

Canadian Nuclear Energy and National Security

Uranium enrichment, nuclear R&D, and Arctic sovereignty in the post-*Pax Americana* era: presented to the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, House of Commons, Canada

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Outline

CNL: winning an
unfair game

And now it's not a
game

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CNL: winning an unfair game

CNL: winning an unfair game (1/5)

Canadian Nuclear
Policy

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And now it's not a
game

Brilliant, but on a leash

- ▶ Chalk River was central to Canada becoming a Tier 1 nuclear country.
- ▶ During and after Second World War.
- ▶ During war: integral to Manhattan Project.
- ▶ Postwar:
 - Revolutionized cancer treatment with Cobalt-60.
 - Revolutionized medical diagnosis with Molybdenum-99.
 - Proved CANDU, Canada's most brilliant and far reaching invention. Right this minute, CANDU is running the building we're in!

CNL: winning an unfair game (2/5)

Canada's uranium, but we're not allowed to enrich it

- ▶ ALL CNL research depended on enriched uranium, **which America provided**.
 - Canada was America's major uranium supplier.
 - America *de facto* forbade Canada to enrich, and Canada complied.
 - Why? An incoherent mishmash of reasons, built around anti-proliferation.
- ▶ This was an unfair arrangement, but Canada went along to get along.

CNL: winning an unfair game

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Canada paid the price for its dependence on America for enriched uranium

- ▶ In 1991, Chuck Shumer began the process of ending U.S. exports of high-enriched uranium, even to friendly countries like Canada.
- ▶ That caused the MAPLE fiasco.
- ▶ In 2016, Obama ended all high-enriched uranium exports.
- ▶ Canada's bulk production of Mo-99 ended; NRU shut down.

CNL: winning an unfair game

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CNL: winning an unfair game (4/5)

Canada played the unfair nuclear game not because we lacked the wherewithal to enrich uranium, but because we benefited from the international rules, norms, and values that we shared with America

- ▶ And we were confident that America would, for the most part, indeed live by the rules, norms, and values that were shared across the West.
- ▶ The post-WWII international system depended entirely on most countries sharing these values, and (mostly) abiding by them.
- ▶ All international institutions, especially the United Nations, depend entirely on shared rules and values.

CNL: winning an unfair game (5/5)

Who ran Chalk River through all this? Who presided over the brilliant inventions based on novel groundbreaking research under severe U.S.-imposed technological constraints?

- ▶ Atomic Energy Canada Limited, a small federal crown corp spun out of the National Research Council.
- ▶ If Canada is Tier 1, capable of performing technological end runs around the most powerful economy in history, then why do we need another country to run our nuclear lab.

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And now it's not a game (1/4)

Let's briefly look at the country to which we're handing the keys

- ▶ Today, new nuclear research is urgently needed to address Canada's Arctic sovereignty and that of our NATO allies:
 - Load-following power reactors, nuclear propelled ships, radioisotope thermoelectric generators (RTGs).
 - Canada **can** develop these, historically has opted not to, and that must change.
 - Canada needs enriched uranium, and must acquire or develop the means to make it.
- ▶ Nuclear research is an urgent matter of Arctic, and national, security.

And now it's not a game (2/4)

The current CNL GoCo puts representatives of a country now adversarial to Canada in charge of the very facility that would conduct the research into Canada's response to the new adversary

- ▶ And pays them with Canadian public money to keep their eye on us.
- ▶ And the new adversary is now friendly with Russia, whom Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy (March 2024) identified as our principal Arctic adversary.
- ▶ Canada now has TWO principal Arctic adversaries.
- ▶ Both nuclear armed.

And now it's not a game (3/4)

Canada played by the (unfair) rules, and was rewarded with “the 51st State,” “Governor Trudeau,” and an unprovoked and destructive trade war

- ▶ America has abandoned the rules-based world order that America itself created and until 2014 upheld.
- ▶ America is now engaged in illegal acts of war in the western hemisphere, and threatens its own allies with annexation.
- ▶ America has ruptured the world order.

And now it's not a game (4/4)

Canada must not hand the keys to its nuclear kingdom to American companies

- ▶ Corporate America has subordinated itself to the current president.
- ▶ The current administration has nationalized U.S. companies: Intel, U.S. Steel; is Exxon next?
- ▶ U.S. media companies (CBS, ABC) forced to provide favourable coverage.
- ▶ The administration can exert direct control over corporate policies, decisions, and investments.