

Canadian arms sales are big business

piece of paper.

accompanying letter went on to say the rest of the documents would cost the price of censoring them.

Regehr feels confident his own check is accurate.

He has been told that External Affairs had led to really tear strips off it (the book) "found errors," he says. "In fact, they didn't find those errors, and so they've

been very, very silent."

Overall, Regehr says the Mulroney government has continued the disturbing long-term trend of supporting the arms industry as a commercial venture — instead of one designed to meet legitimate Canadian defence needs. He points to a structural weakness within External Affairs, as the department includes both programs to restrain military exports and to promote them.

The Defence Programs Bureau, for example, publishes a glossy catalog of military products, offering foreign buyers wares ranging from plastic watercans to jet aircraft and clothing for protection from nuclear, chemical or biological warfare.

The bureau also arranges trade fairs — which exclude the public — for promoting military products.

Another federal project, the Defence Industries Productivity Program, has given out hundreds of millions of dollars in subsidies since its creation in 1959.

"The really high flying arms dealers are not sheiks and soldiers of fortune, but middle level bureaucrats in drab middle level government offices," says Regehr.

But Regehr also criticizes External Affairs minister, Joe Clark, who went to Saudi Arabia to hawk a fleet of light armored vehicles to the royal family in 1986. By doing so, Clark gave high profile support to sales of active combat equipment in a militarily sensitive area, to a government which supplies arms to Iraq and favours the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In the rest of *Arms Canada*, Regehr examines the economic delusions behind the arms industry as a job creator, and points to how relying on American markets can undermine Canadian independence in foreign policy.

In the final chapter, Regehr proposes ten alternative export policies the federal govern-

ment could adopt. The most essential is to realize "all Canadian military production should grow out of Canadian-defined military needs" instead of viewing the arms industry as a commercial enterprise. Countering entrepreneurial rhetoric, Regehr argues that no one has a "right" to manufacture and market weapons.

"Canadians are not without choices."

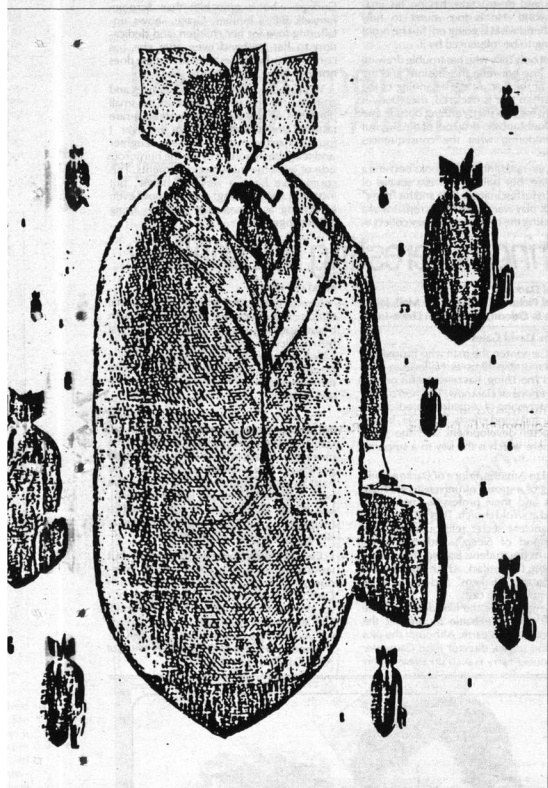
The ultimate entrepreneurial irony was perhaps when British troops in the Falklands were attacked by British-made weapons.

Moreover, arms exports should be undertaken only on a government-to-government basis, consistent with Canadian foreign policy objectives promoting international stability.

Canada also needs more effective control over the final destination of military goods and must refuse them to human rights violators. And there should be a full annual public disclosure and review of exports.

"Canadians are not without choices," says Regehr. "On the one hand, this country has the technical and financial resources to become a strong competitor in the race to make the weapons of war widely available in an unrestrained global arms bazaar."

"On the other hand, it has the political and moral resources to resist dealing in weapons for the economic fun of it."



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