

Government Orders

ism. We have never seen ourselves as a major military power. We have never supported a major arms industry.

Canada has a global reputation that has won us respect in all corners of the world. We have played active roles in peacekeeping. We have consciously turned down the opportunity to become a nuclear power in the past. This has been with the agreement of all parties, whether the Conservative Party under John Diefenbaker or the party of Louis St. Laurent or Mike Pearson or Trudeau.

As Canadians we have always valued our role of being peacekeepers, of trying to have a voice of sanity in the United Nations and in other international bodies.

Of course, what Bill C-6 does is begin to turn Canada away from that tradition. The irony of it is this government knows no shame. Just a few months ago we had some very brave words by the Prime Minister and by the then Secretary of State for External Affairs, exalting the need of restricting the arms race, particularly the selling of arms in the Middle East, the most volatile spot on the face of this earth.

The Prime Minister said and I quote: "There is a general view, without getting into the question of a total interdiction for the moment, that clearly a lot of these weapons, to understate the case, fell into hands that should never have had them in the first place.

• (1620)

"We could be much more active in that area if we wanted. We have all the technology in the world; we have all the resources we need. We could be big arms merchants. We have chosen not to be, although it is a very lucrative business.

"We have chosen not to be because it is fundamentally inconsistent with our policy to develop it, to pedal it, to finance it, and then to deplore its use."

That was the Prime Minister on March 13. As well, the Secretary of State at that time stated that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the arms trade, the constant chase for spheres of influence, is something he regretted and he thought that was one of the major problems of the Middle East.

We had all these great comments by our Prime Minister and our Secretary of State. Canada was going to take a major new initiative. What is the initiative? The initiative is Bill C-6. The reality is that this government wants some of the limitations on exports of weapons removed so that it can sell and make the deal with the Saudis.

Does this government know no shame? Does this government not recognize that Canadians are not fools? It can say one thing in February or March and then totally contradict itself two months later.

Again, I have always felt that the Orwellian period started in 1984 and the actions of this government continue to reinforce that Orwellian notion of saying one thing and doing something else.

I fear the government has started down the path toward selling more and more arms. The reason, of course, is entirely economical. This government, and I must say past Liberal governments as well, have to a certain extent supported the arms industry through DIPP. Some \$300 million is used from public funds to promote the defence industries.

One would tend to think that this is a sunset type industry, that with the end of the cold war the major reason for the arms race has now disappeared, or surely at least a fair-minded person would say it has substantially disappeared.

I am sure that if I could go through the quotes of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State I would find something in their statements supporting my contention that with the end of the cold war, the arms race surely has to come to an end.

Now we are left with all these industries that used to produce arms. We have cutbacks to our own defence budgets in this country and in order for these industries to be viable, they have to start exporting more. As a result we ease the restrictions to allow our defence industry to start exporting to other countries. That is the only reason. It is economic.

Instead of the government beginning to realize that the arms race is at an end, that we have to address the problem of converting the arms industry to peaceful use,