

It is of the utmost importance that like-minded nuclear supplier countries arrive at a common policy on this issue and that Canada and the United States, in particular, do not get out of phase in their efforts. We are working very closely to avoid this possibility but for the complex global policy reasons I have mentioned with which the United States must cope, and for equally complex though sometime different reasons affecting Canada, the achievement of a common approach to the wide range of nuclear questions represents a tremendous challenge.

I am happy to tell you that in recent days, we have reached an interim agreement with the United States covering a broad spectrum of our bilateral nuclear relations and clearing the way for further joint efforts to achieve a more effective world-wide safeguards regime.

Thus if this issue reveals the sometimes difficult nature of the Canada-US relationship, it shows as well the determination to consult and co-operate which is the mark of true friendship.

An independent foreign policy for Canada is not only a necessity for a strong and vital country, it also provides that element of credibility which gives meaning and significance to Canadian support for United States initiatives in international affairs. If the world community took it as read that Canada would always agree with the United States then Canada would be cast in the role of a mere cipher and we would be no good to anyone; least of all ourselves.