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Canada's obligations as a nuclear power

"Nuclear activity is one of the many in which man is now engaged which, if not made susceptible to reason and discipline, could become ultra-hazardous, even cataclysmic. All of our joint wisdom and all of our dedication will be required in order to ensure that mankind enjoys the benefits of this activity without suffering from its perils. Canadian Government nuclear policies have attempted to steer this course," stated the Prime Minister, in an address to the annual meeting of the Canadian Nuclear Association last month.

Mr. Trudeau described as follows Canada's obligations as a nuclear power which, he said, formed the basis of the nuclear policy:

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The first of these obligations finds its origins in the character of Canadians, and in those circumstances of wilderness and weather which contributed to that character. We are a society which has not forgotten its frontier origins. We are a people who have experienced the torment of need, who understand the benefits of sharing. It is inconsistent with that experience and that understanding that we should now deny to the less-developed countries of the world the opportunity to gain a hand-hold on the technological age. It is inconsistent with the character of Canadians that we should expect those hundreds of millions of persons living in destitute circumstances in so many parts of the world to wait patiently for improvement while their countries proceed painfully through the industrial revolution.

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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.

All these devices Canada has. All these devices the world needs. If we are serious in our protestation of interest and our desire to help, if we are honest when we say that we care and intend to share with those less well-

off than ourselves, if we are concerned about the instability of a world in which a fraction of the population enjoys the bulk of the wealth — in any of these events we cannot object to the transfer of advanced technology. Technological transfer is one of the few — and one of the most effective — means available to us of assisting others to contribute to their own development. It forms one component of the program for action for a new international economic order adopted by the United Nations and endorsed so enthusiastically by the vast majority of the countries of the world. It remains as a cornerstone of Canada's economic assistance policy and the programs under that policy which we operate in the UN, in the Commonwealth, in L'Agence franco-phone, in the Colombo Plan, and elsewhere.

Canadian governments since the Second World War have been committed without exception to assisting the less advantaged. That commitment cannot be discharged by help of poor quality or low value. Nor would Canadians permit that. Unless the disadvantaged countries are given the opportunity to pass out from the medieval economic state in which many of them find themselves, and into the twentieth century of accomplishment and productivity, the gap between rich and poor will never narrow. In that process, we must assist them to leapfrog the industrial revolution. Nuclear technology is one of the most certain means of doing so. In instances, therefore, where electric power from nuclear sources is cost-effective, where the advantages of nuclear science are of demonstrable benefit, we should be prepared to share