

guards, recognized by the international community, pursuant to the action of the International Atomic Energy Agency. At that time the international standards did not provide for restriction on explosions expressed to be for peaceful rather than weapons purposes. Canada decided as a matter of principle, subsequent to the Indian explosion, to put on a higher level of standards which were set out in the statement I made on December 20, namely—I will repeat them as I believe I have several times already in this House—that the Canadian technology and Canadian equipment, including the CANDU reactor itself, or material supplied by Canada whether it be heavy water, the uranium, or the spent fuel resulting from the processing or the operation of the Canadian reactor would not be applied for explosive purposes and that the material would not be available to other parties for explosive purposes. These were the safeguards that were set out on December 20, and I would invite the hon. member to read that statement again because it is comprehensive.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I have re-read it and still do not—

**An hon. Member:** Understand it.

**Mr. Lawrence:** I still do not have a very clear understanding. I will admit that. The difference between me and the minister is I admit it.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lawrence:** Will the minister confirm that there is still a very large gap in respect of the actual title passing to Argentina with regard to those spent fuel rods? Does the minister honestly believe that this type of safeguard is worth anything at all if Canada, or any other supplier, may have no further control over those spent fuel rods after they go through the reactor.

**Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):** Mr. Speaker, I just answered that question. I can understand that perhaps we have to keep repeating this to the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham. I indicated that the spent fuel to be used in a Canadian reactor or a reactor not constructed in Canada but with Canadian technology at a later date or one using fuel supplied by Canada, may not subsequently be applied for any weapons making purpose. There is no gap in the coverage of safeguards. I take it that what the hon. gentleman is objecting to, which is his real point, is that, of course, Canada should not rely on the undertakings or obligations of other countries. This is, of course, a viewpoint he can take in international relations but certainly it is not the standard which has been set down for the world generally in the non-proliferation treaty.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member on a final supplementary.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Thank you, Sir. An assertion was made about my understanding. I would like to hear the minister's definition of what is a nuclear weapon. That is really what it boils down to, because certainly in the case of India and of other potential users right now there is a grave difference between weaponry and just plain explosion. Certainly, when he talks about nuclear weaponry he is a year behind the times.

### Oral Questions

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

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### PUBLIC SERVICE

#### GOVERNMENT'S VIEW OF RIGHT OF TRADE UNION OFFICIAL TO CRITICIZE DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister which concerns the rights of more than 250,000 federal civil servants and arises from the recent three-months suspension of the president of a civil service union. I refer to Mr. Arthur Stewart. I would like to ask the Prime Minister if he shares the view of the Minister of Supply and Services who was quoted in this particular instance confirming his approval of the suspension as follows:

● (1420)

I'm prepared to be criticized by my peers, but not by an employee.

My question to the Prime Minister is as follows: since it has implications beyond that particular department, is it the government's view that an elected trade union official within the federal civil service does not have the right to criticize departmental policy?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I would not comment on this particular case without studying it in detail. I have not discussed the particular matter with the minister, but I must say that in principle I agree with the stand he has taken that it is not proper for civil servants to criticize and make political statements against the government. This is a long standing rule and we do not intend to change it.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Since the issue at stake is the effective right of an elected official of the employees to do the job for which he was elected, is it the view of the Prime Minister that an elected representative of the employees working for the government cannot exercise his trade union responsibilities in the same way that trade union representatives outside the public service are expected to do, whether they are criticizing General Motors, General Electric or any of the other "Generals"? Is he saying that there is to be a difference between the rights of representatives of workers in the federal government and representatives of workers in the private sector?

**Mr. Trudeau:** No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot say whether the hon. member believes or whether it is in practice the right of a trade union member to make political statements against the government which employs him. But I repeat to him, if that is what he thinks, it is not government policy and we oppose it. We do not believe that this impinges on the trade union rights of union leaders. This government has institutionalized unionism in the government, and we have given employees the right to strike legitimately. But in so far as political statements or criticisms of government policy are concerned, we object to that, and if that was the situation, I approve of the action taken by the minister.