

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND SAFEGUARDS

During the past two years Canada has been renegotiating its nuclear cooperation agreements with its nuclear customers, a process begun late in 1974 following a review of Canadian nuclear policy in the wake of the Indian nuclear test. Although Canada's new safeguards policy initially encountered some resistance, agreement was reached this year with two uranium customers, Finland and Spain, and two reactor customers, South Korea and Argentina. Understandings on safeguards were reached with the UK and the USA, and the Nuclear Cooperation Agreement with another uranium customer, Sweden, was upgraded by an exchange of notes. Discussions have proceeded with EURATOM, Japan and Switzerland for agreements which would cover not only uranium sales but also any future cooperation involving the sale of nuclear technology.

The Government has continued to pursue its policy, outlined by the Minister for Energy, Mines and Resources on December 20, 1974, of selling uranium and CANDU reactors under strict safeguards to selected customers. This policy is in keeping with Canada's commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to export nuclear items only under safeguards and to ensure that the benefits of lower cost energy which nuclear power promises is shared by all nations. In keeping with this policy, sales of CANDU reactors to the Republic of Korea and Argentina were finalized early this year. Also in keeping with this policy, the Government announced that it was terminating all nuclear cooperation with India as a result of India's refusal to place all facilities and nuclear material in India produced with Canadian assistance under safeguards. Nuclear cooperation with Pakistan has been under review in the wake of Pakistan's purchase from France of a nuclear reprocessing plant whose main current source of irradiated fuel would be a Canadian-supplied reactor.

At the same time Canada has recognized that its bilateral efforts on the non-proliferation front would be ineffective unless the internationally acceptable minimum level of safeguards could be raised to a parallel level of stringency. To promote such international standards Canada has actively supported the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency and has met with the nuclear supplier nations to discuss safeguards policy. The Secretary of State for External Affairs made a statement in the House of Commons on March 23, 1976 concerning the success of the nuclear suppliers discussions; excerpts from his speech are reprinted at the end of this article.