuclear reactors proliferate, the ability to produce nuclear weapons will proliferate, treaty or no treaty, promises or no promises, and in spite of the so-called safeguards.

It is true that nuclear energy will become increasingly important to the development of the world, and the minister is perfectly right in saying that Canada's experience in regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy sources qualifies Canada to help other countries to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. There are also very good commercial reasons why Canada, having made a substantial investment in reactor systems, should seek to recover its investment. However, the problem still remains that the transfer of nuclear material held for peaceful purposes can easily be diverted into nuclear weapons. The effort has been made to overcome this difficulty through the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This treaty provides for international safeguards applied through the Interna-

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tional Atomic Energy Agency with its system of inspection and accounting.

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The least that Canada should require in exporting any nuclear material is to ensure that the countries who accept these nuclear materials adhere to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and accept the inspection and accounting provided for by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

It has been noted that we will be negotiating, and according to the minister's statement negotiating is a continuing process in carrying out contracts, with Argentina and the Republic of South Korea, among others. The former country has not signed the non-proliferation agreement and the latter country, South Korea, although having signed the agreement has never ratified it. I am not sure what the position is in regard to Iran, but I believe it has not ratified the treaty either.

There remains a grave question as to whether agreements, either under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or bilateral, are enforceable and whether they are adequate. They seem to depend upon the reliability of the country giving the guarantee.

The life of a nuclear reactor is about 25 years. During 25 years the complexion of governments may change, and I hope it will in some countries. In this party we want more firm assurances than have been given by the minister in his statement that in fact the safeguard structures of which he speaks will be effective. We may not be able to obtain 100 per cent assurance in any sort of agreement or system of inspection, but we are entitled to question, and question closely the efficacy of these safeguards.

It is my suggestion that this question should be referred to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence before any agreements are entered into so that the adequacy of safeguards can be examined with the help of expert evidence. Many eminent scientists, as I think members of the House know, have questioned the effectiveness of the safeguards. As I have said, this is an agonizing decision. We wish to assist the world by the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, but even that fact and even the commercial advantages should not prevail if in fact what we are doing is proliferating nuclear weapon-making potentiality throughout the world. In that way lies disaster more deadly than it is possible for us to imagine.

For this reason we in this party cannot at the present time approve the government's policy as announced by the minister today.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to thank the minister for having sent to us his statement in French before the House met today.

I would also like to tell him that he was right to make his statement on the use of our nuclear exports. This statement tends to establish that in future the government will be scrupulous towards the users of our nuclear exports. This control, Mr. Speaker, should have been carried out before. We would not have seen some of our nuclear exports used to such ends as recently in India, where they were used for nuclear explosions. Mr. Speaker,