

He urged that the drive should begin by offering to send over an Atomic Energy of Canada team to tell British authorities the latest CANDU success story. This should be followed up by an invitation for a team of senior British authorities to visit Canada and see the CANDU system in action for themselves.

Warren also took the precaution of warning that success was far from certain. But, without a new effort to get CANDU's merits across to the British, failure was already certain.

During a visit to London in May 1973, Alastair Gillespie, the Canadian Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, had met with the British Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Peter Walker. The day after Warren's cable, Ottawa responded by cabling the text of a letter from Gillespie to Walker. The Minister reminded Walker that, during their May talks, they had discussed the scope for Britain and Canada to work together in the nuclear-power field. He reminded Walker of his invitation that a British team be sent to Canada to meet with Atomic Energy and Ontario Hydro officials and see the Pickering reactor station in action. Gillespie said he thought it would be timely to renew the invitation. He also proposed to send over an Atomic Energy team and suggested Canadian and British officials explore areas for co-operation by agencies and firms in both countries in developing nuclear-power facilities during the next few years. Gillespie followed up the letter with a transatlantic telephone call two days later.

The new CANDU sales drive was on. But it still had not broken into the realm of public diplomacy. Warren's first purpose had been to ensure, through private diplomacy, that nothing would be done to offend British officialdom. Meanwhile, a strategy had also been worked out at meetings in the main headquarters of the High Commission, Macdonald House in Grosvenor Square. There was general agreement that the first priority should be to persuade the British not to discard the CANDU-style pressure-tube reactor for the American-designed pressure-vessel reactor. It was also agreed that the campaign must be strictly positive — no knocking anybody else's reactor technology. The emphasis must be on the positive aspects of CANDU-type reactors, including the version Britain had itself been developing.

Chances of success

From the vantage-ground of the press office, the chances of success looked better in the political than in the technological

*Failure certain
without new effort
to communicate
CANDU'S merits*

*Strategy
worked out
at headquarters
in London*

...red to offer a direct CANDU sale to Britain, provided it would be given as serious consideration as America's. A casual interest would only cost Canada money and waste a lot of valuable time. Atomic energy would be prepared to offer the Central Generating Board a CANDU system at a firm price, with significant British content in its production, and with full performance warranties and completion-time guarantees. It would also be willing to offer a complete nuclear-power plant from Canada, though Gray was sure this would be unacceptable to British authorities and industry.

No decision had yet been taken to move the CANDU campaign into the realm of public diplomacy, as we in the press office were recommending. But in the "public" field of diplomacy, events begin to move rapidly. Warren and others at the High Commission did some fast soundings in the more usual — to use a well-worn phrase — "diplomatic channels". It was found that new initiatives to win support for CANDU-type technology with British authorities would raise no official rickles. In fact, there were indications that some British officials who opposed the American reactor design would welcome a wider public debate in Britain about this vital decision.

On November 6, Warren reported the results of the soundings to Ottawa in another diplomatic cable. By happy coincidence, Jeanne Sauvé, Canada's Minister of Science and Technology, had scheduled an official visit to London about the beginning of November. Warren was able to include in his cable her finding that there was evidence of support for the Canadian reactor system and its potentialities across a broad spectrum of British persons with stake of one kind or another in Britain's eventual decision. It had also been determined what the main factors in the decision were likely to be.

British needs

Having had many problems and failures with its own nuclear-power technology, Britain now wanted a reactor system with record of reliable performance, economic operation, proved safety record, design flexibility, commercial application and export potential. These were all CANDU qualities. But the soundings had also turned up evidence that the British were far from fully aware of these qualities. Warren advised Ottawa that, unless the merits of the CANDU system were quickly brought to British attention in a new selling drive, Canadian-style reactor technology would find itself on the sidelines.