

dossier 60



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during a debate in the commons today 6 december 1979,
mr tam dalyell (west lothian) asked: will the prime minister
undertake to ask the dutch prime minister about a leak that
was infinitely more far reaching than any leak of cabinet
papers? i refer to the leak of crucial nuclear secrets from
the centrifuge project at almelo. will the right hon lady ask
the dutch prime minister how that situation occurred, since it
is arguably more damaging to peace in the world than anything
done by the rosenbergs or any other atom spies?

the prime minister: the hon gentleman knows that we have already
made protests about this matter, which involved a person who had
been working at that plant of ureenco on enriched uranium and
the centrifuge process and then went to work in pakistan, where
we are trying to see that there is not proliferation of
production of nuclear materials or any nuclear weapons. the matter
is not on the agenda, but i shall reinforce the protest that we
have already made.

Tuesday 11 December 1979

NUCLEAR SECURITY

Q5. Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister if she has now had discussions with the Government of Holland on the security risks involved in the Khan incident at the nuclear centrifuge establishment at Urenco, Almelo, Holland.

The Prime Minister: I raised this matter with the Netherlands Prime Minister, Mr. van Agt, at my meeting with him on 6 December 1979. He agreed that this was a matter of most serious concern and assured me that everything possible was being done to prevent a repetition.

PRIME MINISTER (ENGAGEMENTS)

Q6. Mr. Dormand asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q8. Mr. Cook asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q9. Mr. Maxton asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q11. Mr. Flannery asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q12. Mr. Jessel asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q13. Miss Joan Lester asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q16. Mr. Ashley asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q17. Mr. James Hamilton asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q19. Mr. Neubert asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q20. Mr. Brotherton asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q21. Mr. Norman Hoog asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q23. Mr. John Townsend asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q24. Mr. Robert Hughes asked the Prime Minister what are her official engagements for 11 December.

Q25. Mr. Peter Bottomley asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q28. Mr. Montgomery asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q29. Dr. Mawhinney asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q30. Mr. Dewar asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q31. Mr. Shersby asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q33. Mr. Pary asked the Prime Minister if she will list her public engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q34. Mr. Edwin Williams asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Tuesday 11 December.

Q35. Mr. McCrindle asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q37. Mr. O'Neill asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q39. Mr. Hardy asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 11 December.

Q39. Mr. Temple-Millar asked the Prime Minister if she will list her engagements for Tuesday.

Q42. Mr. Bob Dunn asked the Prime Minister if she will list her engagements for Tuesday 11 Dec.

Q43. Mr. Stoddart asked the Prime Minister if she will list her engagements for Tuesday 11 Dec.

Q44. Mr. Kenneth Lee asked the Prime Minister if she will list her engagements for Tuesday.

Q48. Mr. Lawrence asked the Prime Minister if she will list her engagements for 11 December.

The Prime Minister: I have met my Friends and the hon. Member for Ormskirk (Sir).

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Q7. Mr. Michael Brown asked the Prime Minister how many letters received concerning industrial relations since she became Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: I have received over a thousand letters concerning industrial relations.

TUC

Q16. Mr. Race asked the Prime Minister when last she met the Trades Union Congress.

Q14. Mr. Colin Storer asked the Prime Minister when last she met the Trades Union Congress.

Q18. Mr. Norman Athkey asked the Prime Minister when last she met the leaders of the Trades Union Congress.

Q41. Mr. Eggar asked the Prime Minister when last she met the Trades Union Congress.

The Prime Minister: On 11 December.

STAFFORDSHIRE

Q15. Mr. Gailyn Robert asked the Prime Minister if she plans to visit Staffordshire.

one guarantee. Will she guarantee that no British troops will be sent until a ceasefire has been accepted by all the parties?

The Prime Minister: With regard to the last question, "Yes". With regard to the earlier question, the right hon. Gentleman referred to what would happen if General Walls ordered an excursion beyond the country's boundaries. I tried to say to the right hon. Gentleman earlier that the Salisbury Administration accept the Governor's authority, so that would not arise.

Mr. Speaker: Statement, the Lord Privy Seal.

Mr. Dalvi: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. In view of the urgency of the matter I wonder whether you have been asked by the Prime Minister whether she can make a statement on Question Q5, in relation to Ureenco?

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid that I have had no such request. Statement, the Lord Privy Seal.

Mr. Frank Altam: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Is this the moment when I could raise a Standing Order No. 9 application?

Mr. Speaker: Applications under Standing Order No. 9 always follow statements. Statement, the Lord Privy Seal.

Copy to

Mr. Shepherd, TAE HQS ✓

Mr. Garrow, BOM

Mr. Manning, NEW DELHI

Mr. Fabian, ISLAMABAD

Mr. Carter

pa (161/3)

F 13/12

RHODESIA

The Lord Privy Seal (Sir Ian Gilmour): With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I shall make a statement on Rhodesia.

We are approaching the conclusion of the Lancaster House conference. Last week, agreement was reached on our proposals for a ceasefire. The final details are still being discussed. Earlier this afternoon my right hon. and noble Friend made in the conference a new presentation of our detailed proposals for the implementation of the ceasefire. We have given assurances about the security of the Patriotic Front forces and that the monitoring force will be adequate to monitor the Rhodesian forces, through their command structure down to company level.

We have explained that the Patriotic Front forces will be sited in their operational areas in locations that will meet their concern that they should not be in close proximity to Rhodesian bases. We have therefore been able to provide the Patriotic Front with the assurances that they have been seeking about their security and the disposition of the Rhodesian forces.

It is important to see the present stage in the perspective of what has already been accomplished. The issue of majority rule, which has been the fundamental cause of the conflict in Rhodesia for 14 years, has been resolved by the independence constitution.

It has been agreed that there should be fresh elections to resolve the question of who should exercise political power. The parties have accepted that a British Governor should exercise legislative and executive authority to supervise the elections and bring Rhodesia back to legality. There is agreement on our proposals for a ceasefire. In the light of what has been agreed, it would be indefensible to continue the war.

Ideally, we would have preferred the final details to be agreed before beginning to put the settlement into effect on the ground, but it is essential to maintain the momentum if we are to achieve a settlement involving all the parties, and if what we have achieved so far is not to be eroded by events outside the conference.

We believe that the proposals have put forward this will lead to early and complete right hon. and noble Friend, will therefore leave later for Rhodesia. Delay could mean what has been achieved for Rhodesia. The Governor's effort to stabilise the situation in relations with neighbouring

A British authority in Salisbury to make the final arrangements for bringing the ceasefire into effect will be restored and same lifted with Lord Soames's acceptance of his authority.

The Governor will set arrangements for elections. It is determined to accept responsibility to bring Rhodesia to independence at the earliest moment.

Mr. Shore: This is a highly important statement, for reasons already intimated. There are difficulties enough, in any arrangements made for the Governor to assume the heavy responsibility await him in Salisbury. It is in my view, a foolish act, in our view, a foolish act.

I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman straight away this question: presentation of the ceasefire according to his own statement, he not at least have waited for the presentation of those proposals and the departure for the very short period we hope, very short period has elapsed. What possibility exists for sending him, ahead of a ceasefire, as now proposed?

I should like to follow up on this question to the Prime Minister by my right hon. and noble Friend a few moments ago. In the light of the questions does the Governor intend to hand over to the armed forces over about to assume control? Will he give him precise instructions with him precise instructions forthwith attacks on bases in the bordering territories of Rhodesia? It occurred only a few days ago that the Governor was seeking to secure at once the scaling down of the whole situation there?

AMBASSADE VAN HET KONINKRIJK DER NEDERLANDEN

ROYAL NETHERLANDS
EMBASSY

MIN. VAN BUITENLANDSE ZAKEN

4 30 1979

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Handwritten signature/initials

Islamabad, 11 december 1979

Onderwerp: Pakistan nucleair.

Op 8 december heeft president Zia in een openingstoespraak tot een wetenschappelijk congres de volgende uitspraken over Pakistan's nucleair programma gedaan, die ik U volledigheidshalve meld. Zij wijken niet af van hetgeen de generaal bij vorige gelegenheid hierover naar voren bracht.

"I think the fundamental problem facing the humanity to-day is: how to preserve life on this planet from the destructive effects of the development of science, and how its useful aspects can be extended to more and more people.

Although this is no occasion for me to speak on Pakistan's Atomic programme, but an example of what I have just said is the modest Atomic Research Programme of Pakistan. Some developed countries endowed with nuclear technology are not happy with this programme of ours, because they want to maintain their monopoly. They take the plea that if immature and irresponsible nations come to acquire nuclear technology, it may jeopardise world peace. We maintain that we want to acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and this is a right which no power on earth can deny us. If the apprehensions of the developed countries are dictated by their interest, our determination reflects our national aspirations. We shall, God willing, continue to try to acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes according to our national aspirations and we shall, God willing, certainly succeed in it. The pressure being exerted on Pakistan in this connection reflects the imperialist mentality which had political dominance over most parts of the world in the past, and which still wishes to maintain its hegemony through science and technology. This is not only an issue of the independence and sovereignty of Pakistan, but it also involved a moral principle of international importance, the focal point of which is that knowledge and wisdom, science and technology and inventions and discoveries are not the property of any one nation,

- and every country -

De Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken
te
Londen - GRAVENHAGE

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Onderwerp: Pakistan nucleair.

and every country has the basic right to make progress in these fields. The distinguished scientists present in this gathering shall have to ponder seriously over the moral aspects of their respective fields of study."

De Ambassadeur,



F.J.T.J. van Agt

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Dossier	813.339.2 PAKISTAN

DOSSIERKOPIE

Londen, 10/12/79

afkomstig van Londen
bestemd voor min vbz

onderwerp: pakistan nucleair

moge voor goede orde uw aandacht vestigen op volgende passages uit artikel in observer van 9 dezer getiteld 'how dr khan stole the bomb for islam' door colin smith en shyam bhatia:

quote

.....
that pakistan, one of the world's poorest and least stable countries, will soon become a nuclear power is largely the fault of khan's former dutch employers. they took four years to warn their british and german nuclear partners in the urencos consortium that khan, a metallurgist working in a laboratory in amsterdam, had been allowed to study a whole range of classified documents and blueprints not directly concerned with the work he was engaged on.

before he announced that he was leaving urencos for 'an offer i can't refuse in pakistan', he even managed to spend some time in the consortium's secret uranium enrichment plant at almelo near the dutch-german border and see its centrifuge process at first hand.

then, while the dutch remained silent about the breach in security, the pakistanis set up dummy companies to import the components needed to build an enrichment plant under the pretext that some of them were needed for a new textile mill.

it was a considerable espionage coup. a country with a tiny industrial base, much smaller for example than that of india (which started the nuclear race on the subcontinent, when it detonated a 'peaceful' nuclear explosion in 1974) has acquired advanced nuclear technology by stealing a process that took decades to develop. whereas fuchs and may supplied the russians with missing pieces of the jigsaw for an atomic bomb, whose formula is today within the grasp of many post-graduate physics students, khan stole the secrets of an entire multistage process for enriching uranium.

the khan affair has been the subject of a government inquiry in holland, and a secret report is now being studied by officials of the urencos joint committee in britain and germany.

AFGESCHREVEN

the enormity of the leak has caused considerable bitterness between the dutch and their partners, who are furious at the sloppiness of dutch security.

urencos says that khan was not really employed by it at all, but by a subcontracting research laboratory in amsterdam called f d o . holland's department of economic affairs, which is responsible for ensuring that people working in security areas are properly screened, blames urencos's security man at almelo for failing to tell the binnenlandse veiligheidsdienst - the dutch security service - of khan's visit here.

the security service itself is blamed for making a poor job of vetting khan, when he first went to work for the f d o in 1972, and it in turn blames dutch overseas intelligence for not telling it how desperate the pakistanis were to achieve nuclear parity with india.

khan's activities might not have been revealed at all had not a few other countries been following pakistan's nuclear progress. in july last year in london, frank allan, m p , asked the government why emerson industrial controls, the swindon-based british subsidiary of an american company, was about to ship a consignment of high frequency inverters to pakistan.

.....
frank allan's question eventually led tony benn, then energy secretary, to advise the department of trade to put an export control order on the inverters. people also began asking where the pakistanis had acquired such a detailed knowledge of the centrifuge technique that they were able to circumvent restrictions imposed by the london group (a group of industrialised nations including britain) on exports that might encourage proliferation.

the trail led inexorably to khan, but when the matter was first raised in the dutch parliament early this year, the government asserted that he had had no access to nuclear secrets. it was not until june, when the middle east magazine '8 days' broke the story and the israeli government protested to the dutch, that dr chris van der klaauw, the dutch foreign minister, announced there would be an inquiry.

since then, the impression has been given that khan was caught with the blueprints of a centrifuge in his pocket, or photographing secret manuals, and was quietly allowed to leave to avoid a scandal. this never happened.

as a spokesman for urencos made clear to us in the hague, khan was a 'trouble shooter'. anything he asked for he was given. and he asked for an awful lot. the puzzle is why, in the first place, the dutch employed a pakistani in a highly sensitive area, when they had experts from three closely linked western european countries to choose from.

.....
like all the 200 scientists and technicians employed by f d o laboratories in amsterdam, khan, because of his employer's work for urencos, had to be screened by the dutch security service. his wife's dutch origins and declaration that he also intended to acquire dutch nationality quelled suspicions about his background.

MEMORANDUM

Van DEW/AT

Datum: 18 december 1979

Aan DIO/PI via DEW

No.: 189/79

Onderwerp Britse parlementaire vragen inzake Khan-affaire

- ./.
- Hiernevens gelieve U aan te treffen enkele vragen van het Britse Parlements-
lid Tom Dalyell aan de Prime Minister, alsmede ontwerpanwoorden daarop.
Ik heb deze informatie ontvangen van de Heer Shepherd van de Britse Ambas-
sade h.t.s.
- Naar mijn mening geven de antwoorden geen aanleiding tot commentaar onzer-
zijds.
-



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[Mr. Buchanan-Smith.] prepared to observe them if an overall limit is imposed. I understand that my announcement has been welcomed as a sensible measure. Many people would like us to go much further, with a general, comprehensive licensing scheme. This is a deep and important subject. Great difficulties are involved. If we are to have a flexible and organic industry we must have a flexible and organic scheme. Too rigid a scheme will not necessarily benefit the industry as a whole. For that reason we decided to introduce effective licensing where the pressure is greatest—in the mackerel fisheries. We have a totally open mind about whether what we learn from the mackerel fishery should be extended to other fisheries or whether we should adopt a more general comprehensive scheme later.

If, as a result of our proposal for the mackerel fishery, there is a diversion of effort to other fisheries, we shall not hesitate to take further measures to ensure that our conservation and management policies are effective and not made void because of inadequate control.

Finally, I should like to return to the point on which the hon. Member for Aberdeen, South opened and on which every contributor to the debate has asked for assurances. What is important is to repeat yet again—and I do so with all the sincerity that I have stated it before—that Britain's fishing industry is not up for trading in the Common Market renegotiations. My right hon. Friend demonstrated this in Dublin. I believe that the mere fact that after Dublin, at the first Fisheries Council, we were prepared to talk constructively about some of the measures that were necessary for an effective common fisheries policy, demonstrated to our partners in Europe that we did not see the fishing negotiations as part of the Dublin negotiations. They thought that we would take pique over fishing, because of Dublin. The fact that we were able to talk about fishing was proof that we wanted to deal with fishing and intended to continue to deal with the subject on its merits.

It is on that note that I finish tonight. I thank those who have contributed to the debate. I repeat yet again that the fishing industry is a most important industry. The livelihood of those who work in it—and the well-being of their

families—is important to the Government. I thank the House for the fact that in our renegotiation of the common fisheries policy my right hon. Friend and I have had the support of all parties in the House in pursuing the objective of ensuring a proper future for our fishermen.

JOINT CENTRIFUGE PROJECT, ALMELO

5.12 am

Mr. Tam Dalyell (West Lothian): Remembering Alan Nunn May, Bruno Pontecorvo, the Rosenbergs—even Klaus Fuchs, with his overall grasp of the concept of the physics of the atom bomb—it is arguable whether any of them, or indeed all of them together, jeopardised world peace to a greater extent than the activities, in the second half of the 1970s, of Dr. Abel Qader Khan.

Certainly the effect of anything that Anthony Blunt may have done pales into trivial insignificance compared with the probable results of Dr. Khan's handiwork.

We now have the real threat of regional nuclear confrontation in Asia or the Arab world, laying a powder trail to a possible world holocaust.

So-called vertical proliferation is one thing. More nuclear weapons in the same hands do not necessarily increase the likelihood of nuclear war.

Horizontal proliferation—the acquisition of nuclear warheads by nations that previously had none at all—is quite a different matter.

That is why, even at 10 minutes past 5 o'clock in the morning, I do not apologise to an Under-Secretary, who has been very good-tempered and had to wait a long time for this Consolidated Fund debate, for keeping him out of his well-deserved bed and rest.

The subject that I raise is the security arrangements of the Joint Centrifuge Project at Almelo, in the light of the Khan espionage affair—class IV, vote 25.

At this hour in the morning I feel somewhat in the position of the Member of Parliament who dreams—proverbially, at any rate—that he was speaking in the House of Commons, and woke up to find that he actually was. Be that as it may, the real point of the debate is the prospect of a Pakistani bomb, and, related

to that, a bomb in the hands of Colonel Gaddafi, who helps to finance Pakistan, or an Ayatollah given a bomb for the sake of Islamic solidarity. This is a spine-chilling prospect—a dream of nightmare proportions.

The stark facts are hardly in dispute. But if my version is inaccurate the Minister will doubtless say so. Since on this occasion I have submitted the guts of my speech to the Department of Energy on the ground that it would be unreasonable to expect any Minister to reply on so complex a subject to questions that were fired at him for the first time in the early hours of the morning.

The gut facts of the case as I see it are first, that Abel Qader Khan came to Europe as a bona fide research worker and a student of metallurgy.

Secondly, at some point in the mid-1970s he was persuaded to devote himself to gaining access to theoretical but, more important, industrial information that would allow his native Pakistan to build and operate a nuclear weapon capacity of its own.

Thirdly, as a result of mind-boggling inefficiency or naivety—wholly uncharacteristic of the Dutch as a nation, in most things among the most competent of people on this planet—or connivance by people in certain key positions—I must make it clear that I have no evidence of connivance, but clearly that is a question that must be asked—Dr. Khan was able to acquire, first, theoretical information on centrifuge and enrichment concepts; secondly, information about metallurgical techniques crucial to nuclear weapons capacity; and, thirdly, and possibly most important, commercial knowledge of where a country such as Pakistan, with a tiny industrial base, could acquire “parts” for making atomic weapons which could not themselves conceivably be made in Pakistan.

Fourthly—here I go on with the guts of the case—for four long years key people in the Netherlands, in positions of great responsibility, may be or may be not inside the Dutch Government, apparently did not see fit to reveal to their West German and British colleagues that they knew that a security breach involving Dr. Khan had taken place.

Fifthly, according to the remarkable *Observer* investigators, Colin Smith and

Shyam Bhatia, Dr. Khan is now living in the leafy suburbs of Islamabad, guarded by tough men ready to take on inquisitive journalists from the *Financial Times* or relatives of the French Ambassador who may innocently or otherwise be displaying uncalled-for curiosity into the Pakistan nuclear effort.

If the Minister wishes to add to or subtract from my deployment of the facts, doubtless he will do so in his reply. Indeed, frankly I feel that he ought to do so, as the Department and the Government have had two month's notice of my intense interest in this topic.

For the sake of those hon. Members who are not here but who displayed an interest in this topic, and for the sake of clarity, I must go over some of the questions that have been put, otherwise if one were to read the debate it would be incoherent and incomplete.

On 29 October I

“asked the Secretary of State for Energy if he will make a statement on the review by Urecco, promised in June, of its detailed security arrangements; what action the governments of Great Britain, Holland and West Germany, as partners in the centrifuge project are taking to strengthen the tripartite arrangements; and if he will make a statement.”

The Secretary of State replied:

“As requested by the Joint Committee of the three Governments at their meeting in June, Urecco have reviewed their security procedures; and have made a number of recommendations. In addition the implementation of existing Troika security procedures in the United Kingdom has been reviewed and an assurance given to the Joint Committee that they are being fully observed.

The Joint Committee considered the Urecco report at its meeting on 19 September. The Joint Committee concluded that the existing tripartite security rules and procedures were in principle adequate, but agreed on a number of detailed points on which improvements needed to be considered. It has been arranged for these to be studied urgently by security experts of the three Governments.”

I am not fool enough to suppose that the House of Commons is the place to deploy details of those particular security arrangements. All I ask is that the promise made on 29 October is fulfilled.

“The Joint Committee also noted that effective security depended on the thorough and continued application of the present tripartite rules and procedures. It agreed to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the application of these rules, and for the submission to the Joint Committee of regular reports by the appropriate security authorities of the three countries of the results of such monitoring.”

[Mr. Dalyell.]

The answer continued:

I should like to have a clear undertaking that, unlike what occurred when Dr. Khan pursued his activities, the Government are party to that monitoring.

The Secretary of State continued:

"A report from the Netherlands authorities on their investigation of the Khan incident was not available to the Joint Committee at its last meeting. The Joint Committee is due to meet again on Friday, 16 November and will again review Urenco security in the light of any further information then available."—[*Official Report*, 29 October 1979; Vol. 972, c. 382-3.]

Understandably, on reading that reply I wondered why on earth the report from the Netherlands authorities on their investigation was not available to the Joint Committee or to the Department. It creates something of a smell about the affair. I should have thought that at least a clean breast would have been made of the affair by the Netherlands authorities. Throughout the argument—as I said at Question Time today—the strand runs: why, for four long years, did not the Netherlands authorities tell their British and West German partners?

The next parliamentary step was on Wednesday 28 November. I asked the Prime Minister what discussions she had had on the security risks involved in the Khan incident at the nuclear centrifuge establishment at Urenco, Almelo, Holland and the right hon. Lady replied:

"I have had no discussions with the Dutch on this matter, but our concern about the Khan incident has been made very clear to our partners."—[*Official Report*, 28 November 1979; Vol. 947 c. 647.]

At that time I thought it was a matter worthy of Prime Ministerial attention and I felt that the right hon. Lady should have contacted the Dutch Prime Minister.

On 29 November I asked the Prime Minister

"whether she will order a review of British involvement in joint European projects in so far as matters of nuclear security are concerned, in the light of the Khan incident at Urenco."

The Home Secretary, replying because the Prime Minister was at the Dublin conference—said:

"The Government attach importance to continued participation in the collaboration on centrifuge enrichment. Our concern about the Khan incident in the Netherlands has been made very clear to our partners, and action

has already been taken to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the implementation of existing tripartite security rules and procedures. Security is being kept under close review by the joint committee of the three Governments in the light of the report by the Netherlands Government of their investigation of the Khan incident.

No other joint European projects in the civil nuclear field currently involve the transfer of classified information but all are kept under continuous review for security and other implications."

I asked the natural question:

"Since the issue is nuclear proliferation in Asia, are the Government saying that they are satisfied with the Dutch proposals put forward at the joint committee on 16 November?"

The Home Secretary replied:

"I appreciate the hon. Gentleman's close interest in this matter. It is extremely important. He had the courtesy to make clear what he wished to ask in putting down his question. It is perhaps difficult always to be satisfied, but we shall do everything possible through diplomatic channels to impress upon our partners the vital importance of these security arrangements."

We all have great affection for the Home Secretary but, if I may say so, that was a vintage Home Secretary reply on a subject on which he had little intention of giving a substantive answer. It is charming, but it does not get to the root of the matter. I still ask what happened about the proposals that were supposed to come forward on 16 November.

I ought to add that my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, Heeley (Mr. Hooley) then asked a highly relevant question:

"What steps are being taken to make sure that nationals of countries that are not signatories to the non-proliferation treaties, such as Israel and South Africa, do not have access to the techniques covered by Urenco?"

The Home Secretary replied:

"These are matters relating to arrangements on security reached between the Governments concerned. I shall make sure that they are brought to the attention of those concerned."—[*Official Report*, 29 November 1979; Vol. 974, c. 1479-80.]

This is not the first time that there has been a question of stolen technology. Although it is not the subject of this debate, as my hon. Friend's question raised the matter of Israel I should point out that the Department of Energy knows the whole saga of the Plumbat affair, of the ship "Scheersberg" and, indeed, of the establishment of a nuclear capacity at Dimona, so this is not an entirely new

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situation in relation to espionage. My hon. Friend put a good question that was not fully answered.

On 28 November I asked the Prime Minister:

"what discussions she has had with the Government of Holland on the security risks involved in the Khan incident at the nuclear centrifuge establishment at Urenco, Almelo, Holland."

The right hon. Lady replied:

"I have had no discussions with the Dutch on this matter, but our concern about the Khan incident has been made very clear to our partners."—[Official Report, 28 November 1979; Vol. 974, c. 647.]

I come back to the point that, on a matter of such global importance, surely the Prime Minister should have at least talked to the Dutch Prime Minister to get some explanation. It is a matter that should have been handled at Heads-of-Government level.

On 6 December I had the opportunity to ask the right hon. Lady:

"Will the Prime Minister undertake to ask the Dutch Prime Minister about a leak that was infinitely more far reaching than any leak of Cabinet papers? I refer to the leak of crucial nuclear secrets from the centrifuge project at Almelo. Will the right hon. Lady ask the Dutch Prime Minister how that situation occurred, since it is arguably more damaging to peace in the world than anything done by the Rosenbergs or any other atom spies?"

The right hon. Lady replied:

"The hon. Gentleman knows that we have already made protests about this matter, which involved a person who had been working at that plant of Urenco on enriched uranium and the centrifuge process and then went to work in Pakistan, where we are trying to see that there is not proliferation of production of nuclear materials or any nuclear weapons. The matter is not on the agenda, but I shall reinforce the protest that we have already made."—[Official Report, 6 December 1979; Vol. 975, c. 611.]

I must say that I find it extraordinary that even at this stage the matter was not on the agenda. Part of my complaint is that, although they wrung their hands in public, I doubt whether senior Ministers have tumbled, even now, to the enormity of what is involved. I do not think that they realise the implications of an Islamic bomb, with all the consequences that flow from that.

On 11 December I raised a point of order with Mr. Speaker and asked whether, in view of the urgency, the Prime Minister would make a statement on Urenco. I had put down a question

for oral answer, and it was No. 5 on the Order Paper. Normally question 5 is reached, but it was not on this occasion, and the Prime Minister's written reply was:

"I raised this matter with the Netherlands Prime Minister, Mr. van Agt, at my meeting with him on 6 December 1979. He agreed that this was a matter of most serious concern and assured me that everything possible was being done to prevent a repetition."—[Official Report, 11 December 1979; Vol. 975, c. 531.]

It would be a little trivial and rude to say that that was a bland reply. After all, it was a written answer, and possibly I could not expect anything more. But I am not being rude if I say that it was an incomplete reply.

On 17 December I asked the Prime Minister if she would

"approach Chancellor Schmidt with a view to setting up a joint German-British inquiry into the reasons why the British and German Governments were not informed by the Dutch Government of security breaches at the joint centrifuge project by Dr. A. Q. Khan, and the effects of his activities on Western security."

The right hon. Lady replied:

"No. I have already expressed my concern to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands about the Khan incident. All three Governments of the centrifuge partnership attach importance to ensuring that incidents of this kind are not repeated and appropriate action has been put in hand."—[Official Report, 17 December 1979; Vol. 976, c. 8.]

I can imagine no matter more urgent on which the Prime Minister should talk to Chancellor Schmidt than security and the consequential events in Islam.

Today I had question C. 1 to the Prime Minister, and it was answered by the Home Secretary. He said:

"We raised the Khan incident with our partners earlier this year. At the joint committee in June it was agreed that security procedures should be reviewed and, as the hon. Member knows, appropriate follow-up action has since been taken."

Well, actually, I do not know what follow-up action has been taken. If the Home Secretary had promised that it had been taken, but refused to tell me exactly what had been done, I would have understood. But after all that has been said and written he may wish to go further. He added in his reply that

"The issue is being kept under close review by the Joint Committee."—[Official Report, 18 December 1979; Vol. 976, c. 278.]

Which can mean anything.

[Mr. Dalyell.]

Is it simply a question of crying over spilt milk, with a pious promise to avoid repetition? Is it a case of saying "Well, it is too bad that the Pakistanis have atomic weapons. They will probably give the information to the Libyans who have given them a lot of money, and, who knows, in the name of Islamic solidarity they could hand over nuclear weapons to an array of Ayatollahs, Free Palestinians and heaven knows who in Islam?"

I think that the concept of an Islamic bomb is more spine-chilling than the whole nuclear armament in the hands of the men in the Kremlin and in Washington. Great Governments, such as those of the Soviet Union or the United States, can be counted upon to act with deliberation. One can sleep fairly easily in one's bed at night without fearing a nuclear holocaust. But the bad dream come true of a Gadhafi bomb or an Ayatollah bomb is altogether different.

It may be said that the knowledge of theoretical physics is such in the world that any country should have the knowledge of how to make nuclear weapons and therefore why should anyone worry about breaches of security. Proliferation, it may be argued, is bound to take place anyway. Were that true, what is the point of having nuclear security anywhere? Were that the case, we might as well forget the whole paraphernalia of secrecy and security.

But while it is true that the theoretical physics of a nuclear explosion is now widely understood by anyone reading the nuclear journals, the short cut by which a relatively poor country lacking an industrial base can actually make a bomb and nuclear weapons is not widely known. This is where Dr. Khan comes in. His value to Pakistan lies in the nuts and bolts of the metallurgy and engineering required to produce nuclear weapons.

I come now to the central purpose of raising the issue in the House. It may, for all I know, be too late. The proverbial birds may have flown. On the other hand, even if at this late stage certain key parts can be denied to Pakistan and other countries with a small industrial base it may not be too late to do some-

thing about the spine-chilling proliferation of nuclear weapons.

My first and possibly most important question is to ask what exactly is the so-called London group of 15 countries. What is its relationship with Governments in an effort to prevent countries without an industrial base from getting hardware crucial to the manufacture of nuclear weapons? If there is anything that I want from the Government this evening it is the promise that they will do all that they can to give muscle to the London group. There have been inconsistent policies in the supply of nuclear materials by those who are in a position to be suppliers of these materials.

My other questions reflect concern about whether there could be any repetition at Urenco, Almelo. It is somewhat a matter of *deja vu* with reference to what the Israelis did in relation to the "Scheersberg", the Plumbat affair and the development at Dimona.

What explanation did Mr. van Agt give to the British Prime Minister of why the Dutch authorities had not informed their British and West German partners in the Urenco consortium of their knowledge of the breach of security operations? Certain people in Holland, we understand, had known precisely what Dr. Khan was up to for four long years before the West Germans and the British were told.

I intersperse at this stage a question that I was asked to put by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bristol, South-East (Mr. Benn), the former Secretary of State for Energy, who is deeply interested in this matter. My right hon. Friend wanted to know when British Ministers were first told about this affair. He said frankly that his own recollections were vague. I pass on that question because I, too, am interested in the answer.

Had the Dutch made a clean breast of it as soon as they knew what Dr. Khan had done, is it not possible that, for example, the British authorities would have ticked on more readily why Pakistan should want specialised high frequency inverters? Had Dr. Khan's activities been fully known to the British and West German authorities, is it not at least more likely that Pakistan would have been denied the industrial requisites for a

bomb? When, and in what circumstances, have export controls been introduced for inverters?

Export controls might have been introduced very much earlier and more effectively had the British Government known what the Dutch authorities apparently knew and what the Dutch Government may or may not have known, namely, that Dr. Khan had been operating in a highly sensitive area on behalf of Pakistan.

Again—and I have given notice of these questions to the Department and to the Minister—what and whose authority is needed to get inside the Almelo plant? Is it true that, simply because he was supposed to know something about hydrogen corrosion, Dr. Khan was invited in for 10 days?

Does Urenco feel obliged to help anyone who writes "I am a research student under the distinguished professor X. I should like information on Y"? It seems that what Dr. Khan did in the first place, fantastic though it may sound, was to write letters along the lines "I am a research student under the distinguished Professor Delaye of the Catholic university in Brussels. Can I have information?" Apparently he was easily given highly sensitive information.

If that is the way in which the Almelo project proceeds the time has come, has it not, to review the whole matter? If that is its style of behaviour, either it is naivety or it results from something else.

Members of the House will understand if I say that there is a great contrast between Britain and Holland. From my experience in the European Parliament I came to know the extent to which Dutch politicians were obsessed by, or at least interested in, nuclear matters. Whereas the House of Commons can hardly get a major debate on cruise missiles—at any rate, before Christmas—Governments in Holland can fall or stand according to their nuclear policies. The Dutch are intensely interested in the nuclear debate.

The supposition or guess is that certain people in Holland would have found it so politically embarrassing to reveal that the Dutch, above all others, had been responsible for creating the conditions for nuclear proliferation that they sat on the

secret. That may or may not be the explanation, but it is a possibility.

I come back to the question: in that case, who is or is not entitled to information in Urenco? Remembering that Dr. Khan was not, as I understand it, at any time a direct employee of Urenco—he was an employee of the FDO—whether he was vetted by that organisation or by the Dutch security service is open to question. The Minister may wish to comment on that matter. I do not press it too greatly. I am concerned about our involvement henceforth in relation to the security aspect.

What investigations, if any, are being made into the alleged dummy company, Weargate Ltd., of Swansea in Wales, which allegedly bought inverters from Emerson Electric Controls in Swindon and sent them to Pakistan? Has any attempt been made to trace the owners of Weargate Ltd.—Mr. and Mrs. Abdus Salaam? Are the Government discussing with other highly developed technological nations the sale of such items as high vacuum valves and glass rotors?

The Minister may say that keeping tabs on such items is unreal and impractical. If that is what the Government believe, they should say so. If it is really impossible for the London group of nations—given the nature of a complex industrial society—to operate, it should be admitted and made plain.

I make no apology for taking half an hour, even at this time of the morning, to go through these matters. Nuclear proliferation, especially nuclear proliferation in Asia, is far more dangerous in the opinion of many than all the discussion and talk about fear of nuclear radiation and the possible safety, or lack of safety—according to taste—of the PWRs. The subject that we are discussing at this time of the morning is far more important in terms of danger to the human race than the various doubts and worries that were raised during Questions to the Secretary of State for Energy when he produced a statement on the PWR and related nuclear matters some 14 hours ago.

That is the context in which I put the matter, and I make no excuse for detaining the House and keeping the Minister up at this time of the morning. I thank him for his good nature and look forward to his reply.

5.47 am

The Under Secretary of State for Energy (Mr. Norman Lamont): The hon. Member for West Lothian (Mr. Dalyell) certainly need not apologise in any way for keeping the House up at this late hour. He had raised an extremely serious matter. I assure him that the Government share the concern that he has expressed today. We consider that the consequences of what has happened are potentially very far reaching.

The hon. Gentleman was kind enough to give me a copy of his speech or what he called the guts of his speech—in advance. I hope to deal in detail with some of the important questions that he raised. He will appreciate, however, that the matter is delicate. Although I wish to reply to the points that he raised, it would not be appropriate or possible for me to go into every detail that arises in the issue.

Mr. Dalyell: I wish to put on record that I do understand that the matter is delicate.

Mr. Lamont: I am grateful for that assurance.

In addition, some of the detailed questions that the hon. Member raised have been the subject of a thorough investigation by the Netherlands Government. A report on this investigation has been produced by an interdepartmental working party of the Netherlands Government, and follow-up action is currently being considered in Holland by the Netherlands Government. A copy of the report has not yet been passed to the Netherlands Parliament. I cannot reveal the detailed findings of the report.

It may be helpful to the hon. Gentleman if I begin—and I am anxious to help him—by outlining a few of the facts of the case.

We understand that in 1972 Dr. Khan, a Pakistani metallurgist, was recruited by a Netherlands subcontractor to Ultra Centrifuge Nederland. UCN is the Netherlands industrial partner in the centrifuge project. Dr. Khan worked for the subcontractor for about three years. During that time he was seconded to Almelo for a short period as a translator. He may well have been in a position to gain access to confidential information about the centrifuge process. He returned to Pakistan in 1975.

The hon. Member asked, quite rightly, "Why was the United Kingdom not informed?" It is a question that we have been asking the Netherlands authorities. To date, we have received no satisfactory explanation.

I should like to outline the steps that have been taken to investigate the Khan incident; to review security procedures within the uranium enrichment collaboration; and, most important, to tighten up on their implementation.

The collaboration with the Germans and Dutch was set up in 1970 by the Treaty of Almelo. A joint committee of the three Governments is responsible under the treaty for providing effective supervision of the collaboration. The committee normally meets, at official level, about four times a year, or more frequently if necessary. The chairmanship rotates; next year the United Kingdom will be in the chair.

Annex II to the treaty deals with security procedures and classification. Principles and minimum standards on security were agreed between the three Governments, but the responsibility for their implementation lies with each individual country.

The rules are designed to ensure that access to sensitive information is tightly controlled, the three Governments having recognised from the outset that their non-proliferation objectives demanded such control. In particular, it has been absolutely clear since the beginning of the collaboration that nationals of fourth countries could be permitted access to confidential information only with the express agreement of the joint committee. No such clearance was sought in the case of Dr. Khan, nor was his departure to Pakistan in 1975 notified to the joint committee. Nor, as required by the Treaty of Almelo, was the apparent breach of security reported to the joint committee until long after it occurred.

Our concern about the affair—which is very considerable—has been made clear to the Netherlands Government, and it was underlined recently by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at her meeting with the Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

Mr. Dalyell: Is not this the most flagrant and mind-boggling let-down?

What do the Dutch think they are playing at? They have broken every agreement, have they not?

Mr. Lamont: If the hon. Gentleman will let me proceed I shall outline what representations have been made, what actions have been taken and what investigations are being conducted.

In April 1979 the United Kingdom asked for a full report to be made to the joint committee of the centrifuge collaboration on the allegations then appearing in the press about Dr. Khan's activities in Holland. Questions were also asked in the Netherlands Parliament. The Netherlands Government told the joint committee at its meeting on 15 June 1979 that they had set up an internal investigation into the circumstances of the Khan incident, and they then made an interim report on its findings.

The United Kingdom and German representatives at the meeting emphasised the gravity of the allegations that had been appearing in the press and stressed that investigation by the appropriate authorities in the Netherlands should be full and thorough so that appropriate follow-up action could be taken. All three Governments agreed that Ureco should be asked urgently to review the security arrangements to be followed by all three industrial partners so that necessary steps to prevent a repetition could be pursued.

After the meeting—and this answers the point that the right hon. Member for Bristol, South-East (Mr. Benn) asked the hon. Member for West Lothian to raise—United Kingdom Ministers were informed of the interim findings of the inquiry by the Netherlands Government, and a review of the implementation of existing tripartite security rules and procedures in the United Kingdom was started. I can assure the hon. Member that the tripartite security rules and procedures are being fully observed in the United Kingdom.

The hon. Member quoted the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Energy to the effect that the Ureco report on the review of security was considered by the joint committee at its meeting in September. The committee concluded that the existing tripartite security rules and procedures were, in principle, adequate, but agreed

on a number of detailed points on which improvements needed to be considered by security experts. I assure the hon. Gentleman that that is happening.

The joint committee also noted that effective security depended on the thorough and continued application of the present tripartite rules and procedures. It agreed to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the application of these rules, and for submission to the joint committee of regular reports by the appropriate security authorities of the three countries of the results of such monitoring.

The implementation of security procedures is essentially a matter for national Governments, but enforcement of the arrangements for monitoring is of course of concern to all three Governments and is being kept under close review by the joint committee.

It was also agreed at the meeting of the joint committee that the matter should be considered again when the report of the Netherlands authorities on the Khan incident was available. The report by the Netherlands Government was received in confidence by the British Government in October. Its implications for future security, throughout the collaboration, including security at Almelo, were discussed, and agreement was reached on appropriate action at a further meeting of the joint committee in November.

We have made clear to the Netherlands Government, through diplomatic channels and meetings of the joint committee, that we attach considerable importance to ensuring that there are no repetitions. That concern was firmly underlined by the Prime Minister at her recent meeting with the Netherlands Prime Minister, Mr. van Agt. He assured the Prime Minister that everything possible is being done to achieve that.

The hon. Gentleman implied that United Kingdom Ministers were not seized of the seriousness of the affair until he pressed the Prime Minister earlier this month. I do not think that that is the case. The Department of Energy Ministers and the Prime Minister were alerted as soon as the full facts of the case emerged, that is when the full report from the Netherlands authorities was received in London during October.

[Mr. Lamont.]

The tripartite Ureco security rules and procedures were drawn up with the objective of minimising the risks of proliferation. I cannot go into details, but we believe that, provided that the rules and procedures are applied thoroughly throughout the collaboration, sensitive nuclear information can, and will, be properly protected.

I turn to some of the particular matters raised by the hon. Gentleman. He referred to and asked about the London group of countries. This consists of 15 main nuclear supplier States, including the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan. It is more commonly known as the nuclear suppliers group. The member States have undertaken, when considering the export of nuclear material, equipment and technology, to act in accordance with certain principles. Before any supplier member State exports any of the items listed in what are known as "The Guidelines", assurances are required from the recipient country's Government regarding peaceful non-explosive use, coverage by international safeguards, and adequate physical protection and retransfers.

The United Kingdom has played a leading role in the nuclear suppliers group, and through frequent bilateral exchanges is working for more effective export controls, internationally, on sensitive nuclear items, including the kind referred to by the hon. Gentleman. This is consistent with our goal of enabling countries to reap the full benefits of nuclear power while minimising the serious dangers of nuclear proliferation.

The United Kingdom exercises careful control over the export of all materials and components specially designed for nuclear facilities. These are subject to licences under the Export of Goods (Control) Order.

The controls that we and others operate play an important part in furthering our non-proliferation objectives. I assure the hon. Gentleman that we have been taking all the necessary steps to ensure effective and comprehensive implementation of the order, and will continue to do so.

Mr. Dwyll: I do not accuse the Minister of being complacent, but we had the example of Weargate Ltd., the dummy company. To what extent were

Emerson Electrical Controls subject to that sort of order? Possibly the hon. Gentleman is coming to that.

Mr. Lamont: It is not normal practice to discuss the activities of individual companies, and I cannot do so. The hon. Gentleman will appreciate that there is nothing illegal in exporting from the United Kingdom general purpose items that do not require a licence and may be widely available throughout the world. Provided that a company is not exporting something that is not illegal, no action can be taken against it. The hon. Gentleman can be assured that specially designed items for use in nuclear facilities are subject to export controls. Applications for an export licence for such items are given the closest scrutiny, and I am satisfied that these controls are stringently applied. Furthermore, the scope of the controls is kept under constant review.

The hon. Gentleman asked about the introduction of export controls on inverters, which are known also as frequency changers. He should be aware—and I am sure that he is—that inverters have many uses. These are items which can be used in both nuclear and industrial applications; for example, in spinning equipment. Following a review of the possibility of United Kingdom manufactured frequency changers being supplied for use overseas in nuclear applications, it was decided to impose export control on those inverters capable of a multi-phase electrical output of between 600-2000Hz. An amendment to the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1978 was accordingly made on 19 October 1978, with effect from 9 November 1978.

It was further amended in February and March this year to cover components of frequency changers and equipment essential for the manufacture of centrifuge parts and components. Discussions have also been held with other leading supplier countries, some of which have since brought frequency changers within the ambit of their export control procedures. That illustrates the way in which leading supplier countries are co-operating greatly on these matters. As the hon. Gentleman has said, there are other equally important steps that have to be taken to discourage the proliferation of nuclear weapons. A decision to build nuclear weapons is, in the final analysis,

a political decision. We need to promote a wider political commitment to non-proliferation.

The United Kingdom has been playing a full part in international discussions on measures to achieve that end, including the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation. The United Kingdom is a depository Power of the non-proliferation treaty, to which there are now 111 parties. We are working continuously to make the treaty as universal as possible in its application.

The Pakistan authorities have consistently stressed the peaceful nature of their nuclear programme. We have noted these assurances, but we have made clear our concern at the development in Pakistan of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities. It is a matter that we should view with seriousness in any non-nuclear weapons State.

We have made clear to all parties in the sub-continent our support in principle for arrangements which could be agreed between them to include the sub-continent in a nuclear weapons-free zone. The Government attach the highest importance to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We should view very seriously indications that any non-nuclear weapons State was setting out to acquire a nuclear weapons capability and to share that with others.

Mr. Delyell: I thank the hon. Gentleman for the obvious care that he has taken over his reply, but may I express a certain incredulity—I am sure that he would put it more tactfully than I would—about the Pakistan assurances? After all, we have the case of the correspondent of the *Financial Times* and the relative of the French Ambassador being beaten up, and there are some of us who just do not think that Pakistan is not trying to get nuclear weapons.

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FAIR TRADING

6.6 am

Mr. Greville Janner (Leicester, West): I am happy, even at this hour, to have the opportunity to raise a matter concerning the salary of the Director General of Fair Trading and thereby to

consider the possibilities for the protection of the consumer that are available to that distinguished gentleman in his work and through the efforts of his Department.

Although I am using the parliamentary procedure of considering the salary of the Director General, I am not to be taken as criticising either the existence or the amount of that salary. Nor am I attacking the efforts of this gentleman or of his staff—nor, indeed, those of his predecessor, the founder, as it were, of that office, when he was acting in that role.

I invite the Minister to tell the House how the work of the Director General of Fair Trading is to be strengthened, with especial reference to certain crucial aspects of that work. Although the Director General is an independent person running his own operation independently of the Department, the Minister may none the less be able, either here or through other channels, to inform the House and the country of the prospects of further advance. In other words, what is in the pipeline?

If the Minister finds that, because of the exigencies of the hour and the nature of the debate, he cannot inform the House in this way, I hope that he will make arrangements to do so as fully as possible by way of letter or otherwise. It is important that the House and the public should know exactly what is to be done and what the Director General and his office are to produce in the foreseeable future.

As the Director General of Fair Trading is in charge of what may be described as a quasi-quango, and as the Government are known for their quango-hunting activities, I believe that the House and the country would like an assurance that there is no intention to destroy the work of this office or to hack away at its effectiveness by cutting its basic costs.

I hope that the Minister will give an assurance on behalf of the Government and that this will not be one of the occasions on which he says that we ask the Director General himself. This is the responsibility of the Government, as the Director General of Fair Trading is the creation of a previous incarnation of Conservative misrule. Indeed, it has been said that he is one of the few useful products of an otherwise wretched regime. I have heard it said that the production

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tijdens de lagerhuuszitting van 18 op 19 dezer heeft het Labourlid Tom Dalyell enige voor Nederland minder flat-terende opmerkingen gemaakt gedurende een debat over de beveiligingsmaatregelen rond het u c n - project te Atmelo. Dalyell hekelde onder meer de "mind-boggling inefficiency or naivety uncharacteristic of the Dutch as a nation, or connivance by people in certain key positions" waardoor het Khan volgens hem mogelijk was geweest, informatie te verkrijgen over metallurgie technieken die onmisbaar waren voor het maken van kernwapens. Vier jaar lang hadden hooggeplaatste Nederlandse autoriteiten gemeend, hun unesco partners niet erover te hoeven inlichten dat zij wisten van een schending van de beveiliging, aldus Dalyell. In zijn antwoord ontkende Norman Lamont (undersecretary for energy) niet dat het hier een hoogst ernstige en delikate zaak betrof. De Britse regering had de Nederlandse regering gevraagd waarom zij de partners niet hadden ingelicht maar nog geen bevestigende uitleg ontvangen. De Britse regering had eveneens duidelijk gesteld dat het aan-

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zienlijk belang hechtte aan het nemen van maatregelen ter voorkoming van herhalingen, laatstelijk nog tijdens de recente ontmoeting van premier van agt met zijn e. l. t. e. ambtgenote. deze maatregelen waren overigens wel toegezegd, aldus lamont. de desbetreffende passages uit verslag gaan u spoedigst na ontvangst toe.

in dit verband stelde heel dalyell tevens in een eerder stadium vragen aan de premier. de tekst van de vragen en de antwoorden erop volgen:

quote

nuclear security

q1. mr dalyell asked the prime minister if she will initiate discussions with the governments of west germany and holland with a view to setting up an inquiry, with the purpose of improving security at ureenco, almeelo, holland, in the light of the khan incident.

the secretary of state for the home department (mr. william whitelaw): i have been asked to reply.

we raised the khan incident with our partners earlier this year. at the joint committee in june it was agreed that security procedures should be reviewed and, as the hon. gentleman knows, appropriate follow-up action has since been taken. the issue is being kept under close review by the joint committee.

mr. dalyell: has downing street authorised the under-secretary of state for energy, the hon. member for kingston upon thames (mr. lamont), who will be replying to one of the consolidated fund debates, to explain why for four long years the authorities in britain and germany were apparently not told of the major security leak that has had more devastating effects than nunn may and fuchs and which has probably resulted in an islamic bomb?

mr. whitelaw: i know of the hon. gentleman's extreme interest in the matter and how important it is. i trust that he will receive a satisfactory reply from my hon. friend.

mr. dalyell: has downing street authorized such an explanation?

mr. whitelaw: i said that i trust that the hon. gentleman will receive a suitable reply from my hon. friend. of course downing street authorises everything that ministers say.

mr. whitney: is my right hon. friend aware that in this truly lamentable affair dr. khan was never employed by ureenco and that no blame should be attached to what has been a highly successful trinational operation? the blame has to be placed at the door of the dutch authorities.

mr. whitelaw: these are matters that can properly be raised during the consolidated fund debate.

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POSTTELEGRAM

→ cc James 2^e 1/1
alleen bij

No. 20396/108

Londen, 21 December 1979

Onderwerp: TON-Almelo, affaire Chan

Met verwijzing naar mijn telex van 20 dezer No. 626653
moge ik U hiernevens doch toekomen het volledig
verslag in Mansard van het debat in het Lagerhuis
op 19 december jl. inzake de beveiliging van het
Joint Centrifuge Project te Almelo.

De Ambassadeur,
voor deze

E. Röell

De Heer Minister
van Buitenlandse Zaken
's-Gravenhage.

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[Mr. Buchanan-Smith.] prepared to observe them if an overall limit is imposed. I understand that my announcement has been welcomed as a sensible measure. Many people would like us to go much further, with a general, comprehensive licensing scheme. This is a deep and important subject. Great difficulties are involved. If we are to have a flexible and organic industry we must have a flexible and organic scheme. Too rigid a scheme will not necessarily benefit the industry as a whole. For that reason we decided to introduce effective licensing where the pressure is greatest—in the mackerel fisheries. We have a totally open mind about whether what we learn from the mackerel fishery should be extended to other fisheries or whether we should adopt a more general comprehensive scheme later.

If, as a result of our proposal for the mackerel fishery, there is a diversion of effort to other fisheries, we shall not hesitate to take further measures to ensure that our conservation and management policies are effective and not made void because of inadequate control.

Finally, I should like to return to the point on which the hon. Member for Aberdeen, South opened and on which every contributor to the debate has asked for assurances. What is important is to repeat yet again—and I do so with all the sincerity that I have stated it before—that Britain's fishing industry is not up for trading in the Common Market negotiations. My right hon. Friend demonstrated this in Dublin. I believe that the mere fact that after Dublin, at the first Fisheries Council, we were prepared to talk constructively about some of the measures that were necessary for an effective common fisheries policy, demonstrated to our partners in Europe that we did not see the fishing negotiations as part of the Dublin negotiations. They thought that we would take pique over fishing, because of Dublin. The fact that we were able to talk about fishing was proof that we wanted to deal with fishing and intended to continue to deal with the subject on its merits.

It is on that note that I finish tonight. I thank those who have contributed to the debate. I repeat yet again that the fishing industry is a most important industry. The livelihood of those who work in it—and the well-being of their

families—is important to the Government. I thank the House for the fact that in our renegotiation of the common fisheries policy my right hon. Friend and I have had the support of all parties in the House in pursuing the objective of ensuring a proper future for our fishermen.

JOINT CENTRIFUGE PROJECT, ALMELO

5.12 am

Mr. Tam Dalyell (West Lothian): Remembering Alan Nunn May, Bruno Pontecorvo, the Rosenbergs—even Klaus Fuchs, with his overall grasp of the concept of the physics of the atom bomb—it is arguable whether any of them, or indeed all of them together, jeopardised world peace to a greater extent than the activities, in the second half of the 1970s, of Dr. Abel Qader Khan.

Certainly the effect of anything that Anthony Blunt may have done pales into trivial insignificance compared with the probable results of Dr. Khan's handiwork.

We now have the real threat of regional nuclear confrontation in Asia or the Arab world, laying a powder trail to a possible world holocaust.

So-called vertical proliferation is one thing. More nuclear weapons in the same hands do not necessarily increase the likelihood of nuclear war.

Horizontal proliferation—the acquisition of nuclear warheads by nations that previously had none at all—is quite a different matter.

That is why, even at 10 minutes past 5 o'clock in the morning, I do not apologise to an Under-Secretary, who has been very good-tempered and had to wait a long time for this Consolidated Fund debate, for keeping him out of his well-deserved bed and rest.

The subject that I raise is the security arrangements at the Joint Centrifuge Project at Almelo, in the light of the Khan espionage affair—class IV, vote 25.

At this hour in the morning I feel somewhat in the position of the Member of Parliament who dreamt—proverbially, at any rate—that he was speaking in the House of Commons, and woke up to find that he actually was. Be that as it may, the real point of the debate is the prospect of a Pakistani bomb, and, related

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to that, a bomb in the hands of Colonel
Gadafi, who helps to finance Pakistan,
or an Ayatollah given a bomb for the
sake of Islamic solidarity. This is a spine-
chilling prospect—a dream of nightmare
proportions.

The stark facts are hardly in dispute.
But if my version is inaccurate the Mini-
ster will doubtless say so. Since on this
occasion I have submitted the guts of my
speech to the Department of Energy on
the ground that it would be unreasonable
to expect any Minister to reply on so
complex a subject to questions that were
fired at him for the first time in the early
hours of the morning.

The gut facts of the case as I see it
are first, that Abel Qader Khan came to
Europe as a bona fide research worker
and a student of metallurgy.

Secondly, at some point in the mid-
1970s he was persuaded to devote him-
self to gaining access to theoretical but,
more important, industrial information
that would allow his native Pakistan to
build and operate a nuclear weapon
capacity of its own.

Thirdly, as a result of mind-boggling
inefficiency or naivety—wholly uncharac-
teristic of the Dutch as a nation, in most
things among the most competent of
people on this planet—or connivance by
people in certain key positions—I must
make it clear that I have no evidence of
connivance, but clearly that is a question
that must be asked—Dr. Khan was able
to acquire, first, theoretical information
on centrifuge and enrichment concepts;
secondly, information about metallurgical
techniques crucial to nuclear weapons
capacity; and, thirdly, and possibly most
important, commercial knowledge of
where a country such as Pakistan, with a
tiny industrial base, could acquire
“parts” for making atomic weapons
which could not themselves conceivably
be made in Pakistan.

Fourthly—here I go on with the guts
of the case—for four long years key
people in the Netherlands, in positions of
great responsibility, may be or may be
not inside the Dutch Government,
apparently did not see fit to reveal to
their West German and British colleagues
that they knew that a security breach
involving Dr. Khan had taken place.

Fifthly, according to the remarkable
Observer investigators, Colin Smith and

Shyam Bhatia, Dr. Khan is now living
in the leafy suburbs of Islamabad,
guarded by tough men ready to take on
inquisitive journalists from the *Financial
Times* or relatives of the French Am-
bassador who may innocently or other-
wise be displaying uncalled-for curiosity
into the Pakistan nuclear effort.

If the Minister wishes to add to or
subtract from my deployment of the facts,
doubtless he will do so in his reply.
Indeed, frankly I feel that he ought to
do so, as the Department and the Gov-
ernment have had two month's notice of
my intense interest in this topic.

For the sake of those hon. Members
who are not here but who displayed an
interest in this topic, and for the sake
of clarity, I must go over some of the
questions that have been put, otherwise
if one were to read the debate it would
be incoherent and incomplete.

On 29 October I

asked the Secretary of State for Energy if
he will make a statement on the review by
Urenco, promised in June, of its detailed
security arrangements; what action the gov-
ernments of Great Britain, Holland and West
Germany, as partners in the centrifuge project
are taking to strengthen the tripartite arrange-
ments; and if he will make a statement.”

The Secretary of State replied:

“As requested by the Joint Committee of
the three Governments at their meeting in
June, Urenco have reviewed their security pro-
cedures; and have made a number of recom-
mendations. In addition the implementation of
existing Troika security procedures in the
United Kingdom has been reviewed and an
assurance given to the Joint Committee that
they are being fully observed.

The Joint Committee considered the Urenco
report at its meeting on 19 September. The
Joint Committee concluded that the existing
tripartite security rules and procedures were
in principle adequate, but agreed on a number
of detailed points on which improvements
needed to be considered. It has been arranged
for these to be studied urgently by security
experts of the three Governments.”

I am not fool enough to suppose that the
House of Commons is the place to deploy
details of those particular security
arrangements. All I ask is that the
promise made on 29 October is fulfilled.

The Joint Committee also noted that effec-
tive security depended on the thorough and
continued application of the present tripartite
rules and procedures. It agreed to reinforce
the arrangements for monitoring the applica-
tion of these rules, and for the submission to
the Joint Committee of regular reports by the
appropriate security authorities of the three
countries of the results of such monitoring.”

[Mr. Dalyell.]

The answer continued:

I should like to have a clear undertaking that, unlike what occurred when Dr. Khan pursued his activities, the Government are party to that monitoring.

The Secretary of State continued:

"A report from the Netherlands authorities on their investigation of the Khan incident was not available to the Joint Committee at its last meeting. The Joint Committee is due to meet again on Friday, 16 November and will again review Urenco security in the light of any further information then available."—[Official Report, 29 October 1979; Vol. 972, c. 382-3.]

Understandably, on reading that reply I wondered why on earth the report from the Netherlands authorities on their investigation was not available to the Joint Committee or to the Department. It creates something of a smell about the affair. I should have thought that at least a clean breast would have been made of the affair by the Netherlands authorities. Throughout the argument—as I said at Question Time today—the strand runs: why, for four long years, did not the Netherlands authorities tell their British and West German partners?

The next parliamentary step was on Wednesday 28 November. I asked the Prime Minister what discussions she had had on the security risks involved in the Khan incident at the nuclear centrifuge establishment at Urenco, Almelo, Holland and the right hon. Lady replied:

"I have had no discussions with the Dutch on this matter, but our concern about the Khan incident has been made very clear to our partners."—[Official Report, 28 November 1979; Vol. 947 c. 647.]

At that time I thought it was a matter worthy of Prime Ministerial attention and I felt that the right hon. Lady should have contacted the Dutch Prime Minister.

On 29 November I asked the Prime Minister

"whether she will order a review of British involvement in joint European projects in so far as matters of nuclear security are concerned, in the light of the Khan incident at Urenco."

The Home Secretary—replying because the Prime Minister was at the Dublin conference—said:

"The Government attach importance to continued participation in the collaboration on centrifuge enrichment. Our concern about the Khan incident in the Netherlands has been made very clear to our partners, and action

has already been taken to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the implementation of existing tripartite security rules and procedures. Security is being kept under close review by the joint committee of the three Governments in the light of the report by the Netherlands Government of their investigation of the Khan incident.

No other joint European projects in the civil nuclear field currently involve the transfer of classified information but all are kept under continuous review for security and other implications."

I asked the natural question:

"Since the issue is nuclear proliferation in Asia, are the Government saying that they are satisfied with the Dutch proposals put forward at the joint committee on 16 November?"

The Home Secretary replied:

"I appreciate the hon. Gentleman's close interest in this matter. It is extremely important. He had the courtesy to make clear what he wished to ask in putting down his question. It is perhaps difficult always to be satisfied, but we shall do everything possible through diplomatic channels to impress upon our partners the vital importance of these security arrangements."

We all have great affection for the Home Secretary but, if I may say so, that was a vintage Home Secretary reply on a subject on which he had little intention of giving a substantive answer. It is charming, but it does not get to the root of the matter. I still ask what happened about the proposals that were supposed to come forward on 16 November.

I ought to add that my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, Heeley (Mr. Hooley) then asked a highly revelant question:

"What steps are being taken to make sure that nationals of countries that are not signatories to the non-proliferation treaties, such as Israel and South Africa, do not have access to the techniques covered by Urenco?"

The Home Secretary replied:

"These are matters relating to arrangements on security reached between the Governments concerned. I shall make sure that they are brought to the attention of those concerned."—[Official Report, 29 November 1979; Vol. 974, c. 1479-80.]

This is not the first time that there has been a question of stolen technology. Although it is not the subject of this debate, as my hon. Friend's question raised the matter of Israel I should point out that the Department of Energy knows the whole saga of the Plumbat affair, of the ship "Scheersberg" and, indeed, of the establishment of a nuclear capacity at Dimona, so this is not an entirely new

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hon. Friend put a good question that was
not fully answered.

On 28 November I asked the Prime
Minister:

"what discussions she has had with the
Government of Holland on the security risks
involved in the Khan incident at the nuclear
centrifuge establishment at Urengo, Almelo,
Holland."

The right hon. Lady replied:

"I have had no discussions with the Dutch
on this matter, but our concern about the Khan
incident has been made very clear to our
partners."—[Official Report, 28 November
1979; Vol. 974, c. 647.]

I come back to the point that, on a
matter of such global importance, surely
the Prime Minister should have at least
talked to the Dutch Prime Minister to get
some explanation. It is a matter that
should have been handled at Heads-of-
Government level.

On 6 December I had the opportunity
to ask the right hon. Lady:

"Will the Prime Minister undertake to ask
the Dutch Prime Minister about a leak that
was infinitely more far reaching than any leak
of Cabinet papers? I refer to the leak of
crucial nuclear secrets from the centrifuge
project at Almelo. Will the right hon. Lady
ask the Dutch Prime Minister how that situa-
tion occurred, since it is arguably more damag-
ing to peace in the world than anything done
by the Rosenbergs or any other atom spies?"

The right hon. Lady replied:

"The hon. Genteman knows that we have
already made protests about this matter, which
involved a person who had been working at
that plant of Urengo on enriched uranium and
the centrifuge process and then went to work
in Pakistan, where we are trying to see that
there is not proliferation of production of
nuclear materials or any nuclear weapons. The
matter is not on the agenda, but I shall rein-
force the protest that we have already made."
—[Official Report, 6 December 1979; Vol. 975,
c. 611.]

I must say that I find it extraordinary that
even at this stage the matter was not on
the agenda. Part of my complaint is
that, although they wrung their hands in
public, I doubt whether senior Ministers
have tumbled, even now, to the enormity
of what is involved. I do not think that
they realise the implications of an Islamic
bomb, with all the consequences that
flow from that.

On 11 December I raised a point of
order with Mr. Speaker and asked
whether, in view of the urgency, the
Prime Minister would make a statement
on Urengo. I had put down a question

for oral answer, and it was No. 5 on the
Order Paper. Normally question 5 is
reached, but it was not on this occasion,
and the Prime Minister's written reply
was:

"I raised this matter with the Netherlands
Prime Minister, Mr. van Agt, at my meeting
with him on 6 December 1979. He agreed
that this was a matter of most serious con-
cern and assured me that everything possible
was being done to prevent a repetition."
—[Official Report, 11 December 1979; Vol. 975,
c. 531.]

It would be a little trivial and rude to say
that that was a bland reply. After all, it
was a written answer, and possibly I
could not expect anything more. But I
am not being rude if I say that it was an
incomplete reply.

On 17 December I asked the Prime
Minister if she would

"approach Chancellor Schmidt with a view to
setting up a joint German-British inquiry into
the reasons why the British and German Gov-
ernments were not informed by the Dutch
Government of security breaches at the joint
centrifuge project by Dr. A. Q. Khan, and
the effects of his activities on Western
security."

The right hon. Lady replied:

"No. I have already expressed my con-
cern to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands
about the Khan incident. All three Govern-
ments of the centrifuge partnership attach
importance to ensuring that incidents of this
kind are not repeated and appropriate action
has been put in hand."—[Official Report, 17
December 1979; Vol. 976, c. 8.]

I can imagine no matter more urgent on
which the Prime Minister should talk to
Chancellor Schmidt than security and the
consequential events in Islam.

Today I had question Q. 1 to the Prime
Minister, and it was answered by the
Home Secretary. He said:

"We raised the Khan incident with our
partners earlier this year. At the joint com-
mittee in June it was agreed that security
procedures should be reviewed and, as the
hon. Member knows, appropriate follow-up
action has since been taken."

Well, actually, I do not know what
follow-up action has been taken. If the
Home Secretary had promised that it had
been taken, but refused to tell me exactly
what had been done, I would have under-
stood. But after all that has been said and
written he may wish to go further. He
added in his reply that

"The issue is being kept under close review
by the Joint Committee."—[Official Report,
18 December 1979; Vol. 976, c. 278.]
Which can mean anything.

[Mr. Dalyell.]

Is it simply a question of crying over spilled milk, with a pious promise to avoid repetition? Is it a case of saying "Well, it is too bad that the Pakistanis have atomic weapons. They will probably give the information to the Libyans who have given them a lot of money, and, who knows, in the name of Islamic solidarity they could hand over nuclear weapons to an array of Ayatollahs, Free Palestinians and heaven knows who in Islam?"

I think that the concept of an Islamic bomb is more spine-chilling than the whole nuclear armament in the hands of the men in the Kremlin and in Washington. Great Governments, such as those of the Soviet Union or the United States, can be counted upon to act with deliberation. One can sleep fairly easily in one's bed at night without fearing a nuclear holocaust. But the bad dream come true of a Gadaffi bomb or an Ayatollah bomb is altogether different.

It may be said that the knowledge of theoretical physics is such in the world that any country should have the knowledge of how to make nuclear weapons and therefore why should anyone worry about breaches of security. Proliferation, it may be argued, is bound to take place anyway. Were that true, what is the point of having nuclear security anywhere? Were that the case, we might as well forget the whole paraphernalia of secrecy and security.

But while it is true that the theoretical physics of a nuclear explosion is now widely understood by anyone reading the nuclear journals, the short cut by which a relatively poor country lacking an industrial base can actually make a bomb and nuclear weapons is not widely known. This is where Dr. Khan comes in. His value to Pakistan lies in the nuts and bolts of the metallurgy and engineering required to produce nuclear weapons.

I come now to the central purpose of raising the issue in the House. It may, for all I know, be too late. The proverbial birds may have flown. On the other hand, even if at this late stage certain key parts can be denied to Pakistan and other countries with a small industrial base it may not be too late to do some-

thing about the spine-chilling proliferation of nuclear weapons.

My first and possibly most important question is to ask what exactly is the so-called London group of 15 countries. What is its relationship with Governments in an effort to prevent countries without an industrial base from getting hardware crucial to the manufacture of nuclear weapons? If there is anything that I want from the Government this evening it is the promise that they will do all that they can to give muscle to the London group. There have been inconsistent policies in the supply of nuclear materials by those who are in a position to be suppliers of these materials.

My other questions reflect concern about whether there could be any repetition at Urenco, Almelo. It is somewhat a matter of *deja vu* with reference to what the Israelis did in relation to the "Scheersberg", the Plumbat affair and the development at Dimona.

What explanation did Mr. van Agt give to the British Prime Minister of why the Dutch authorities had not informed their British and West German partners in the Urenco consortium of their knowledge of the breach of security operations? Certain people in Holland, we understand, had known precisely what Dr. Khan was up to for four long years before the West Germans and the British were told.

I intersperse at this stage a question that I was asked to put by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bristol, South-East (Mr. Benn), the former Secretary of State for Energy, who is deeply interested in this matter. My right hon. Friend wanted to know when British Ministers were first told about this affair. He said frankly that his own recollections were vague. I pass on that question because I, too, am interested in the answer.

Had the Dutch made a clean breast of it as soon as they knew what Dr. Khan had done, is it not possible that, for example, the British authorities would have ticked on more readily why Pakistan should want specialised high frequency inverters? Had Dr. Khan's activities been fully known to the British and West German authorities, is it not at least more likely that Pakistan would have been denied the industrial requisites for a

bomb? We have export inverters?

Export could have been produced very actively had they known what the D knew and we may or may not that Dr. Kh. highly sensitive Pakistan.

Again—on these questions the Minister—needed to go. Is it true that posed to know gen corrosion for 10 days?

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Members stand if I contrast between my experience I came Dutch political least interest: Whereas the hardly get missiles—at Governments according to Dutch are nuclear debate

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bomb? When, and in what circumstances, have export controls been introduced for inverters?

Export controls might have been introduced very much earlier and more effectively had the British Government known what the Dutch authorities apparently knew and what the Dutch Government may or may not have known, namely, that Dr. Khan had been operating in a highly sensitive area on behalf of Pakistan.

Again—and I have given notice of these questions to the Department and to the Minister—what and whose authority is needed to get inside the Almelo plant? Is it true that, simply because he was supposed to know something about hydrogen corrosion, Dr. Khan was invited in for 10 days?

Does Urenco feel obliged to help anyone who writes "I am a research student under the distinguished professor X. I should like information on Y"? It seems that what Dr. Khan did in the first place, fantastic though it may sound, was to write letters along the lines "I am a research student under the distinguished Professor Delaye of the Catholic university in Brussels. Can I have information?" Apparently he was easily given highly sensitive information.

If that is the way in which the Almelo project proceeds the time has come, has it not, to review the whole matter? If that is its style of behaviour, either it is naivety or it results from something else.

Members of the House will understand if I say that there is a great contrast between Britain and Holland. From my experience in the European Parliament I came to know the extent to which Dutch politicians were obsessed by, or at least interested in, nuclear matters. Whereas the House of Commons can hardly get a major debate on cruise missiles—at any rate, before Christmas—Governments in Holland can fall or stand according to their nuclear policies. The Dutch are intensely interested in the nuclear debate.

The supposition or guess is that certain people in Holland would have found it so politically embarrassing to reveal that the Dutch, above all others, had been responsible for creating the conditions for nuclear proliferation that they sat on the

secret. That may or may not be the explanation, but it is a possibility.

I come back to the question: in that case, who is or is not entitled to information in Urenco? Remembering that Dr. Khan was not, as I understand it, at any time a direct employee of Urenco—he was an employee of the FDO—whether he was vetted by that organisation or by the Dutch security service is open to question. The Minister may wish to comment on that matter. I do not press it too greatly. I am concerned about our involvement henceforth in relation to the security aspect.

What investigations, if any, are being made into the alleged dummy company, Weargate Ltd., of Swansea in Wales, which allegedly bought inverters from Emerson Electric Controls in Swindon and sent them to Pakistan? Has any attempt been made to trace the owners of Weargate Ltd.—Mr. and Mrs. Abdus Salaam? Are the Government discussing with other highly developed technological nations the sale of such items as high vacuum valves and glass rotors?

The Minister may say that keeping tabs on such items is unreal and impractical. If that is what the Government believe, they should say so. If it is really impossible for the London group of nations—given the nature of a complex industrial society—to operate, it should be admitted and made plain.

I make no apology for taking half an hour, even at this time of the morning, to go through these matters. Nuclear proliferation, especially nuclear proliferation in Asia, is far more dangerous in the opinion of many than all the discussion and talk about fear of nuclear radiation and the possible safety, or lack of safety—according to taste—of the PWRs. The subject that we are discussing at this time of the morning is far more important in terms of danger to the human race than the various doubts and worries that were raised during Questions to the Secretary of State for Energy when he produced a statement on the PWR and related nuclear matters some 14 hours ago.

That is the context in which I put the matter, and I make no excuse for detaining the House and keeping the Minister up at this time of the morning. I thank him for his good nature and look forward to his reply.

5.47 am

The Under Secretary of State for Energy (Mr. Norman Lamont): The hon. Member for West Lothian (Mr. Dalyell) certainly need not apologise in any way for keeping the House up at this late hour. He had raised an extremely serious matter. I assure him that the Government share the concern that he has expressed today. We consider that the consequences of what has happened are potentially very far reaching.

The hon. Gentleman was kind enough to give me a copy of his speech—or what he called the guts of his speech—in advance. I hope to deal in detail with some of the important questions that he raised. He will appreciate, however, that the matter is delicate. Although I wish to reply to the points that he raised, it would not be appropriate or possible for me to go into every detail that arises in the issue.

Mr. Dalyell: I wish to put on record that I do understand that the matter is delicate.

Mr. Lamont: I am grateful for that assurance.

In addition, some of the detailed questions that the hon. Member raised have been the subject of a thorough investigation by the Netherlands Government. A report on this investigation has been produced by an interdepartmental working party of the Netherlands Government, and follow-up action is currently being considered in Holland by the Netherlands Government. A copy of the report has not yet been passed to the Netherlands Parliament. I cannot reveal the detailed findings of the report.

It may be helpful to the hon. Gentleman if I begin—and I am anxious to help him—by outlining a few of the facts of the case.

We understand that in 1972 Dr. Khan a Pakistani metallurgist, was recruited by a Netherlands subcontractor to Ultra Centrifuge Nederland. UCN is the Netherlands industrial partner in the centrifuge project. Dr. Khan worked for the subcontractor for about three years. During that time he was seconded to Almelo for a short period as a translator. He may well have been in a position to gain access to confidential information about the centrifuge process. He returned to Pakistan in 1975.

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The hon. Member asked, quite rightly, "Why was the United Kingdom not informed?" It is a question that we have been asking the Netherlands authorities. To date, we have received no satisfactory explanation.

I should like to outline the steps that have been taken to investigate the Khan incident; to review security procedures within the uranium enrichment collaboration; and, most important, to tighten up on their implementation.

The collaboration with the Germans and Dutch was set up in 1970 by the Treaty of Almelo. A joint committee of the three Governments is responsible under the treaty for providing effective supervision of the collaboration. The committee normally meets, at official level, about four times a year, or more frequently if necessary. The chairmanship rotates; next year the United Kingdom will be in the chair.

Annex II to the treaty deals with security procedures and classification. Principles and minimum standards on security were agreed between the three Governments, but the responsibility for their implementation lies with each individual country.

The rules are designed to ensure that access to sensitive information is tightly controlled, the three Governments having recognised from the outset that their non-proliferation objectives demanded such control. In particular, it has been absolutely clear since the beginning of the collaboration that nationals of fourth countries could be permitted access to confidential information only with the express agreement of the joint committee. No such clearance was sought in the case of Dr. Khan, nor was his departure to Pakistan in 1975 notified to the joint committee. Nor, as required by the Treaty of Almelo, was the apparent breach of security reported to the joint committee until long after it occurred.

Our concern about the affair—which is very considerable—has been made clear to the Netherlands Government, and it was underlined recently by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at her meeting with the Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

Mr. Dalyell: Is not this the most flagrant and mind-boggling let-down?

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asked, quite rightly, if the United Kingdom has not questioned the Netherlands authorities. We have received no satisfactory

outline the steps that will be investigated the Khan security procedures enrichment collaboration, to tighten

with the Germans in 1970 by the joint committee of which is responsible for providing effective collaboration. The committee meets, at official intervals a year, or more frequently. The chairman is the United Kingdom

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measured to ensure that information is tightly controlled Governments having understood that their non-essential demands such as, it has been absolute beginning of the nationals of fourth permitted access to ion only with the the joint committee. is sought in the case as his departure to notified to the joint committee required by the the apparent reported to the joint after it occurred.

the affair—which is has been made clear Government, and it by my right hon. Minister at her meeting ster of the Nether-

not this the most oggling let-down?

What do the Dutch think they are playing at? They have broken every agreement, have they not?

Mr. Lamont: If the hon. Gentleman will let me proceed I shall outline what representations have been made, what actions have been taken and what investigations are being conducted.

In April 1979 the United Kingdom asked for a full report to be made to the joint committee of the centrifuge collaboration on the allegations then appearing in the press about Dr. Khan's activities in Holland. Questions were also asked in the Netherlands Parliament. The Netherlands Government told the joint committee at its meeting on 16 June 1979 that they had set up an internal investigation into the circumstances of the Khan incident, and they then made an interim report on its findings.

The United Kingdom and German representatives at the meeting emphasised the gravity of the allegations that had been appearing in the press and stressed that investigation by the appropriate authorities in the Netherlands should be full and thorough so that appropriate follow-up action could be taken. All three Governments agreed that Urenco should be asked urgently to review the security arrangements to be followed by all three industrial partners so that necessary steps to prevent a repetition could be pursued.

After the meeting—and this answers the point that the right hon. Member for Bristol, South-East (Mr. Benn) asked the hon. Member for West Lothian to raise—United Kingdom Ministers were informed of the interim findings of the inquiry by the Netherlands Government, and a review of the implementation of existing tripartite security rules and procedures in the United Kingdom was started. I can assure the hon. Member that the tripartite security rules and procedures are being fully observed in the United Kingdom.

The hon. Member quoted the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Energy to the effect that the Urenco report on the review of security was considered by the joint committee at its meeting in September. The committee concluded that the existing tripartite security rules and procedures were, in principle, adequate, but agreed

on a number of detailed points on which improvements needed to be considered by security experts. I assure the hon. Gentleman that that is happening.

The joint committee also noted that effective security depended on the thorough and continued application of the present tripartite rules and procedures. It agreed to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the application of these rules, and for submission to the joint committee of regular reports by the appropriate security authorities of the three countries of the results of such monitoring.

The implementation of security procedures is essentially a matter for national Governments, but enforcement of the arrangements for monitoring is of course of concern to all three Governments and is being kept under close review by the joint committee.

It was also agreed at the meeting of the joint committee that the matter should be considered again when the report of the Netherlands authorities on the Khan incident was available. The report by the Netherlands Government was received in confidence by the British Government in October. Its implications for future security, throughout the collaboration, including security at Almelo, were discussed, and agreement was reached on appropriate action at a further meeting of the joint committee in November.

We have made clear to the Netherlands Government, through diplomatic channels and meetings of the joint committee, that we attach considerable importance to ensuring that there are no repetitions. That concern was firmly underlined by the Prime Minister at her recent meeting with the Netherlands Prime Minister, Mr. van Agt. He assured the Prime Minister that everything possible is being done to achieve that.

The hon. Gentleman implied that United Kingdom Ministers were not seized of the seriousness of the affair until he pressed the Prime Minister earlier this month. I do not think that that is the case. The Department of Energy Ministers and the Prime Minister were alerted as soon as the full facts of the case emerged, that is when the full report from the Netherlands authorities was received in London during October.

[Mr. Lamont.]

The tripartite Urenco security rules and procedures were drawn up with the objective of minimising the risks of proliferation. I cannot go into details, but we believe that, provided that the rules and procedures are applied thoroughly throughout the collaboration, sensitive nuclear information can, and will, be properly protected.

I turn to some of the particular matters raised by the hon. Gentleman. He referred to and asked about the London group of countries. This consists of 15 main nuclear supplier States, including the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan. It is more commonly known as the nuclear suppliers group. The member States have undertaken, when considering the export of nuclear material, equipment and technology, to act in accordance with certain principles. Before any supplier member State exports any of the items listed in what are known as "The Guidelines", assurances are required from the recipient country's Government regarding peaceful non-explosive use, coverage by international safeguards, and adequate physical protection and retransfers.

The United Kingdom has played a leading role in the nuclear suppliers group, and through frequent bilateral exchanges is working for more effective export controls, internationally, on sensitive nuclear items, including the kind referred to by the hon. Gentleman. This is consistent with our goal of enabling countries to reap the full benefits of nuclear power while minimising the serious dangers of nuclear proliferation.

The United Kingdom exercises careful control over the export of all materials and components specially designed for nuclear facilities. These are subject to licences under the Export of Goods (Control) Order.

The controls that we and others operate play an important part in furthering our non-proliferation objectives. I assure the hon. Gentleman that we have been taking all the necessary steps to ensure effective and comprehensive implementation of the order, and will continue to do so.

Mr. Dalyell: I do not accuse the Minister of being complacent, but we had the example of Weargate Ltd., the dummy company. To what extent were

Emerson Electrical Controls subject to that sort of order? Possibly the hon. Gentleman is coming to that.

Mr. Lamont: It is not normal practice to discuss the activities of individual companies, and I cannot do so. The hon. Gentleman will appreciate that there is nothing illegal in exporting from the United Kingdom general purpose items that do not require a licence and may be widely available throughout the world. Provided that a company is not exporting something that is not illegal, no action can be taken against it. The hon. Gentleman can be assured that specially designed items for use in nuclear facilities are subject to export controls. Applications for an export licence for such items are given the closest scrutiny, and I am satisfied that these controls are stringently applied. Furthermore, the scope of the controls is kept under constant review.

The hon. Gentleman asked about the introduction of export controls on inverters, which are known also as frequency changers. He should be aware—and I am sure that he is—that inverters have many uses. These are items which can be used in both nuclear and industrial applications; for example, in spinning equipment. Following a review of the possibility of United Kingdom manufactured frequency changers being supplied for use overseas in nuclear applications, it was decided to impose export control on those inverters capable of a multi-phase electrical output of between 600-2000Hz. An amendment to the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1978 was accordingly made on 19 October 1978, with effect from 9 November 1978.

It was further amended in February and March this year to cover components of frequency changers and equipment essential for the manufacture of centrifuge parts and components. Discussions have also been held with other leading supplier countries, some of which have since brought frequency changers within the ambit of their export control procedures. That illustrates the way in which leading supplier countries are co-operating urgently on these matters. As the hon. Gentleman has said, there are other equally important steps that have to be taken to discourage the proliferation of nuclear weapons. A decision to build nuclear weapons is, in the final analysis,

a political decision, and a wider proliferation.

The United Kingdom will take a full part in measures to the International Evaluation. depository Power treaty, to which we are working as an application.

The Pakistanis consistently stress their nuclear facilities. We noted these as clear our cooperation with Pakistan of ties. It is a serious with serious weapons State

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Mr. Dalyell: I am sure that the Government will take over a certain amount of it would put it all, about the ent of the relative of the beaten up, and just do not trying to get

DIRECTOR

6.6 am
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a political decision. We need to promote
a wider political commitment to non-
proliferation.

The United Kingdom has been playing
a full part in international discussions on
measures to achieve that end, including
the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle
Evaluation. The United Kingdom is a
depository Power of the non-proliferation
treaty, to which there are now 111 parties.
We are working continuously to make the
treaty as universal as possible in its
application.

The Pakistan authorities have con-
sistently stressed the peaceful nature of
their nuclear programme. We have
noted these assurances, but we have made
clear our concern at the development in
Pakistan of unsafeguarded nuclear facili-
ties. It is a matter that we should view
with seriousness in any non-nuclear
weapons State.

We have made clear to all parties in
the sub-continent our support in principle
for arrangements which could be agreed
between them to include the sub-
continent in a nuclear weapons-free zone.
The Government attach the highest
importance to the non-proliferation of
nuclear weapons. We should view very
seriously indications that any non-nuclear
weapons State was setting out to acquire a
nuclear weapons capability and to share
that with others.

Mr. Dalyell: I thank the hon. Gentle-
man for the obvious care that he has
taken over his reply, but may I express
a certain incredulity—I am sure that he
would put it more factfully than I would
—about the Pakistan assurances? After
all, we have the case of the correspond-
ent of the *Financial Times* and the
relative of the French Ambassador being
beaten up, and there are some of us who
just do not think that Pakistan is not
trying to get nuclear weapons.

**DIRECTOR GENERAL OF
FAIR TRADING**

6.6 am

Mr. Greville Janner (Leicester,
West): I am happy, even at this hour, to
have the opportunity to raise a matter
concerning the salary of the Director
General of Fair Trading and thereby to

consider the possibilities for the protec-
tion of the consumer that are available to
that distinguished gentleman in his work
and through the efforts of his Department.

Although I am using the parliamentary
procedure of considering the salary of
the Director General, I am not to be
taken as criticising either the existence or
the amount of that salary. Nor am I
attacking the efforts of this gentleman or
of his staff—nor, indeed, those of his pre-
decessor, the founder, as it were, of that
office, when he was acting in that role.

I invite the Minister to tell the House
how the work of the Director General of
Fair Trading is to be strengthened, with
especial reference to certain crucial
aspects of that work. Although the
Director General is an independent per-
son running his own operation independ-
ently of the Department, the Minister
may none the less be able, either here or
through other channels, to inform the
House and the country of the prospects of
further advance. In other words, what is
in the pipeline?

If the Minister finds that, because of the
exigencies of the hour and the nature of
the debate, he cannot inform the House
in this way, I hope that he will make
arrangements to do so as fully as possible
by way of letter or otherwise. It is im-
portant that the House and the public
should know exactly what is to be done
and what the Director General and his
office are to produce in the foreseeable
future.

As the Director General of Fair Trading
is in charge of what may be described as
a quasi-quango, and as the Government
are known for their quango-hunting activi-
ties, I believe that the House and the
country would like an assurance that
there is no intention to destroy the work
of this office or to hack away at its
effectiveness by cutting its basic costs.

I hope that the Minister will give an
assurance on behalf of the Government
and that this will not be one of the occa-
sions on which he says that we ask the
Director General himself. This is the
responsibility of the Government, as the
Director General of Fair Trading is the
creation of a previous incarnation of
Conservative misrule. Indeed, it has been
said that he is one of the few useful pro-
ducts of an otherwise wretched regime.
I have heard it said that the production

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mr. dalyell asked the prime minister whether she will order a
review of british involvement in joint european projects in so
far as matters of nuclear security are concerned, in the light of
the khan incident at urencok.

mr. whitelaw: i have been asked to reply.
the government attach importance to continued participation in
the collaboration on centrifuge enrichment. our concern about the
khan incident in the netherlands has been made very clear to our
partners, and action has already been taken to reinforce the
arrangements for monitoring the implementation of existing tripartite
security rules and procedures. security is being kept under close
review by the joint committee of the three governments in the
light of the report by the netherlands government of their
investigation of the khan incident.
no other joint european projects in the civil nuclear
field currently involve the transfer of classified information
but all are kept under continuous review for security and other
implications.

mr. dalyell: since the issue is nuclear proliferation in asia, are
the government saying that they are satisfied with the dutch
proposals put forward at the joint committee on 16 november?

mr. whitelaw: i appreciate the hon. gentleman's close interest
in this matter. it is extremely important. he had the courtesy
to make clear what he wished to ask in putting down his question.
it is perhaps difficult always to be satisfied, but we shall do
everything possible through diplomatic channels to impress upon
our partners the vital importance of these security arrangements.

mr. hooley: what steps are being taken to make sure that nationals
of countries that not signatories to the non-proliferation treaty,
such as israel and south africa, do not have access to the technol-

ques covered by urenco?

mr. whitelaw: these are matters relating to arrangements on security reached between the governments concerned. i shall make sure that they are brought to the attention of those concerned.

mr. cryer: will the right hon. gentleman accept that the development of nuclear power, on a civil basis, internationally or nationally, involves grave dangers? this has been demonstrated at harrisburg. will he also accept that grave reductions in our civil liberties are involved, due to the tight security arrangements that are frequently necessary? will the government move away from their obsession with nuclear power and cease to build, construct or develop nuclear power until an absolutely concrete and complete safeguard is provided against any injury?

mr. whitelaw: the answer to that question must be: 'no sir'. but we will keep all security considerations carefully in mind.
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[Mr. Buchanan-Smith.] prepared to observe them if an overall limit is imposed. I understand that my announcement has been welcomed as a sensible measure. Many people would like us to go much further, with a general, comprehensive licensing scheme. This is a deep and important subject. Great difficulties are involved. If we are to have a flexible and organic industry we must have a flexible and organic scheme. Too rigid a scheme will not necessarily benefit the industry as a whole. For that reason we decided to introduce effective licensing where the pressure is greatest—in the mackerel fisheries. We have a totally open mind about whether what we learn from the mackerel fishery should be extended to other fisheries or whether we should adopt a more general comprehensive scheme later.

If, as a result of our proposal for the mackerel fishery, there is a diversion of effort to other fisheries, we shall not hesitate to take further measures to ensure that our conservation and management policies are effective and not made void because of inadequate control.

Finally, I should like to return to the point on which the hon. Member for Aberdeen, South opened and on which every contributor to the debate has asked for assurances. What is important is to repeat yet again—and I do so with all the sincerity that I have stated it before—that Britain's fishing industry is not up for trading in the Common Market negotiations. My right hon. Friend demonstrated this in Dublin. I believe that the mere fact that after Dublin, at the first Fisheries Council, we were prepared to talk constructively about some of the measures that were necessary for an effective common fisheries policy, demonstrated to our partners in Europe that we did not see the fishing negotiations as part of the Dublin negotiations. They thought that we would take pique over fishing, because of Dublin. The fact that we were able to talk about fishing was proof that we wanted to deal with fishing and intended to continue to deal with the subject on its merits.

It is on that note that I finish tonight. I thank those who have contributed to the debate. I repeat yet again that the fishing industry is a most important industry. The livelihood of those who work in it—and the well-being of their

families—is important to the Government. I thank the House for the fact that in our renegotiation of the common fisheries policy my right hon. Friend and I have had the support of all parties in the House in pursuing the objective of ensuring a proper future for our fishermen.

JOINT CENTRIFUGE PROJECT, ALMELO

5.12 am

Mr. Tam Dalyell (West Lothian): Remembering Alan Nunn May, Bruno Pontecorvo, the Rosenbergs—even Klaus Fuchs, with his overall grasp of the concept of the physics of the atom bomb—it is arguable whether any of them, or indeed all of them together, jeopardised world peace to a greater extent than the activities, in the second half of the 1970s, of Dr. Abel Qader Khan.

Certainly the effect of anything that Anthony Blunt may have done pales into trivial insignificance compared with the probable results of Dr. Khan's handiwork.

We now have the real threat of regional nuclear confrontation in Asia or the Arab world, laying a powder trail to a possible world holocaust.

So-called vertical proliferation is one thing. More nuclear weapons in the same hands do not necessarily increase the likelihood of nuclear war.

Horizontal proliferation—the acquisition of nuclear warheads by nations that previously had none at all—is quite a different matter.

That is why, even at 10 minutes past 5 o'clock in the morning, I do not apologise to an Under-Secretary, who has been very good-tempered and had to wait a long time for this Consolidated Fund debate, for keeping him out of his well-deserved bed and rest.

The subject that I raise is the security arrangements at the Joint Centrifuge Project at Almelo, in the light of the Khan espionage affair—class IV, vote 25.

At this hour in the morning I feel somewhat in the position of the Member of Parliament who dreamt—proverbially, at any rate—that he was speaking in the House of Commons, and woke up to find that he actually was. Be that as it may, the real point of the debate is the prospect of a Pakistani bomb, and, related

to that, a bomb in the hands of Colonel Gadhafi, who helps to finance Pakistan, or an Ayatollah given a bomb for the sake of Islamic solidarity. This is a spine-chilling prospect—a dream of nightmare proportions.

The stark facts are hardly in dispute. But if my version is inaccurate the Minister will doubtless say so. Since on this occasion I have submitted the guts of my speech to the Department of Energy on the ground that it would be unreasonable to expect any Minister to reply on so complex a subject to questions that were fired at him for the first time in the early hours of the morning.

The gut facts of the case as I see it are first, that Abul Qader Khan came to Europe as a bona fide research worker and a student of metallurgy.

Secondly, at some point in the mid-1970s he was persuaded to devote himself to gaining access to theoretical but, more important, industrial information that would allow his native Pakistan to build and operate a nuclear weapon capacity of its own.

Thirdly, as a result of mind-boggling inefficiency or naivety—wholly uncharacteristic of the Dutch as a nation, in most things among the most competent of people on this planet—or connivance by people in certain key positions—I must make it clear that I have no evidence of connivance, but clearly that is a question that must be asked—Dr. Khan was able to acquire, first, theoretical information on centrifuge and enrichment concepts; secondly, information about metallurgical techniques crucial to nuclear weapons capacity; and, thirdly, and possibly most important, commercial knowledge of where a country such as Pakistan, with a tiny industrial base, could acquire "parts" for making atomic weapons which could not themselves conceivably be made in Pakistan.

Fourthly—here I go on with the guts of the case—for four long years key people in the Netherlands, in positions of great responsibility, may be or may be not inside the Dutch Government, apparently did not see fit to reveal to their West German and British colleagues that they knew that a security breach involving Dr. Khan had taken place.

Fifthly, according to the remarkable *Observer* investigators, Colin Smith and

Shyam Bhatia, Dr. Khan is now living in the leafy suburbs of Islamabad, guarded by tough men ready to take on inquisitive journalists from the *Financial Times* or relatives of the French Ambassador who may innocently or otherwise be displaying uncalled-for curiosity into the Pakistan nuclear effort.

If the Minister wishes to add to or subtract from my deployment of the facts, doubtless he will do so in his reply. Indeed, frankly I feel that he ought to do so, as the Department and the Government have had two month's notice of my intense interest in this topic.

For the sake of those hon. Members who are not here but who displayed an interest in this topic, and for the sake of clarity, I must go over some of the questions that have been put, otherwise if one were to read the debate it would be incoherent and incomplete.

On 29 October I

"asked the Secretary of State for Energy if he will make a statement on the review by Urenco, promised in June, of its detailed security arrangements; what action the governments of Great Britain, Holland and West Germany, as partners in the centrifuge project are taking to strengthen the tripartite arrangements; and if he will make a statement."

The Secretary of State replied:

"As requested by the Joint Committee of the three Governments at their meeting in June, Urenco have reviewed their security procedures; and have made a number of recommendations. In addition the implementation of existing Troika security procedures in the United Kingdom has been reviewed and an assurance given to the Joint Committee that they are being fully observed.

The Joint Committee considered the Urenco report at its meeting on 19 September. The Joint Committee concluded that the existing tripartite security rules and procedures were in principle adequate, but agreed on a number of detailed points on which improvements needed to be considered. It has been arranged for these to be studied urgently by security experts of the three Governments."

I am not fool enough to suppose that the House of Commons is the place to deploy details of those particular security arrangements. All I ask is that the promise made on 29 October is fulfilled.

"The Joint Committee also noted that effective security depended on the thorough and continued application of the present tripartite rules and procedures. It agreed to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the application of these rules, and for the submission to the Joint Committee of regular reports by the appropriate security authorities of the three countries of the results of such monitoring."

[Mr. Dalyell.]

The answer continued:

I should like to have a clear undertaking that, unlike what occurred when Dr. Khan pursued his activities, the Government are party to that monitoring.

The Secretary of State continued:

"A report from the Netherlands authorities on their investigation of the Khan incident was not available to the Joint Committee at its last meeting. The Joint Committee is due to meet again on Friday, 16 November and will again review Urenco security in the light of any further information then available."—[Official Report, 29 October 1979; Vol. 972, c. 382-3.]

Understandably, on reading that reply I wondered why on earth the report from the Netherlands authorities on their investigation was not available to the Joint Committee or to the Department. It creates something of a smell about the affair. I should have thought that at least a clean breast would have been made of the affair by the Netherlands authorities. Throughout the argument—as I said at Question Time today—the strand runs: why, for four long years, did not the Netherlands authorities tell their British and West German partners?

The next parliamentary step was on Wednesday 28 November. I asked the Prime Minister what discussions she had had on the security risks involved in the Khan incident at the nuclear centrifuge establishment at Urenco, Almelo, Holland and the right hon. Lady replied:

"I have had no discussions with the Dutch on this matter, but our concern about the Khan incident has been made very clear to our partners."—[Official Report, 28 November 1979; Vol. 947 c. 647.]

At that time I thought it was a matter worthy of Prime Ministerial attention and I felt that the right hon. Lady should have contacted the Dutch Prime Minister.

On 29 November I asked the Prime Minister

"whether she will order a review of British involvement in joint European projects in so far as matters of nuclear security are concerned, in the light of the Khan incident at Urenco."

The Home Secretary—replying because the Prime Minister was at the Dublin conference—said:

"The Government attach importance to continued participation in the collaboration on centrifuge enrichment. Our concern about the Khan incident in the Netherlands has been made very clear to our partners, and action

has already been taken to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the implementation of existing tripartite security rules and procedures. Security is being kept under close review by the joint committee of the three Governments in the light of the report by the Netherlands Government of their investigation of the Khan incident.

No other joint European projects in the civil nuclear field currently involve the transfer of classified information but all are kept under continuous review for security and other implications."

I asked the natural question:

"Since the issue is nuclear proliferation in Asia, are the Government saying that they are satisfied with the Dutch proposals put forward at the joint committee on 16 November?"

The Home Secretary replied:

"I appreciate the hon. Gentleman's close interest in this matter. It is extremely important. He had the courtesy to make clear what he wished to ask in putting down his question. It is perhaps difficult always to be satisfied, but we shall do everything possible through diplomatic channels to impress upon our partners the vital importance of these security arrangements."

We all have great affection for the Home Secretary but, if I may say so, that was a vintage Home Secretary reply on a subject on which he had little intention of giving a substantive answer. It is charming, but it does not get to the root of the matter. I still ask what happened about the proposals that were supposed to come forward on 16 November.

I ought to add that my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, Healey (Mr. Hooley) then asked a highly relevant question:

"What steps are being taken to make sure that nationals of countries that are not signatories to the non-proliferation treaties, such as Israel and South Africa, do not have access to the techniques covered by Urenco?"

The Home Secretary replied:

"These are matters relating to arrangements on security reached between the Governments concerned. I shall make sure that they are brought to the attention of those concerned."—[Official Report, 29 November 1979; Vol. 974, c. 1479-80.]

This is not the first time that there has been a question of stolen technology. Although it is not the subject of this debate, as my hon. Friend's question raised the matter of Israel I should point out that the Department of Energy knows the whole saga of the Plumbat affair, of the ship "Scheersberg" and, indeed, of the establishment of a nuclear capacity at Dimona, so this is not an entirely new

situation in relation to espionage. My hon. Friend put a good question that was not fully answered.

On 28 November I asked the Prime Minister:

"what discussions she has had with the Government of Holland on the security risks involved in the Khan incident at the nuclear centrifuge establishment at Urenco, Almelo, Holland."

The right hon. Lady replied:

"I have had no discussions with the Dutch on this matter, but our concern about the Khan incident has been made very clear to our partners."—[Official Report, 28 November 1979; Vol. 974, c. 647.]

I come back to the point that, on a matter of such global importance, surely the Prime Minister should have at least talked to the Dutch Prime Minister to get some explanation. It is a matter that should have been handled at Heads-of-Government level.

On 6 December I had the opportunity to ask the right hon. Lady:

"Will the Prime Minister undertake to ask the Dutch Prime Minister about a leak that was infinitely more far reaching than any leak of Cabinet papers? I refer to the leak of crucial nuclear secrets from the centrifuge project at Almelo. Will the right hon. Lady ask the Dutch Prime Minister how that situation occurred, since it is arguably more damaging to peace in the world than anything done by the Rosenbergs or any other atom spies?"

The right hon. Lady replied:

"The hon. Gentleman knows that we have already made protests about this matter, which involved a person who had been working at that plant of Urenco on enriched uranium and the centrifuge process and then went to work in Pakistan, where we are trying to see that there is not proliferation of production of nuclear materials or any nuclear weapons. The matter is not on the agenda, but I shall reinforce the protest that we have already made."—[Official Report, 6 December 1979; Vol. 975, c. 611.]

I must say that I find it extraordinary that even at this stage the matter was not on the agenda. Part of my complaint is that, although they wrung their hands in public, I doubt whether senior Ministers have tumbled, even now, to the enormity of what is involved. I do not think that they realise the implications of an Islamic bomb, with all the consequences that flow from that.

On 11 December I raised a point of order with Mr. Speaker and asked whether, in view of the urgency, the Prime Minister would make a statement on Urenco. I had put down a question

for oral answer, and it was No. 5 on the Order Paper. Normally question 5 is reached, but it was not on this occasion, and the Prime Minister's written reply was:

"I raised this matter with the Netherlands Prime Minister, Mr. van Agt, at my meeting with him on 6 December 1979. He agreed that this was a matter of most serious concern and assured me that everything possible was being done to prevent a repetition."—[Official Report, 11 December 1979; Vol. 975, c. 531.]

It would be a little trivial and rude to say that that was a bland reply. After all, it was a written answer, and possibly I could not expect anything more. But I am not being rude if I say that it was an incomplete reply.

On 17 December I asked the Prime Minister if she would

"approach Chancellor Schmidt with a view to setting up a joint German-British inquiry into the reasons why the British and German Governments were not informed by the Dutch Government of security breaches at the joint centrifuge project by Dr. A. Q. Khan, and the effects of his activities on Western security."

The right hon. Lady replied:

"No. I have already expressed my concern to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands about the Khan incident. All three Governments of the centrifuge partnership attach importance to ensuring that incidents of this kind are not repeated and appropriate action has been put in hand."—[Official Report, 17 December 1979; Vol. 976, c. 8.]

I can imagine no matter more urgent on which the Prime Minister should talk to Chancellor Schmidt than security and the consequential events in Islam.

Today I had question Q. 1 to the Prime Minister, and it was answered by the Home Secretary. He said:

"We raised the Khan incident with our partners earlier this year. At the joint committee in June it was agreed that security procedures should be reviewed and, as the hon. Member knows, appropriate follow-up action has since been taken."

Well, actually, I do not know what follow-up action has been taken. If the Home Secretary had promised that it had been taken, but refused to tell me exactly what had been done, I would have understood. But after all that has been said and written he may wish to go further. He added in his reply that

"The issue is being kept under close review by the Joint Committee."—[Official Report, 18 December 1979; Vol. 976, c. 278.]

Which can mean anything.

[Mr. Dalyell.]

Is it simply a question of crying over spilled milk, with a pious promise to avoid repetition? Is it a case of saying "Well, it is too bad that the Pakistanis have atomic weapons. They will probably give the information to the Libyans who have given them a lot of money, and, who knows, in the name of Islamic solidarity they could hand over nuclear weapons to an array of Ayatollahs, Free Palestinians and heaven knows who in Islam?"

I think that the concept of an Islamic bomb is more spine-chilling than the whole nuclear armament in the hands of the men in the Kremlin and in Washington. Great Governments, such as those of the Soviet Union or the United States, can be counted upon to act with deliberation. One can sleep fairly easily in one's bed at night without fearing a nuclear holocaust. But the bad dream come true of a Gadaffi bomb or an Ayatollah bomb is altogether different.

It may be said that the knowledge of theoretical physics is such in the world that any country should have the knowledge of how to make nuclear weapons and therefore why should anyone worry about breaches of security. Proliferation, it may be argued, is bound to take place anyway. Were that true, what is the point of having nuclear security anywhere? Were that the case, we might as well forget the whole paraphernalia of secrecy and security.

But while it is true that the theoretical physics of a nuclear explosion is now widely understood by anyone reading the nuclear journals, the short cut by which a relatively poor country lacking an industrial base can actually make a bomb and nuclear weapons is not widely known. This is where Dr. Khan comes in. His value to Pakistan lies in the nuts and bolts of the metallurgy and engineering required to produce nuclear weapons.

I come now to the central purpose of raising the issue in the House. It may, for all I know, be too late. The proverbial birds may have flown. On the other hand, even if at this late stage certain key parts can be denied to Pakistan and other countries, with a small industrial base it may not be too late to do some-

thing about the spine-chilling proliferation of nuclear weapons.

My first and possibly most important question is to ask what exactly is the so-called London group of 15 countries. What is its relationship with Governments in an effort to prevent countries without an industrial base from getting hardware crucial to the manufacture of nuclear weapons? If there is anything that I want from the Government this evening it is the promise that they will do all that they can to give muscle to the London group. There have been inconsistent policies in the supply of nuclear materials by those who are in a position to be suppliers of these materials.

My other questions reflect concern about whether there could be any repetition at Urenco, Almelo. It is somewhat a matter of *deja vu* with reference to what the Israelis did in relation to the "Scheersberg", the Plumbat affair and the development at Dimona.

What explanation did Mr. van Agt give to the British Prime Minister of why the Dutch authorities had not informed their British and West German partners in the Urenco consortium of their knowledge of the breach of security operations? Certain people in Holland, we understand, had known precisely what Dr. Khan was up to for four long years before the West Germans and the British were told.

I intersperse at this stage a question that I was asked to put by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bristol, South-East (Mr. Benn), the former Secretary of State for Energy, who is deeply interested in this matter. My right hon. Friend wanted to know when British Ministers were first told about this affair. He said frankly that his own recollections were vague. I pass on that question because I, too, am interested in the answer.

Had the Dutch made a clean breast of it as soon as they knew what Dr. Khan had done, is it not possible that, for example, the British authorities would have ticked on more readily why Pakistan should want specialised high frequency inverters? Had Dr. Khan's activities been fully known to the British and West German authorities, is it not at least more likely that Pakistan would have been denied the industrial requisites for a

bomb? When, and in what circumstances, have export controls been introduced for inverters?

Export controls might have been introduced very much earlier and more effectively had the British Government known what the Dutch authorities apparently knew and what the Dutch Government may or may not have known, namely, that Dr. Khan had been operating in a highly sensitive area on behalf of Pakistan.

Again—and I have given notice of these questions to the Department and to the Minister—what and whose authority is needed to get inside the Almelo plant? Is it true that, simply because he was supposed to know something about hydrogen corrosion, Dr. Khan was invited in for 10 days?

Does Urenco feel obliged to help anyone who writes "I am a research student under the distinguished professor X. I should like information on Y"? It seems that what Dr. Khan did in the first place, fantastic though it may sound, was to write letters along the lines "I am a research student under the distinguished Professor Delaye of the Catholic university in Brussels. Can I have information?" Apparently he was easily given highly sensitive information.

If that is the way in which the Almelo project proceeds the time has come, has it not, to review the whole matter? If that is its style of behaviour, either it is naivety or it results from something else.

Members of the House will understand if I say that there is a great contrast between Britain and Holland. From my experience in the European Parliament I came to know the extent to which Dutch politicians were obsessed by, or at least interested in, nuclear matters. Whereas the House of Commons can hardly get a major debate on cruise missiles—at any rate, before Christmas—Governments in Holland can fall or stand according to their nuclear policies. The Dutch are intensely interested in the nuclear debate.

The supposition or guess is that certain people in Holland would have found it so politically embarrassing to reveal that the Dutch, above all others, had been responsible for creating the conditions for nuclear proliferation that they sat on the

secret. That may or may not be the explanation, but it is a possibility.

I come back to the question: in that case, who is or is not entitled to information in Urenco? Remembering that Dr. Khan was not, as I understand it, at any time a direct employee of Urenco—he was an employee of the FDO—whether he was vetted by that organisation or by the Dutch security service is open to question. The Minister may wish to comment on that matter. I do not press it too greatly. I am concerned about our involvement henceforth in relation to the security aspect.

What investigations, if any, are being made into the alleged dummy company, Weargate Ltd., of Swansea in Wales, which allegedly bought inverters from Emerson Electric Controls in Swindon and sent them to Pakistan? Has any attempt been made to trace the owners of Weargate Ltd.—Mr. and Mrs. Abdus Salaam? Are the Government discussing with other highly developed technological nations the sale of such items as high vacuum valves and glass rotors?

The Minister may say that keeping tabs on such items is unreal and impractical. If that is what the Government believe, they should say so. If it is really impossible for the London group of nations—given the nature of a complex industrial society—to operate, it should be admitted and made plain.

I make no apology for taking half an hour, even at this time of the morning, to go through these matters. Nuclear proliferation, especially nuclear proliferation in Asia, is far more dangerous in the opinion of many than all the discussion and talk about fear of nuclear radiation and the possible safety, or lack of safety—according to taste—of the PWRs. The subject that we are discussing at this time of the morning is far more important in terms of danger to the human race than the various doubts and worries that were raised during Questions to the Secretary of State for Energy when he produced a statement on the PWR and related nuclear matters some 14 hours ago.

That is the context in which I put the matter, and I make no excuse for detaining the House and keeping the Minister up at this time of the morning. I thank him for his good nature and look forward to his reply.

5.47 am

The Under Secretary of State for Energy (Mr. Norman Lamont): The hon. Member for West Lothian (Mr. Dalyell) certainly need not apologise in any way for keeping the House up at this late hour. He had raised an extremely serious matter. I assure him that the Government share the concern that he has expressed today. We consider that the consequences of what has happened are potentially very far reaching.

The hon. Gentleman was kind enough to give me a copy of his speech—or what he called the guts of his speech—in advance. I hope to deal in detail with some of the important questions that he raised. He will appreciate, however, that the matter is delicate. Although I wish to reply to the points that he raised, it would not be appropriate or possible for me to go into every detail that arises in the issue.

Mr. Dalyell: I wish to put on record that I do understand that the matter is delicate.

Mr. Lamont: I am grateful for that assurance.

In addition, some of the detailed questions that the hon. Member raised have been the subject of a thorough investigation by the Netherlands Government. A report on this investigation has been produced by an interdepartmental working party of the Netherlands Government, and follow-up action is currently being considered in Holland by the Netherlands Government. A copy of the report has not yet been passed to the Netherlands Parliament. I cannot reveal the detailed findings of the report.

It may be helpful to the hon. Gentleman if I begin—and I am anxious to help him—by outlining a few of the facts of the case.

We understand that in 1972 Dr. Khan a Pakistani metallurgist, was recruited by a Netherlands subcontractor to Ultra Centrifuge Nederland. UCN is the Netherlands industrial partner in the centrifuge project. Dr. Khan worked for the subcontractor for about three years. During that time he was seconded to Almelo for a short period as a translator. He may well have been in a position to gain access to confidential information about the centrifuge process. He returned to Pakistan in 1975.

18 O 36

The hon. Member asked, quite rightly, "Why was the United Kingdom not informed?" It is a question that we have been asking the Netherlands authorities. To date, we have received no satisfactory explanation.

I should like to outline the steps that have been taken to investigate the Khan incident; to review security procedures within the uranium enrichment collaboration; and, most important, to tighten up on their implementation.

The collaboration with the Germans and Dutch was set up in 1970 by the Treaty of Almelo. A joint committee of the three Governments is responsible under the treaty for providing effective supervision of the collaboration. The committee normally meets, at official level, about four times a year, or more frequently if necessary. The chairmanship rotates; next year the United Kingdom will be in the chair.

Annex II to the treaty deals with security procedures and classification. Principles and minimum standards on security were agreed between the three Governments, but the responsibility for their implementation lies with each individual country.

The rules are designed to ensure that access to sensitive information is tightly controlled, the three Governments having recognised from the outset that their non-proliferation objectives demanded such control. In particular, it has been absolutely clear since the beginning of the collaboration that nationals of fourth countries could be permitted access to confidential information only with the express agreement of the joint committee. No such clearance was sought in the case of Dr. Khan, nor was his departure to Pakistan in 1975 notified to the joint committee. Nor, as required by the Treaty of Almelo, was the apparent breach of security reported to the joint committee until long after it occurred.

Our concern about the affair—which is very considerable—has been made clear to the Netherlands Government, and it was underlined recently by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at her meeting with the Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

Mr. Dalyell: Is not this the most flagrant and mind-boggling let-down?

What do the Dutch think they are playing at? They have broken every agreement, have they not?

Mr. Lamont: If the hon. Gentleman will let me proceed I shall outline what representations have been made, what actions have been taken and what investigations are being conducted.

In April 1979 the United Kingdom asked for a full report to be made to the joint committee of the centrifuge collaboration on the allegations then appearing in the press about Dr. Khan's activities in Holland. Questions were also asked in the Netherlands Parliament. The Netherlands Government told the joint committee at its meeting on 16 June 1979 that they had set up an internal investigation into the circumstances of the Khan incident, and they then made an interim report on its findings.

The United Kingdom and German representatives at the meeting emphasised the gravity of the allegations that had been appearing in the press and stressed that investigation by the appropriate authorities in the Netherlands should be full and thorough so that appropriate follow-up action could be taken. All three Governments agreed that Urenco should be asked urgently to review the security arrangements to be followed by all three industrial partners so that necessary steps to prevent a repetition could be pursued.

After the meeting—and this answers the point that the right hon. Member for Bristol, South-East (Mr. Benn) asked the hon. Member for West Lothian to raise—United Kingdom Ministers were informed of the interim findings of the inquiry by the Netherlands Government, and a review of the implementation of existing tripartite security rules and procedures in the United Kingdom was started. I can assure the hon. Member that the tripartite security rules and procedures are being fully observed in the United Kingdom.

The hon. Member quoted the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Energy to the effect that the Urenco report on the review of security was considered by the joint committee at its meeting in September. The committee concluded that the existing tripartite security rules and procedures were, in principle, adequate, but agreed

on a number of detailed points on which improvements needed to be considered by security experts. I assure the hon. Gentleman that that is happening.

The joint committee also noted that effective security depended on the thorough and continued application of the present tripartite rules and procedures. It agreed to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the application of these rules, and for submission to the joint committee of regular reports by the appropriate security authorities of the three countries of the results of such monitoring.

The implementation of security procedures is essentially a matter for national Governments, but enforcement of the arrangements for monitoring is of course of concern to all three Governments and is being kept under close review by the joint committee.

It was also agreed at the meeting of the joint committee that the matter should be considered again when the report of the Netherlands authorities on the Khan incident was available. The report by the Netherlands Government was received in confidence by the British Government in October. Its implications for future security, throughout the collaboration, including security at Almelo, were discussed, and agreement was reached on appropriate action at a further meeting of the joint committee in November.

We have made clear to the Netherlands Government, through diplomatic channels and meetings of the joint committee, that we attach considerable importance to ensuring that there are no repetitions. That concern was firmly underlined by the Prime Minister at her recent meeting with the Netherlands Prime Minister, Mr. van Agt. He assured the Prime Minister that everything possible is being done to achieve that.

The hon. Gentleman implied that United Kingdom Ministers were not seized of the seriousness of the affair until he pressed the Prime Minister earlier this month. I do not think that that is the case. The Department of Energy Ministers and the Prime Minister were alerted as soon as the full facts of the case emerged, that is when the full report from the Netherlands authorities was received in London during October.

[Mr. Lamont.]

The tripartite Urenco security rules and procedures were drawn up with the objective of minimising the risks of proliferation. I cannot go into details, but we believe that, provided that the rules and procedures are applied thoroughly throughout the collaboration, sensitive nuclear information can, and will, be properly protected.

I turn to some of the particular matters raised by the hon. Gentleman. He referred to and asked about the London group of countries. This consists of 15 main nuclear supplier States, including the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan. It is more commonly known as the nuclear suppliers group. The member States have undertaken, when considering the export of nuclear material, equipment and technology, to act in accordance with certain principles. Before any supplier member State exports any of the items listed in what are known as "The Guidelines", assurances are required from the recipient country's Government regarding peaceful non-explosive use, coverage by international safeguards, and adequate physical protection and retransfers.

The United Kingdom has played a leading role in the nuclear suppliers group, and through frequent bilateral exchanges is working for more effective export controls, internationally, on sensitive nuclear items, including the kind referred to by the hon. Gentleman. This is consistent with our goal of enabling countries to reap the full benefits of nuclear power while minimising the serious dangers of nuclear proliferation.

The United Kingdom exercises careful control over the export of all materials and components specially designed for nuclear facilities. These are subject to licences under the Export of Goods (Control) Order.

The controls that we and others operate play an important part in furthering our non-proliferation objectives. I assure the hon. Gentleman that we have been taking all the necessary steps to ensure effective and comprehensive implementation of the order, and will continue to do so.

Mr. Dafyell: I do not accuse the Minister of being complacent, but we had the example of Weargate Ltd., the dummy company. To what extent were

Emerson Electrical Controls subject to that sort of order? Possibly the hon. Gentleman is coming to that.

Mr. Lamont: It is not normal practice to discuss the activities of individual companies, and I cannot do so. The hon. Gentleman will appreciate that there is nothing illegal in exporting from the United Kingdom general purpose items that do not require a licence and may be widely available throughout the world. Provided that a company is not exporting something that is not illegal, no action can be taken against it. The hon. Gentleman can be assured that specially designed items for use in nuclear facilities are subject to export controls. Applications for an export licence for such items are given the closest scrutiny, and I am satisfied that these controls are stringently applied. Furthermore, the scope of the controls is kept under constant review.

The hon. Gentleman asked about the introduction of export controls on inverters, which are known also as frequency changers. He should be aware—and I am sure that he is—that inverters have many uses. These are items which can be used in both nuclear and industrial applications; for example, in spinning equipment. Following a review of the possibility of United Kingdom manufactured frequency changers being supplied for use overseas in nuclear applications, it was decided to impose export control on those inverters capable of a multi-phase electrical output of between 600-2000Hz. An amendment to the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1978 was accordingly made on 19 October 1978, with effect from 9 November 1978.

It was further amended in February and March this year to cover components of frequency changers and equipment essential for the manufacture of centrifuge parts and components. Discussions have also been held with other leading supplier countries, some of which have since brought frequency changers within the ambit of their export control procedures. That illustrates the way in which leading supplier countries are co-operating urgently on these matters. As the hon. Gentleman has said, there are other equally important steps that have to be taken to discourage the proliferation of nuclear weapons. A decision to build nuclear weapons is, in the final analysis,

a political decision. We need to promote a wider political commitment to non-proliferation.

The United Kingdom has been playing a full part in international discussions on measures to achieve that end, including the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation. The United Kingdom is a depository Power of the non-proliferation treaty, to which there are now 111 parties. We are working continuously to make the treaty as universal as possible in its application.

The Pakistan authorities have consistently stressed the peaceful nature of their nuclear programme. We have noted these assurances, but we have made clear our concern at the development in Pakistan of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities. It is a matter that we should view with seriousness in any non-nuclear weapons State.

We have made clear to all parties in the sub-continent our support in principle for arrangements which could be agreed between them to include the sub-continent in a nuclear weapons-free zone. The Government attach the highest importance to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We should view very seriously indications that any non-nuclear weapons State was setting out to acquire a nuclear weapons capability and to share that with others.

Mr. Dalyell: I thank the hon. Gentleman for the obvious care that he has taken over his reply, but may I express a certain incredulity—I am sure that he would put it more tactfully than I would—about the Pakistan assurances? After all, we have the case of the correspondent of the *Financial Times* and the relative of the French Ambassador being beaten up, and there are some of us who just do not think that Pakistan is not trying to get nuclear weapons.

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FAIR TRADING

6.6 am

Mr. Greville Janner (Leicester, West): I am happy, even at this hour, to have the opportunity to raise a matter concerning the salary of the Director General of Fair Trading and thereby to

consider the possibilities for the protection of the consumer that are available to that distinguished gentleman in his work and through the efforts of his Department.

Although I am using the parliamentary procedure of considering the salary of the Director General, I am not to be taken as criticising either the existence or the amount of that salary. Nor am I attacking the efforts of this gentleman or of his staff—nor, indeed, those of his predecessor, the founder, as it were, of that office, when he was acting in that role.

I invite the Minister to tell the House how the work of the Director General of Fair Trading is to be strengthened, with especial reference to certain crucial aspects of that work. Although the Director General is an independent person running his own operation independently of the Department, the Minister may none the less be able, either here or through other channels, to inform the House and the country of the prospects of further advance. In other words, what is in the pipeline?

If the Minister finds that, because of the exigencies of the hour and the nature of the debate, he cannot inform the House in this way, I hope that he will make arrangements to do so as fully as possible by way of letter or otherwise. It is important that the House and the public should know exactly what is to be done and what the Director General and his office are to produce in the foreseeable future.

As the Director General of Fair Trading is in charge of what may be described as a quasi-quango, and as the Government are known for their quango-hunting activities, I believe that the House and the country would like an assurance that there is no intention to destroy the work of this office or to hack away at its effectiveness by cutting its basic costs.

I hope that the Minister will give an assurance on behalf of the Government and that this will not be one of the occasions on which he says that we ask the Director General himself. This is the responsibility of the Government, as the Director General of Fair Trading is the creation of a previous incarnation of Conservative misrule. Indeed, it has been said that he is one of the few useful products of an otherwise wretched regime. I have heard it said that the production

132 VERVOLG

MINISTERIE VAN BUITENLANDSE ZAKEN

PLEIN 23 - 'S-GRAVENHAGE - TEL. 614941

AAN: de Heer Voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer
der Staten-Generaal
te

Verzonden 14 JAN. 1980

'S- G R A V E N H A G E

Dienstonderdeel: Raad van Europa en Wetenschappelijke
Samenwerking
Onderwerp: Schriftelijke vragen van de Heer Gualthérie
van Weezel

Datum: 10 januari 1980

Kenmerk: DRW/AT-6922-

Onder verwijzing naar Uw schrijven van 30 november 1979, No. 79.1678, waarbij U mij heeft toegezonden de door het lid Uwer Kamer, de Heer Gualthérie van Weezel, overeenkomstig artikel 107 van het Reglement van Orde van de Tweede Kamer bij U ingediende vragen, heb ik de eer U mede te delen dat met het voorbereiden van het antwoord op deze vragen nog enige tijd, doch niet meer dan drie weken, zal zijn gemoed. Derhalve is het mij niet mogelijk binnen de daarvoor gestelde termijn de bedoelde vragen te beantwoorden.

DE MINISTER VAN BUITENLANDSE ZAKEN,

C. A. van der Meer



's-Gravenhage.

30 november

1979

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Namens de Voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal heb ik de eer,
 U mede te delen dat door het lid der Kamer *Gaas van Kesteren*
 bijgaande vragen overeenkomstig artikel 107 van het Reglement van Orde zijn
 ingediend.

De griffier van de Tweede Kamer
 der Staten Generaal,

Joost de Vries

Aan de *Minister van Binnenlandse Zaken*

1
Heeft de Minister kennis genomen van een bericht in de «Sunday Times» van 25 dezer, waarin melding wordt gemaakt van de diefstal van 20 ton voor Frankrijk bestemd uranium uit een vrachtwagen op weg van het noorden van Niger naar de haven van Cotonou in Benin?

2
Is het bericht waar en mag tevens, overeenkomstig hetzelfde artikel, aangenomen worden, dat het hier niet gaat om een enkele diefstal maar dat in het verleden meermalen, op gelijksoortige wijze, uranium ontvreemd is en via Libië naar Pakistan verscheept?

3
Wordt, indien deze berichten waar zijn, het vermoeden niet versterkt, dat Pakistan in samenwerking met Libië op weg is een nucleair wapen te ontwikkelen?

4
Is de Minister bereid, gezien het bovenstaande contact op te nemen met zijn EPS-partners en via de Ierse voorzitter bij de Pakistaanse regering navraag te doen over deze gang van zaken?

5
Kan de Minister, in het licht van deze gebeurtenissen, een indruk geven van het gesprek dat hij met zijn Pakistaanse collega in New York heeft gehad?

MEMORANDUM

CC: Mr. BOS
Mr Wansink } EZ
Drs Geijzers }
DIO

Van: DRW/AT

Datum: 16 januari 1980

Aan: DKO/PI via DRW

No.: 9/80

Onderwerp: Vragen in Brise Lagerhuis m.b.t. Khan-affaire

Handwritten notes and signatures:
- "2000" and "21/11" with arrows pointing to the right.
- A box containing "21/11" with an arrow pointing down.
- A large signature on the right side of the page.

Zojuist ontving ik van de Heer Shepherd van de Britse Ambassade h.t.s. het ontwerpantwoord op een vraag die door een niet nader aangeduide parlementariër op 17 januari 1980 aan de Prime-Minister zal worden gesteld. Het antwoord geeft mij geen aanleiding tot opmerkingen, waarbij zij opgemerkt dat het gezien de geringe beschikbare tijd nauwelijks mogelijk zou zijn daarop een gecoördineerde inhoudelijke reactie te geven. Wel onderstreept deze vraag de noodzaak dat in Nederland op korte termijn besloten wordt om nu eindelijk het Parlement nader over de zaak Khan in te lichten.

260

22/10

MEMORANDUM

Mr Wansink } EZ
Drs Geijzers }
DIO

Van: DRW/AT

Datum: 16 januari 1980

Aan: DIO/PT via DRW

No.: 9/80

Onderwerp: Vragen in Brise Lagerhuis m.b.t. Khan-affaire

Verzonden 17 JAN. 1980

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MEMORANDUM

DAM/ND

DIO/PI

DIO/OV

Van DRW/AT

Datum: 28 januari 1980

Aan Chef DRW, Chef DAM, Chef DIO

No.: 16/80

Onderwerp: Schriftelijke vragen van het lid der Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, de Heer Gualthérie van Weezel, m.b.t. uranium afkomstig uit Niger

./.

Hierbij doe ik U ontwerpantwoorden toekomen op bovengenoemde vragen. Gaarne zou ik Uw commentaar daarop vernemen, waarna door mij via U de ontwerpantwoorden aan M zullen worden voorgelegd.

Voor de goede orde moge ik erop wijzen dat de vragen reeds enige tijd geleden beantwoord hadden moeten zijn, maar dat reeds uitstel van behandeling is aangevraagd.

Antwoord van de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken op vragen
van het lid der Tweede Kamer, de Heer Gualthérie van Weezel

1 en 2) Volgens de door mij ingewonnen informatie is het bericht in de "Sunday Times" van 25 november 1979 niet juist.

Wel heeft zich in Niger een ongeluk voorgedaan met een tweetal vrachtwagens die uranaat transporteerden. Dit uranaat is echter volledig geborgen door de betrokken Franse firma.

Overigens is het bekend dat in de afgelopen jaren door Niger uranium is geleverd aan Pakistan en Libië.

In 1977 en 1978 heeft Niger in totaal omstreeks 100 ton uranium geleverd aan Pakistan. Ter zake is met de Internationale Organisatie voor Atoomenergie (IAEA) voor de geleverde materialen ("yellow cake") een waarborgovereenkomst gesloten op 7 juli 1977. Deze overeenkomst is in zoverre uniek dat normaliter door de IAEA geen waarborgen worden toegepast op "yellow cake" doch slechts op materialen in een latere fase van het bewerkingsproces.

Daarnaast heeft Niger 120 ton uranium geleverd aan Libië. Daarbij zijn door Niger geen specifieke waarborgen gevraagd daar Libië partij is bij het Non-proliferatieverdrag. Evenwel bestond op het moment van levering nog geen waarborgovereenkomst tussen Libië en de IAEA, zodat op dit uranium in de praktijk geen waarborgen worden toegepast. Het is de Regering niet bekend waarvoor Libië, dat, voorzover bekend, niet beschikt over nucleaire installaties, uranium nodig heeft of dat het inmiddels aan een ander land is doorgeleverd.

3) De Regering beschikt niet over concrete bewijzen dat Libië betrokken zou zijn bij de nucleaire ontwikkelingen in Pakistan.

4 en 5) Pakistan blijft tegenover Nederland en vele andere Westerse landen onderstrepen zich slechts bezig te houden met strikt vreedzame nucleaire activiteiten. Pakistan heeft ook verschillende voorstellen gedaan, zowel in de VN als bilateraal aan India, om tot een kernwapenvrije

zone te komen in Zuid-Azië dan wel wederzijdse of internationale controle te aanvaarden op alle nucleaire activiteiten. Aan de andere kant zijn er aanwijzingen dat Pakistan bezig is met de bouw van nucleaire installaties voor o.a: uraniumverrijking die niet lijken te passen in het betrekkelijk bescheiden kernenergieprogramma van Pakistan. De Regering is hierover ernstig verontrust. Bij de Pakistaanse regering kan er geen twijfel over bestaan hoe Nederland en zijn bondgenoten over de ontwikkelingen in Pakistan denken. Zowel met de EPS-partners als met andere bondgenoten vindt op verschillende niveaus regelmatig overleg plaats over de nucleaire ontwikkelingen in Pakistan. Een specifieke démarche op dit ogenblik lijkt minder opportuun en gezien het ter zake reeds gevoerde overleg thans niet noodzakelijk. De Regering blijft ter zake alert.

Ik heb in een gesprek met mijn Pakistaanse ambtgenoot, dat in New York heeft plaatsgevonden, mijn zorgen over eventuele Pakistaanse nucleaire intenties op niet mis te verstane wijze tot uitdrukking gebracht. Het is mij echter uiteraard niet mogelijk om over dit vertrouwelijke gesprek in het openbaar mededelingen te doen.

1

Heeft de Minister kennis genomen van een bericht in de «Sunday Times» van 25 dezer, waarin melding wordt gemaakt van de diefstal van 20 ton voor Frankrijk bestemd uranium uit een vrachtwagen op weg van het noorden van Niger naar de haven van Cotonou in Benin?

2

Is het bericht waar en mag tevens, overeenkomstig hetzelfde artikel, aangenomen worden, dat het hier niet gaat om een enkele diefstal maar dat in het verleden meermalen, op gelijksoortige wijze, uranium ontvreemd is en via Libië naar Pakistan verscheept?

3

Wordt, indien deze berichten waar zijn, het vermoeden niet versterkt, dat Pakistan in samenwerking met Libië op weg is een nucleair wapen te ontwikkelen?

4

Is de Minister bereid, gezien het bovenstaande contact op te nemen met zijn EPS-partners en via de Ierse voorzitter bij de Pakistaanse regering navraag te doen over deze gang van zaken?

5

Kan de Minister, in het licht van deze gebeurtenissen, een indruk geven van het gesprek dat hij met zijn Pakistaanse collega in New York heeft gehad?



's-Gravenhage, 28 januari

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PLVS
DGPZ
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AP
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<i>DRW</i> ter behandeling
<i>Dit</i>
Antwoord uiterlijk : <i>18 feb</i>
Informatiecopie aan DPN - AP

*Antwoord 5/2
in con. 750*

Namens de Voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal heb ik de eer,
U mede te delen dat door ~~het~~ lid der Kamer **Van der Stoek en Ter Beek**
de leden

bijgaande vragen overeenkomstig artikel 107 van het Reglement van Orde zijn ingediend.

Deze vragen worden gesteld aan de Minister-President en aan de Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken, van Economische Zaken en van Binnenlandse Zaken.

De griffier van de Tweede Kamer
der Staten Generaal,

[Handwritten signature]

Aan de *Minister van Binnenlandse Zaken*

68

v.d. Stoel, Ter Beek - Min.-Pres., BuZa,
EcZa, BiZa

1

Kunnen de Ministers de juistheid bevestigen van de mededeling van de Britse staatssecretaris Lamont in het Lagerhuis op 18 december jl. dat, in strijd met de afspraak dat burgers van andere dan in het Verdrag van Almelo samenwerkende staten alleen toegang zouden hebben tot de vertrouwelijke informatie inzake het ultracentrifuge proces, met uitdrukkelijke toestemming van het in het kader van dit verdrag ingestelde Brits-Duitse-Nederlandse joint committee, de Pakistaanse staatsburger, Dr. Kahn in de periode 1972-1975 zich zodanig binnen Nederland heeft kunnen bewegen dat «he may well have been in a position to gain access to confidential information about the centrifuge process»?

2

Kunnen de Ministers de verklaring van de Britse staatssecretaris bevestigen: «... nor, as required by the treaty of Almelo, was the apparent breach of security reported to the joint committee until long after it occurred»?
Zo ja, waarom is dit nagelaten?

3

Delen de Ministers het oordeel van de Britse staatssecretaris, dat de consequenties van wat is gebeurd mogelijk zeer verreichend zijn?

4

Kunnen de Ministers, indien het antwoord op vraag 1 geheel of gedeeltelijk bevestigend luidt, met inachtneming van het vertrouwelijk overleg in de vaste kamercommissie voor de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdiensten, thans eindelijk opheldering verschaffen over de volgende vragen:

a. Hoe kan worden verklaard dat op zo ontstellend nonchalante wijze een in overleg met de partners van het Verdrag van Almelo gemaakte afspraak terzijde is geschoven, en dit terwijl de veiligheidsrisico's rond het ultracentrifuge project zo evident zijn, zeker voor de autoriteiten van een land dat het te gegaan van het gevaar van de spreiding van kernwapens in het internationale overleg steeds zozeer op de voorgrond heeft gesteld?

b. Treft ook de leiding van de betrokken bedrijven blaam?

c. Is overeenstemming met de regeringen van de Duitse Bondsrepubliek en het Verenigd Koninkrijk over de maatregelen, noodzakelijk om herhaling van het gebeuren te voorkomen?

ONTVANGEN TELEXBERICHT

nr 505.066

Kopie: m r t s dgpz ap dges dgis plan amad dpm
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Dir.	Visie
Ag. no.	366 (95)
Dossier	

bonn, 29 jan 1980

afkomstig van ambassade bonn
bestemd voor min van buitenlandse zaken

onderwerp: pakistan nucleair.

moge u opmerkzaam maken op artikel op voorpagina
van die welt van 29 dezer onder kop: wie dr.
dader khan pakistan zur atombombe verhilft.

volgen twee passages uit bedoeld artikel.

''doktor khan ist seit klaus fuchs und alan nunn
gay, die fuer den kremi arbeiteten, der wohl
erfolgreichste atomspion, den es je gegeben hat.''

''die tatsache, dass pakistan... in den rang
einer atommacht aufsteigen wird, liegt an
doktor khans ehemaligen hollaendischen arbeitgebern.
denn die liessen sich vier jahre zeit, bevor sie
ihre britischen und deutschen atompartner im
urenceo-konsortium informierten, was geschehen war''

Van Lynden 505.066

ELB

DOSSIERKOPIE

AFGESCHRIJVEN

ONTVANGEN TELEXBERICHT

625.133

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Dir.	Visie
Ag. no.	
Dossier	

London 30 jan 1980

afkomstig van Londen
bestemd voor min vbz

onderwerp: urengo in lagerhuis

op 29 dezer heeft premier thatcher mondelinge vragen beantwoord van lagerhuisleden dalyell en allaun inzake de veiligheidssituatie in urengo-almelo. de tekst van vragen en antwoorden volgt hieronder.

quote

mr. dalyell asked the prime minister if she will make a statement on her latest discussions with mr. van agt, prime minister of holland, on security at the joint conference project at urengo, almelo, holland.

the p m : i have not spoken to mr. van agt since our meeting on 6 december 1979, when i made my concern about the khan affair very clear to him. as i told the hon. gentleman on 17 january, we remain in close touch with the netherlands and german governments through diplomatic channels and the urengo joint committee to ensure that all the necessary action to prevent a repetition is being taken.

mr. dalyell: has there yet been a complete and candid explanation by the dutch as to why, for four long years, their british and german partners were not told about a major security leak to pakistan?

the p m : as the hon. gentleman knows, there is a report of which we have received a confidential copy. i know of the hon. gentleman's concern about this matter and i wish to make it quite clear that we are every bit as concerned as he is. it was an appalling breach of security which can have far-reaching consequences. all our efforts at the moment are strained towards ensuring that there is no repetition of that breach.

mr. frank allaun: since pakistan deceived the british government into sending it inverters for a nuclear weapon plant under the pretence that they were for a textile mill - i was involved in bringing this to the attention of the house - is it right to send arms to pakistan

==2==

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the p m : with respect to the hon. gentleman, i do not think that the two issues are exactly related. my right hon. and noble friend the foreign secretary made our views very clear to the pakistan government. as the hon. gentlemen knows, pakistan has not signed the non-proliferation agreement, which is a matter of great concern to us. we tried to secure undertaking from the government of pakistan that they would not transfer any nuclear technology anywhere else.

the selling of arms to pakistan is a different matter especially as pakistan is right in the front line now.

unquote

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ONTVANGEN TELEXBERICHT

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Dossier <i>625170</i>	

DOSSIERKOPIE

VERZONDEN/ONTVANGEN
AVR/RR/11

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Londen, 7 februari 1980 mp++

afkomstig van amb Londen
bestemd voor min van bz

onderwerp: urengo - almelo - affaire khan.

referte uw bericht langs andere weg en mijn telexbericht 625 133.

Lagerhuislid tom dalyell heeft andermaal schriftelijke vragen gesteld aan premier thatcher inz. affaire khan. volgt uittreksel hansard terzake.

quote
mr. dalyell asked the prime minister what efforts she is now making towards ensuring that there is no repetition of the khan incident at the joint centrifuge project at almelo, holland.

the prime minister: as i have already told the hon. member on a number of occasions the implementation of troika security rules and procedures throughout the collaboration are being improved in order to ensure there is no repetition of the khan affair. this is a continuous process and the hon. member will understand that i cannot go into the details.

mr dalyell asked the prime minister if she will detail the efforts she made to secure undertakings from the government of pakistan to the effect that they would not transfer any nuclear technology anywhere else.

the prime minister: the pakistani authorities are well aware from our many exchanges with them of the concern in this country at their unsafeguarded nuclear programme. our discussions are necessarily confidential but include confirmation on their part that pakistan does not intend to transfer nuclear technology to other countries.

unquote

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29 OCT. 1974.

the role of nuclear energy in the United Kingdom's long-term energy programme.

Mr. David Howell: We believe that nuclear power has a vital role to play in our energy policy and that nuclear power stations will be essential for meeting this country's long-term energy requirements.

Energy Conservation

21. Mr. Foran asked the Secretary of State for Energy if he will make a further statement on energy conservation.

Mr. John Moore: We shall continue to pursue vigorous policies to promote greater energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy, and to emphasise the positive aspects of energy conservation.

Coal Use (Advanced Technology)

22. Mr. Hardy asked the Secretary of State for Energy what is the present position in regard to the development of advanced technology in the use of coal; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. John Moore: Advanced coal technology developments are taking place in the NCB of fluidised bed combustion, gasification to yield substitute natural gas and fuel gas, and in the production of oil from coal. In fluidised bed combustion, the NCB and private industry are pressing forward with the development of industrial boilers and furnaces; my Department is supporting NCB participation in the IFA pressurised combustion project at Grimethorpe aimed at power generation applications. In gasification, British Gas is developing processes to manufacture substitute natural gas, and the NCB is working on fuel gas production for use in advanced power generating systems. Design and feasibility studies for the pilot plant development of two NCB oil-from-coal processes are being supported by Government.

Oil (Sale)

24. Mr. Alan Clark asked the Secretary of State for Energy what is the average dollar price per barrel at which the British National Oil Corporation has been selling oil during 1979.

Mr. Gray: This is a commercial matter and I shall ask the chairman of the

British National Oil Corporation to make a statement.

European Community (Oil and Energy Ministers)

25. Mr. John H. O'Sullivan, led the Secretary of State for Energy if he will ask to place on the agenda for the next meeting of the European Economic Community Energy Ministers the question of coal, oil and gas prices, with a view to obtaining comparable energy prices throughout the Community.

Mr. John Moore: No.

British National Oil Corporation

25. Mr. Holland asked the Secretary of State for Energy what proposals he has for modifying the dual role of the British National Oil Corporation.

Mr. Gray: As my right hon. Friend previously announced to the House, the Government have decided that the corporation's statutory role as adviser to the Government should be ended. As to the corporation's commercial activities, the trading activity is to continue with the corporation's access to oil through participation options retained. We intend also that the British public should be given the chance to participate directly in B.N.O.C.'s oil producing business. A statement will be made in due course.

Industrial Users (Gas Supply)

27. Mr. Stoddart asked the Secretary of State for Energy if, in view of the difficulties caused to prospective new industries intending to build plant on industrial estates, such as that at Grendwell Farm, Wiltshire, of the derogation of the British Gas Corporation's statutory duty to supply industrial customers, he will bring forward proposals to end the derogation.

Mr. John Moore: There has been no derogation of the British Gas Corporation's statutory obligation to supply. It intends to continue to meet its statutory obligations.

Ureco

Mr. Dalyell asked the Secretary of State for Energy if he will make a statement on the review by Ureco, promised in June, of its detailed security arrangements; what action the governments of

Germany, Italy, Holland and West Germany, as participants in the centrifuge project are taking to strengthen the tripartite arrangements; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. David Howell: As requested by the Joint Committee of the three Governments at their meeting in June, Urenco have reviewed their security procedures; and have made a number of recommendations. In addition the implementation of existing Troika security procedures in the United Kingdom has been reviewed and an assurance given to the Joint Committee that they are being fully observed.

The Joint Committee considered the Urenco report at its meeting on 19 September. The Joint Committee concluded that the existing tripartite security rules and procedures were in principle adequate, but agreed on a number of detailed points on which improvements needed to be considered. It has arranged for these to be studied urgently by security experts of the three Governments.

The Joint Committee also noted that effective security depended on the thorough and continued application of the present tripartite rules and procedures. It agreed to reinforce the arrangements for monitoring the application of these rules, and for the submission to the Joint Committee of regular reports by the appropriate security authorities of the three countries of the results of such monitoring.

A report from the Netherlands authorities on their investigation of the Khan incident was not available to the Joint Committee at its last meeting. The Joint Committee is due to meet again on Friday 16 November and will again review Urenco security in the light of any further information then available.

Coking Coal

Mr. Spearing asked the Secretary of State for Energy what is the amount per tonne and method of support given by each of the members of the FEC to their respective steel industries in respect of coking coal.

Mr. John Moore: We are not aware of any aid which member States pay to their steel industries in respect of coking coal. But ECSC Decision 287/73 allows member States to pay a production sub-

sidy to the coal producers to cover the difference between cost of production and either the selling price or an indicative price whichever is the higher. The indicative price is the average price of imports on term contracts from Australia and the United States; it reflects world price. Thus the directive aims to allow Community coal to compete with third country coal but does not allow member States to subsidise sales of indigenous coking coal to the Community's steel industries at prices below the indicative price.

Gas (Industrial Consumers)

Mr. John H. Osborn asked the Secretary of State for Energy if he will bring forward legislation to seek to provide for regulation of contracts between the British Gas Corporation and industrial users, and to provide for the publication of the terms of such contracts.

Mr. David Howell: No. The regulation of contracts for the sale of gas is a matter for the British Gas Corporation. The terms of individual contracts are commercially confidential and it would be inappropriate to publish them.

United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (Expenditure)

Mr. Foulkes asked the Secretary of State for Energy how much is being spent by the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority in (a) 1979-80 and (b) 1980-81 on information and public relations on behalf of the nuclear industry; and what share of these sums is being spent in Scotland.

Mr. John Moore: The UKAEA estimates that its expenditure on the distribution of information about nuclear power to the public will amount to about £350,000 in 1979-80 and about £650,000 in 1980-81. It is not possible to say how much of these sums will be spent in Scotland.

Fuel Charges

Mr. John H. Osborn asked the Secretary of State for Energy if he will publish in the *Official Report*, from information available to him, the range of prices expressed in pence per therm at which heating oil, gas and coal are available to domestic and industrial users, respectively, in the United Kingdom and each

**SECURITY BREACHES (JOINT
CENTRIFUGE PROJECT)**

Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister if she will approach Chancellor Schmidt with a view to setting up a joint German-British inquiry into the reasons why the British and German Governments were not informed by the Dutch Government of security breaches at the joint centrifuge project by Dr. A. Q. Khan and the effects of his activities on Western security.

The Prime Minister: No. I have already expressed my concern to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands about the Khan incident. All three Governments of the centrifuge partnership attach importance to ensuring that incidents of this kind are not repeated and appropriate action has been put in hand.

the people of Belize, and what were the contents of this acknowledgement.

Mr. Ribbey: The Republic of El Salvador has not announced any change in its policy towards Belize or the right of the Belizean people to independence. The vote on the resolution reasserting this right in the United Nations General Assembly this year, was carried by 134 votes in favour, none against, with 8 abstentions. El Salvador was one of the abstainers.

St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla

Mr. Rowlands asked the Lord Privy Seal if he will make a statement on constitutional development relating to St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla since the Minister of State's reply on 20 November.

Mr. Ridley: Talks under my chairmanship were held in London on 13 and 14 December with a delegation from the St. Kitts-Nevis Government and with representatives from Nevis. It was agreed that the St. Kitts-Nevis Government would take steps in the States Legislature to facilitate the formal separation by Her Majesty's Government of Anguilla from the Associated State. It was decided that St. Kitts-Nevis should move to independence as a unitary State as early as possible in 1980 but that a referendum should be held 18 months after independence to decide whether Nevis should remain part of the State. The St. Kitts-Nevis Government agreed, in the meantime, to pursue further measures of devolution.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS (VEVO)

236. **Mr. Newens** asked the Prime Minister whether she has the right of veto over the use of United States nuclear weapons based in Great Britain in all circumstances; and if she will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: The understanding relating to the use by the United States of certain bases in the United Kingdom has often been referred to in the House. It was first reached between Mr. Aitlee and President Truman in 1951 and was confirmed in 1952 by Mr. Churchill and President Truman. The understanding which continues to apply today provides that the use of these bases

in an emergency would be a matter for joint decision by Her Majesty's Government and the United States Government in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time.

NUCLEAR SECURITY

Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister in what terms she has carried out her promise, given at Question Time on 6 December to reinforce protests made to the Prime Minister of Holland, about the leak of secrets from the Joint Civilian Project, run by Great Britain, West Germany, and Holland, through the activities of Dr. A. Q. Khan.

The Prime Minister: As I said in my reply to the hon. Member on 11 December, I raised this matter with the Prime Minister of the Netherlands at my meeting with him on 6 December.

HUDDERSFIELD

Q5. **Mr. Sheerman** asked the Prime Minister when next she intends to visit Huddersfield.

The Prime Minister: I have at present no plans to do so.

SUTTON AT HONE AND HAWLEY

Q6. **Mr. Bob Dean** asked the Prime Minister if she has any plans to visit Sutton at Hone and Hawley.

The Prime Minister: I have at present no plans to do so.

PRIME MINISTER (ENGAGEMENTS)

Q7. **Mr. Stanbrook** asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 20 December.

Q8. **Mr. O'Neill** asked the Prime Minister if she will list her engagements for 20 December.

Q9. **Mr. Montgomery** asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 20 December.

Q11. **Mr. Robert Atkins** asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 20 December.

to give in relation to national security it is necessary for my Government to treat the issue with the utmost care. As I have said before, it is my desire at the appropriate stage, and perhaps at several stages, to make available to this House as much information as possible.

Defence Capability

9. Mr. Robert Atkins asked the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the current state of Great Britain's defences.

Mr. Pym: In the face of the growing military challenge from the Soviet Union, NATO has recognised the need to strengthen Alliance defences. The Government fully support these measures, and we are taking positive steps to improve the United Kingdom's contribution to the Alliance.

Mr. Atkins: When will we have enough forces and weapons to give support to the proposed rapid deployment force suggested by President Carter?

Mr. Pym: We are considering that matter with the United States, and acutely so in light of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. That is why the Foreign Secretary has gone on a tour of five countries which are affected by the invasion. As my hon. Friend the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, said yesterday, Ministers are considering the matter both in the North Atlantic Council today and in the European Community. We have the matter actively under review with our allies.

Mr. Dalyell: Can the Secretary of State be satisfied in light of the statement made by the Under-Secretary of State for Energy on the continuing possible leakage of crucial information from Urenco at Almelo? In light of the Government's own implicit criticism of the Dutch Government, what do they propose to do about it?

Mr. Pym: I am aware of the hon. Gentleman's concern in this matter. He is probably right in the sense that no Secretary of State for Defence, and certainly not this one, can be complacent about such a matter. It is serious, but here is nothing specific that I can say to the hon. Gentleman about it today.

12.0.21

Mr. Gordon Wilson: In view of the important external threats that have been mentioned, can the Minister say what was the point of the Army training forces at Cumberley to combat non-existent insurgency in Scotland? Will the right hon. Gentleman take this opportunity to apologise to the Scottish people for the fact that they were singled out by the English establishment for such discriminatory treatment?

Mr. Pym: I am not sure that the hon. Gentleman ought not to look to the BBC for an apology, if that is what he wants. Neither this Government nor any other have responsibility for what is put out in a programme or for the views expressed in that programme. The fact that consideration is given to the support of the civil power by the military ought to be well understood by the House in view of events in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Banks: Does my right hon. Friend agree that civil defence is part of Britain's total defence? Does he also agree that the subject has been seriously neglected for more than 10 years, and will he, therefore, consult the Home Secretary about conducting an urgent review of civil defence arrangements?

Mr. Pym: As my hon. Friend will recognise, that matter is the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary. The reduction in the effort devoted to civil defence a couple of decades ago flowed from the tripartite strategy. It was thought to be unnecessary to have any civil defence. That is why it has been at a minimal level. I know that my right hon. Friend is giving some consideration to that important matter, but I do not have responsibility for it.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

10. Mr. Stephen Ross asked the Secretary of State for Defence what decisions were reached at the recent conference of Ministers within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Pym: I made a statement to the House on 13 December about the decisions reached at the special meeting of the NATO Foreign and Defence Ministers on the previous day.

At their meetings on 10 and 11 December, NATO Defence Ministers had reiterated their concern at the sustained

17th January 1980

Q28. Mr. Parry asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 17 January.

Prime
engage-

Q29. Mr. Meacher asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 17 January.

Prime
engage-

Q30. Mr. Stanbrook asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 17 January.

Prime
official

Q31. Mrs. Renée Short asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 17 January.

Prime
engage-

Q32. Mr. Ray Powell asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for Thursday 17 January.

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Q33. Mr. Kilfedder asked the Prime Minister if she will list her official engagements for 17 January.

Prime Min-
engage-

Q34. Mr. Campbell-Savours asked the Prime Minister if she will state her official engagements for Thursday 17 January.

Prime
engage-

The Prime Minister: I refer hon. Members and my hon. Friends to the reply which I gave earlier today to the hon. Member for Derby, North (Mr. Whitehead).

asked the
official

RHODESIA

Q8. Mr. Latham asked the Prime Minister whether she will make a statement on Southern Rhodesia, and its progress towards full independence.

asked the
official
statement

The Prime Minister: I have nothing to add at this stage to what my right hon. Friend the Lord Privy Seal said in this House yesterday.

asked the
official

NUCLEAR SECURITY

Q10. Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister if she has received an explanation from the Dutch Government as to why they did not inform Her Majesty's Government of security breaches at the joint centrifuge project, at Urenco, Almelo, until four years after the information was known to them.

asked the
official

asked the
official

Prime Minis-
agements

The Prime Minister: The extent to which the significance of Dr. Khan's activities in Holland was fully appreciated within the Netherlands Administration is one of the issues examined in the report prepared by an internal working party of the Netherlands Government. A copy of this report has been received in confidence by the United Kingdom. No decision has yet been taken by the Netherlands Government to publish it and I cannot discuss its detailed findings.

I have made my concern about the Khan affair very clear to Mr. van Agt the Netherlands Prime Minister, and we remain in close touch with the Netherlands and German Governments through diplomatic channels and in the Ureenco joint committee to ensure that all the necessary action to prevent a repetition is being taken.

RETAIL DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES

Q14. Mr. Edward Lyons asked the Prime Minister whether she will advise the institution of a special annual award to retail distribution companies which have distinguished themselves by the low percentage of imports in their purchases of merchandise.

The Prime Minister: No. British manufacturers can ensure that retailers stock their products by offering what the customer wants in terms of price and quality. I do, however, welcome developments in the footwear and clothing trades where retailers have accepted that United Kingdom manufacturers should have a fair opportunity to compete against imports.

BOOTLE

Q15. Mr. Allan Roberts asked the Prime Minister if she will pay an official visit to Bootle.

The Prime Minister: I have at present no plans to do so.

TUC

Q21. Mr. Stoddart asked the Prime Minister when she intends next to meet Trades Union Congress.

...by considering that. However, I should say that the law is far from ideal.

Mr. Barry Jones: Will the Prime Minister consider telling her hon. Friends who sit behind her that if they would stop making their hyena-like remarks we might be able to get the strike settled?

The Prime Minister: It is rather significant that the hon. Gentleman refers to upholding the law in that way. We do not.

Mr. Michael Morris: Is my right hon. Friend aware that most local authorities have complied with the wishes of the Cabinet on public expenditure cuts? If there are to be further cuts, the local authorities would wish central Government to indicate which services should be finished.

The Prime Minister: Examples of waste within many services are noted almost daily by the newspapers. If one looks at the enormous number of people employed by local authorities and the way in which that number has steadily increased, one can but reach the conclusion that there is considerable scope for further economies in administration.

Mr. John Morris: How long does the Prime Minister intend to maintain the Government's posture of non-intervention in the steel strike? Is she aware of bitter criticism today of the Government's proposal for the rundown of BSC as regards numbers, speed and the fact that no application has been made to the EEC for aid? Will she publish a White Paper on her negotiations on this matter with the EEC and her responses to the criticisms that are being ventilated?

The Prime Minister: I heard on the early morning news the criticisms made by Commissioner Vredeling. He seemed to indicate that we had not applied for aid from Europe. However, since 1973 there have been 100 such applications. On 12 December the Department of Industry informed Commission officials of BSC's proposals for redundancies in 1980 and 1981. The Commission decided that £7.7 million should be allocated to Shotton and that allocation was signed by Commissioner Vredeling.

Mr. Robert Atkins: Will my right hon. Friend consider today the increase in the

United States defence budget? Will she consider whether we could increase our defence spending by more than the 4 per cent that may be possible? Perhaps it could be increased to 10 per cent?

The Prime Minister: I do not think that we can go beyond the pledges we have already given. If we manage to get expansion in the economy and earnings and productivity go up, we could do a great deal more in many areas. I am not prepared to commit extra expenditure until we have got extra earnings.

DRONGAN

Q3. Mr. Faulkes asked the Prime Minister if she will make an official visit to Drongan.

The Prime Minister: I have at present no plans to do so.

Mr. Faulkes: If the Prime Minister visits Drongan will she compare the excellent local authority sheltered housing there with the old people's homes highlighted recently in *The Sunday Times*? Will she ask the Secretary of State for Social Services and the Attorney-General to look into the laws governing old people's homes and the case of Olive St. Barbe in particular?

The Prime Minister: I am happy to report that many of us have excellent sheltered housing and old peoples' homes in our constituencies. When we once again have economic expansion we will be able to provide more of them. If the hon. Gentleman has particular cases in mind I am sure that he will refer them to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

NUCLEAR SECURITY

Q4. Mr. Delyell asked the Prime Minister if she will make a statement on her latest discussions with Mr. van Agt, Prime Minister of Holland, on security at the joint conference project at Uranco, Almelo, Holland.

The Prime Minister: I have not spoken to Mr. van Agt since our meeting on 6 December 1979, when I made my comment about the Khan affair very clear to him. As I told the hon. Gentleman on 17 January, we remain in close touch with the

Netherlands and Chinese Governments through diplomatic channels and the UNCTAD joint venture, to ensure that all the necessary actions prevent a repetition of the following.

Mr. Dudgeon: Has there yet been a complete and candid explanation by the Dutch as to why, for four long years, their British and German partners were not told about a major security leak to Pakistan?

The Prime Minister: As the hon. Gentleman knows, there is a report of which we have received a confidential copy. I know of the hon. Gentleman's concern about this matter and I wish to make it quite clear that we are every bit as concerned as he is. It was an appalling breach of security which can have far-reaching consequences. All our efforts at the moment are strained towards ensuring that there is no repetition of that breach.

Mr. Frank Allam: Since Pakistan deceived the British Government into sending it inspectors for a nuclear weapon plant under the pretence that they were for a textile mill. I was involved in bringing this to the attention of the House. Is it right to send arms to Pakistan?

The Prime Minister: With respect to the hon. Gentleman, I do not think that the two issues are exactly related. My right hon. and noble Friend the Foreign Secretary made our views very clear to the Pakistan Government. As the hon. Gentleman knows, Pakistan has not signed the non-proliferation agreement, which is a matter of great concern to us. We tried to secure undertakings from the Government of Pakistan that they would not transfer any nuclear technology anywhere else.

The selling of arms to Pakistan is a different matter especially as Pakistan is fighting in the front line now.

MR. SPEAKER (PERSONAL STATEMENT)

Mr. Speaker: Order. I shall make a brief personal statement. Those who were in the Chamber earlier this afternoon will know that right hon. and hon. Members were kind enough to give me birthday greetings. [Hon. Members: "Hear, Hear."] I really was not asking for more. In view of the article in *The Times* today, it is in the interests of the House for me to make a brief statement to end speculation about my intentions for the future.

It is but eight months since the House did me the honour of electing me Mr. Speaker for the life of this Parliament. That is a trust that I hope to fulfil. I do not wish to tempt providence, but I am feeling as fit as when I assumed the Chair. Therefore, it is my intention to continue to serve the House for this Parliament as it invited me to do eight months ago. [Hon. Members: "Hear, hear."]

SCUNTHORPE STEEL STRIKE COMMITTEE (LEADER)

Mr. Michael Brown: I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 9, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration, namely,

the consequences of a circular letter sent by the Scunthorpe Steel Strike Committee to steel workers who are reluctant to give their support to the steel strike by picketing.

I apologise, Mr. Speaker, for being unable to give you notice before 12 noon. Unfortunately, the document that is the subject of my application was not in my hands until the lunch-time period.

The letter states:

"This fight will only be won with you and every member doing their duty, by reporting to our strike center, and being prepared to assist by doing a turn on picket duties. This fight will be over one day, and we would not want any unpleasantness after we have won, by some people being accused of not pulling their weight."

The letter contains threats which, though unspecified, are a clear attempt to intimidate.

Following the recent judgment by Lord Denning, in the Court of Appeal,

satisfy the House that there is effective political control over the security services?

The Prime Minister: I am happy to say that there is effective political control over the security services. I have made that clear in previous debates. There is also effective ministerial control over the subject of telephone interception.

Mr. Dover: Has the Prime Minister studied recent reports to the effect that there is a shortage of staff in the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, and is she worried that that may delay the recently announced nuclear programme? Will she arrange, if necessary, secondment of staff from other Departments?

The Prime Minister: As my hon. Friend knows, the work done by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate is highly specialised. I was not aware that there was a shortage of staff. Its work is extremely important, and we would never go ahead with a particular nuclear power station or system without safety clearance from the inspectorate. I shall look into the points that my hon. Friend raises.

Mr. Robert Sheldon: Will the right hon. Lady assure us that telephones of right hon. and hon. Members are not tapped?

The Prime Minister: It is exactly the same practice that was announced under the Prime Ministership of the right hon. Member for Huyton (Sir H. Wilson). All Governments have followed that practice since. There has been no change whatsoever.

Nuclear Security

Q3. Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister what discussions she has had with Chancellor Schmidt on security arrangements at the Joint Centrifuge Centre, at URENCO Almelo, Holland, run by Great Britain, West Germany and Holland, in the light of the Khan incident, involving nuclear proliferation in the Arab world.

The Prime Minister: None, but we remain in close touch with the German and Netherlands Governments about the follow-up to the Khan affair.

Mr. Dalyell: What assurances have the Germans given that they will do

everything possible to stop their sophisticated industries exporting items such as inverters, which make possible a nuclear capacity for developing countries?

The Prime Minister: I am not aware of any particular assurance given through the joint committee. The hon. Gentleman knows of the concern of all who are connected with the centrifuge enrichment plant there that there should be no repetition of previous events. We are four-square behind the nuclear non-proliferation agreement. We all genuinely and sincerely endeavour to carry out those duties in practice.

PRIME MINISTER (ENGAGEMENTS)

Q4. Mr. Parry asked the Prime Minister if she will list her public engagements for Thursday 31 January.

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that I gave earlier today to the hon. Member for Isle of Ely (Mr. Freud).

Mr. Parry: Following yesterday's farcical meetings over our EEC budget contributions, are the Prime Minister and her ministerial colleagues aware that the increasing inflation and unemployment, together with further public spending—estimated at £2 billion, and said to be coming from present allocations—means that the Government are heading for the biggest confrontation with the trade union and Labour movement since the war?

The Prime Minister: Certainly not. I do not accept the premise in the hon. Gentleman's question in any way. With regard to the question that I at first thought that he was asking, concerning yesterday's meeting with Signor Cossiga, if that was his question, my reply is that it was not disastrous in any way. The European Community is moving towards our position—

Mr. Kilroy-Silk: Where is the community moving?

The Prime Minister: The European Community is moving towards our position, but I made it perfectly clear that it is not moving far enough or fast enough for my liking.

Mr. James Callaghan: I am sure that we all hope that the right hon. Lady

is right when she says that the Community is in a difficult position, but is it the case that she is moving towards the Community? Or is she departing from the Community? Or is she insisting on a better position for payments and interest?

The Prime Minister: The answer that I gave to the hon. Member from Dublin was that I am not aware of any particular assurance given through the joint committee. We all genuinely and sincerely endeavour to carry out those duties in practice.

Mr. Callaghan: Lady now care to say whether she has moved she moving?

The Prime Minister: I answered, the right hon. Member, that I adopted the position that I adopted yesterday. I would not be prepared to say that I adopted the position that I adopted yesterday.

Mr. Callaghan: or "No"?

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman is asking me at the end of the debate whether we are adopting the position that we adopted yesterday. I would not be prepared to say that I adopted the position that I adopted yesterday.

Mr. Temple: The right hon. Gentleman is asking me whether I am aware that the right hon. Gentleman is not the whole of the picture in her efforts to bring about a better position? Is she is admired for her efforts in Dublin? Or is she is hollow victory? Or is she is case would be for the support of the Community?

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman is asking me whether I am aware that the right hon. Gentleman is not the whole of the picture in her efforts to bring about a better position? Is she is admired for her efforts in Dublin? Or is she is hollow victory? Or is she is case would be for the support of the Community?

Mr. David: The Minister confirm

With regard to strengthening the reply that I gave—which was intended to preserve the constitutional position of this House—far from being weakened, I think that the exchanges on this subject yesterday and today have strengthened that understanding. I shall certainly personally keep an even more vigilant eye on it than I have done in the past.

Later—

Mr. Torney: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I ask for your protection for Back Benchers in this House against a Minister, to wit, the Leader of the House, concerning the pledge that he has broken on fishing—a pledge to Members of this House on an important—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Has the hon. Gentleman a point of order, or is he just repeating the point that he has already made this afternoon?

Mr. Torney: I have a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: A point of order on which I can rule concerning the rules of House?

Mr. Torney: Yes. I want to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether you can give some protection to Back Bench Members—that is my point of order—in a situation in which Ministers of the Crown can break pledges and ignore this House completely.

Mr. Speaker: Order. That complaint is as old as creation. Obviously, in every Government there are hon. Members who feel that a statement is not what they wanted to hear. I am not seeking to intervene at all in the content of the exchanges that have taken place this afternoon. I only want to say that my job is to protect the rules of the House as well as to protect Back Benchers.

NUCLEAR SECURITY

Mr. Dalyell: May I raise a point of order, Mr. Speaker, of which I gave you notice this morning and on which I have talked to the office at No. 10 Downing Street and to the Editor of *Hansard* and which I believe is of significance in principle to all hon. Members?

It is known to some hon. Members that I have been asking a series of questions concerned with nuclear security leaks from the joint centrifuge project at Almelo, Holland, and the consequences of these leaks, generally called the Ureenco Khan incident, for the development of a Pakistani or Islamic nuclear weapon—hardly a trivial matter.

On Tuesday 29 January, in columns 1122 and 1023—I make no complaint about the rare mistake in *Hansard's* numbering: the Prime Minister answered a question of specific substance, of which she had had the usual fortnight's warning, on the Ureenco security position. When I examined what she had said in print in *Hansard*, I had the impression that it read rather differently from what I had understood the Prime Minister to say in the House, to which I had listened intently.

I therefore went to the sound archive unit in Norman Shaw South, where I had the most courteous and prompt attention from Mr. Philip Farrow and the head of the unit, Mr. Morgan. For the usual 25p fee they gave me a cassette of what the Prime Minister had said, which I have given to the Clerk to the House in case you find it convenient to listen to it, Mr. Speaker.

In at least six instances the Prime Minister's replies to myself and to my hon. Friend the Member for Salford, East (Mr. Allain) were different from the recorded cassette in wording and in the various degrees of emphasis, and in one other instance there was a material difference. The Prime Minister did not say:

"We tried to secure undertakings from the Government of Pakistan that they would not transfer any nuclear technology anywhere else."—[*Official Report*, 29 January 1980; Vol. 977, c. 1023.]

According to the cassette, she said: "We do try . . ."

The implication of the *Hansard* report was that the Government had actually

[Mr. Dalyell.]
tried and failed on a specific occasion. According to the cassette, this is not the meaning, and another question I had devised would not have been put on a false basis.

We are all indebted to the *Hansard* reporters for the wonderful job they do in tidying up our grammar and, frankly, I understand that, cassette or no cassette, sound broadcasting unit or no sound broadcasting unit, there has to be a certain editorial discretion by *Hansard*. Like others, I do not know what I would do without the assistance of *Hansard* quite often when it comes to grammar and, candidly, had some change occurred in, for example, some obscure amendment to yesterday's Heritage Bill, I should not be raising the issue.

On the other hand, the answers to Prime Minister's Questions can be very sensitive, and is it not desirable that what any Prime Minister says at Question Time, warts and all, should in fact be reported in print? In particular, when the question is not an open question about her day's diary but a very precise question on a narrow topic of which she has been given warning and on which it is surely proper to try to interrogate her, should not special care be taken to put in print what the Prime Minister of the day actually said?

Frankly, I am of the opinion in this instance that both the *Hansard* reporters and the Prime Minister's private secretaries who check her answers in *Hansard* acted in good faith, but it is precisely because there appears to be an absence

of skulduggery on this occasion that I think that it is a good time for you, Mr. Speaker, to reflect on the issues involved and possibly to make a statement at your convenience, and perhaps for the Prime Minister to make her views known at her convenience on the reporting of her answers at Question Time.

I submit that this is a subject of some consequence to all Members.

Mr. Emery: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have a considered reply to give to the hon. Member for West Lothian (Mr. Dalyell), who submitted his point of order this morning. Perhaps the hon. Member for Hounston (Mr. Emery) would wait and see what my reply is.

First of all, there is quite a simple reply: yes, there was a mistake in *Hansard*. The shorthand writing has been examined and there was a mistake in copying. It is a simple, human error that has happened before and I have no doubt at all will happen again. But I have already made it clear to the House that I am not going to accept the BBC recording as in any way a check upon *Hansard*. I am going to be guided by our *Hansard* reporters, on whose integrity we all rely and who will write down what they hear. Otherwise, as I have explained to the House before, some distant microphone could pick up a remark that the rest of the House does not hear and it could land us in exceedingly great difficulty.

But I can tell the hon. Gentleman that the necessary correction will be made in *Hansard*.

by Her Majesty's Government to the Government of Syria about the redeployment of Syrian armour and artillery in the South Lebanon area.

Mr. Hurd: None. There is no evidence that Syrian forces have moved south of their existing positions. Reports of Syrian concentrations close to positions occupied by the Christian militia have not been confirmed.

Mr. Hooley asked the Lord Privy Seal what representations have been made by Her Majesty's Government to the Government of Israel about the movement of armoured forces across the border into South Lebanon.

Mr. Hurd: None. We have no independent evidence to confirm these reports.

Mr. Hooley asked the Lord Privy Seal what attempts are being made currently by the Security Council to strengthen the United Nations Interim Force in the Lebanon.

Mr. Hurd: None. The Secretary-General's report of 14 December 1979 showed that UNIFIL's force levels were in excess of its authorised ceiling and we do not believe that any further strengthening of the force is necessary at this stage. A copy of the Secretary-General's report is being placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Hooley asked the Lord Privy Seal what discussions have been held in the Security Council about the movement of Israeli armour into South Lebanon and the redeployment of Syrian forces in that area.

Mr. Hurd: None.

Ascension Island

Mr. Dalyell asked the Lord Privy Seal when he expects to receive the pre-feasibility study of tourism on Ascension Island, currently being studied by the St. Helena Government; and what proposals he has to safeguard the nesting beaches of the green turtle on Ascension Island.

Mr. Ridley: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Essex, South-East, (Sir B. Braine) on 11 December.

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NUCLEAR SECURITY

Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister what efforts she is now making towards ensuring that there is no repetition of the Khan incident at the joint centrifuge project at Almelo, Holland.

The Prime Minister: As I have already told the hon. Member on a number of occasions the implementation of Troika security rules and procedures throughout the collaboration are being improved in order to ensure there is no repetition of the Khan affair. This is a continuous process and the hon. Member will understand that I cannot go into the details.

Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister if she will detail the efforts she made to secure undertakings from the Government of Pakistan to the effect that they would not transfer any nuclear technology anywhere else.

The Prime Minister: The Pakistani authorities are well aware from our many exchanges with them of the concern in this country at their unsafeguarded nuclear programme. Our discussions are necessarily confidential but include confirmation on their part that Pakistan does not intend to transfer nuclear technology to other countries.

CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY RADAR SYSTEM

Mr. Dalyell asked the Prime Minister if she is satisfied with the co-ordination between the Departments of Trade, Industry and Defence on the contract for a new Civil Aviation Authority radar system; and if she will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: Yes, the three Departments have been in close touch over this matter. But the procurement of such equipment is a matter for the Civil Aviation Authority. I understand that no contract has yet been placed.

DOG LICENSING (MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY)

Mr. Stoddart asked the Prime Minister if she will list which Minister or Ministers are responsible for the operation and enforcement of dog licensing, giving details of responsibilities.

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