

IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING - JUNE 1974

STATEMENT BY H.E. Mr. J. Alan BEESLEY

GOVERNOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA

The Government of Canada deeply regrets the development of a nuclear explosive device by the Government of India. Canadian views were set forth in the statement made on May 22 by The Honourable Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada.

Canada is dedicated to the peaceful uses of nuclear power. For many years Canada has had the resources and the technical skills which would have permitted the development of nuclear explosive devices. It has been the judgement of successive Canadian Governments and of the Canadian people that this would not be a fruitful use of Canadian resources. We have instead concentrated on the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, that is to say, for the generation of electric power. Our faith in nuclear power has been vindicated. We know from our own experience that it is now fully competitive with other power sources.

It is inevitable that more countries will turn to nuclear power to meet future electricity requirements. Access to this cheap and reliable power source should be facilitated to those countries prepared to deal in a responsible manner with the obligations which access to nuclear technology entails, but the progressive spread of nuclear power makes it even more essential to prevent the use of fissile material for military use. Unhappily there is no way of distinguishing military and peaceful nuclear explosive technology, and it is for this reason that Article I of the Non-Proliferation Treaty treats on the same basis nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

Canada, like other adherents to this Treaty, has an obligation to ensure that nuclear equipment and material exported to non-nuclear-weapon states be used for peaceful uses only, and to achieve this end, be subject to international safeguards. Canadian views on any further proliferation of nuclear explosive devices were, for example, set forth in the letter of October 1, 1971 sent by The Right Honourable Pierre Elliot Trudeau to Mrs. I. Gandhi, Prime Minister of India.

It is not my intention, however, to analyze positions taken by different governments in the past,

but rather to focus on how the international community can achieve the objective of ensuring that nuclear energy is used for the benefit of man and that its destructive capability is held in check. For this purpose the Non-Proliferation Treaty was negotiated. It takes into account the possible use of nuclear explosive devices to achieve economic objectives. Experience to date, however, has not --as far as we have been able to ascertain--identified areas where nuclear explosions would provide over-riding economic benefits. There are other more fruitful areas for technological research.

We have noted with interest the views expressed by the distinguished Governor of Pakistan and others concerning the relationship of the provision of technical assistance by the Agency to the level of expertise and capability of recipient countries in the field of nuclear technology. That there is a relationship is undeniable. That is the reason, for example, why Canada, although a non-nuclear-weapon state, is a supplier rather than a recipient of technical assistance in the field of nuclear technology. For this reason we accept the proposition that the Agency should give first preference to those countries which are not developing nuclear explosive devices, since those which are doing so

have an already existing nuclear capability, and one, moreover, which, in our view, is not being used in the most productive manner. Such countries should therefore be accorded a lower priority in IAEA programmes in technical assistance, and first priority should be given now to those countries only now entering into nuclear/programmes. /power

That being said, it is incumbent upon those with a nuclear explosive capability to make services available at cost to those countries which identify an economic requirement for peaceful nuclear explosions. These are matters which can be dealt with through the normal course of international consultation and cooperation but the possible benefits of nuclear explosive devices at some stage in the future, in certain economic areas, does not outweigh the clear and immediate peril entailed by an unrestricted proliferation of nuclear explosive capability.

For its part, the Canadian Government wishes to make clear that it interprets its NPT obligations as precluding it from making nuclear material, equipment and engineering services available to non-NPT parties which could be used for the development of a nuclear explosive device in the absence of a satisfactory under-

taking precluding their use in the development of such a device. This is, of course, also fully in keeping with the IAEA Safeguards System, which the Government of Canada believes has an essential role to play in the promotion of a stable and peaceful world order.