

*Nuclear Proliferation*

What would be the consequences of making permanent the suspension of supplying nuclear co-operation to India? What would be the consequences on the safeguard system? Would the Indian government consider that the co-operation obligations of Canada had been breached, and that the safeguards—which are an integral part of the co-operation agreement—should be removed? To what extent should co-operation be resumed in order to permit an upgrading of existing safeguards on the RAPP reactor? Is the proposed agreement effective in ensuring that spent fuel from the RAPP reactor will never be used for explosions? To what extent does the proposed agreement represent new and significant safeguard obligations for India which would bear on the development of its nuclear policy? How would any upgraded system relate to this particular reactor about which we are concerned? How would such an upgraded system compare with Canadian and other suppliers' standards? Would our completing this single, particular program by which we might upgrade the safeguard system, lead to an over-all upgrading in the situation which other suppliers could accept and respect?

● (1640)

Other questions are: Would the completion of our particular project with India be an inhibiting or delaying factor regarding a further explosion in India? Would we have any effect or, indeed, would a second explosion be delayed or be out of bounds in India? These are some of the main questions that are now before me. They are questions which have been considered by the negotiators in India who have been acting under my instructions and have reached an understanding with their India counterparts.

I have not reached any conclusion on these understandings because there are further questions I want to ask and further refinements I want to achieve in respect of the interpretations of various terms that are being employed. But the simple test, really, is which is best for non-proliferation? Is it to get out, as the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham suggests, or to complete our particular single project and thereby achieve an upgrading of the safeguards system on an important nuclear reactor which, in the absence of the completion of our program, might be left unsafeguarded long into the future? That is the basic issue we face in so far as the India situation is concerned.

It has been a great disillusionment for Canada and the Canadian people that this unhappy and tragic explosion did take place in India. It certainly was against the understandings that we had reached and it had a serious effect upon all of us, I believe, in an attempt to reassess and reorganize over the dangers in respect of proliferation which exists in any transfer of nuclear technology, nuclear materials or nuclear equipment. We have reached the conclusion that even though there is a very difficult balancing to be made between the objective of sharing and the objective of non-proliferation, those two objectives can be pursued simultaneously and, as a responsible supplier, we probably, as a country, will do more to reach the objectives put forward this afternoon by participating energetically with principles rather than by withdrawing within a Canadian cloister.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, would the minister permit a question?

[Mr. MacEachen.]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the minister prepared to answer a question by the hon. member?

**Mr. MacEachen:** Yes.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the minister would add a few questions to the list he is asking his officials.

**Mr. MacEachen:** I am asking myself.

**Mr. Lawrence:** Then I will ask the minister right now whether the safeguards, for instance, in respect of the original reactor we provided for India are retroactive? Will the safeguards, for instance, cover the new reactors near Madras in which Canada will have very little input? A third question might well be: If, for instance, India exported some of its own technology and material to a country, let us say like Iran, and the deal is being made now, do these safeguards cover the whole nuclear industry in Iran, rather than just the small portion which may come from India? There is one other thing: would the minister please remember the old saying, "Once bitten, twice shy"?

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Not this minister.

**Mr. MacEachen:** I believe these are extremely pertinent questions. The hon. member asks whether the original reactor, the research reactor Cirus, would be subject to safeguards.

**Mr. Lawrence:** One even before that.

**Mr. MacEachen:** This is the one from which the plutonium was produced, the RAPP reactor. These are questions we are now examining. I would ask the hon. member, if I may, rhetorically, whether he would prefer to have all of them, or would one or two be better than none?

**Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Halifax):** Mr. Speaker, there seem to be a few smart alecks around today. I think most of us recognize we are discussing perhaps the most serious question that confronts any of us in the world today. The minister, during the course of his remarks, said that the Indian experience had been a great disillusionment to the government and the Canadian people. I have no doubt that is so. However, I am concerned today that the minister and the Canadian people may have some even further disillusionment as a result of the policy he and his government are pursuing.

I think we are all agreed upon the importance of the question. This represents one of the great challenges of our time. I think we are all agreed on the very obvious danger to mankind. We have learned, in a way, to live in a certain balance of terror between the two superpowers. But proliferation, to other countries, smaller countries and countries which may react with fear and desperation, obviously greatly heightens the menace to mankind. We, the opposition, have been addressing ourselves mainly to the minister and to the government today. I want to make clear that so far as I am concerned, this problem is not the responsibility just of the government of Canada.

I do not think we can be very happy about the behaviour of the international community generally with regard to