

"It would be unconscionable under any circumstances to deny to the developing countries the most modern of technologies as assistance in their quest for higher living standards. But, in a world increasingly concerned about depleting reserves of fossil fuels, about food shortages, and about the need to reduce illness, it would be irresponsible as well to withhold the advantages of the nuclear age - of power reactors, agricultural isotopes, cobalt beam-therapy units."

In Canada we have developed this high technology. It is one of the show pieces of Canadian industry and has application throughout the world. This afternoon honourable gentlemen are saying, "Sit on it. Look inward. Keep this technology in Canada because we do not want to be as other countries and take risks." We take some risks, admittedly. They say, "We prefer to withdraw than to confront the dilemma proposed by our policy, namely, how can we share this technology with the rest of the world and at the same time avoid the proliferation of nuclear weapons?" That is the dilemma.

The Honourable Member said it was a moral issue, but he ignored the moral question which we, as a rich, developed country would face if we did as he proposed and refused to take risks which other developed countries take - and there are risks - in sharing this technology with the rest of the world. The Honourable 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.

Honourable 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 Honourable 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 Honourable Member would totally eliminate the considerable influence which Canada possesses at the present time.

I wonder whether honourable 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. Honourable Members asked why this country did not join the NPT and take on these responsibilities.