

Old Testament or the New Testament, and nothing to do with the war in Iraq.

This bill has to do with export permits and restricting export permits for these kinds of weapons. It also concerns redressing an anomaly that existed in our industrial base for a very limited class of military equipment. Certainly it has nothing to do with weapons of mass destruction. The hon. member tried to, in his hyperbole, drag in images of mass destruction, the Old and New Testaments, Middle East conflict and so on. None of that is really relevant to this bill.

I will not repeat what the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and the Minister for International Trade has said earlier today. He has outlined the details of the bill.

I wanted to outline two things, first of all from the point of view of being a minister of state in the department of industry, and second as a member of Parliament from London, Ontario. Close examination of this bill will make it clear that it is totally consistent with all that the government has said concerning the proliferation of weapons and controlling the arms trade. The government is seeking support for proposals to increase controls on the world's arms trade, in particular exports which contribute to programs to develop weapons of mass destruction. This remains a policy and we have put in place to that effect.

We are also working actively in the UN to encourage greater transparencies in arms transfers. That is exactly what this bill does. It makes everything transparent. It is not hypocritical. In fact what we are doing is transparent, greater transparency in arms transports through measures such as establishing an international arms transfer register. In a unilateral effort to bring greater transparency to arms transfers, Canada has begun publishing annual reports on exports of arms from Canada. This is not hypocrisy; this is transparency.

We believe this is an important subject and must be handled properly and with clarity.

At the same time, we recognize that all countries have a legitimate right to self-defence. What the hon. member misses is that every country must have a limited stock of rifles, for example, to defend itself through its police forces as well as its military, and also for internal peace purposes. Even more important, you have to transport your troops. You put your troops in a truck; you can put

them in an open truck or you can put them in a covered, light armoured vehicle which can have a turret for defence, but not a weapon of mass destruction. That is really what we are talking about.

They take those two very mundane parts of the storage of any police force or any military and they make them sound like weapons of mass destruction. They are not. It is a very pragmatic supply for one's own security.

It means that we are going to be making these things in Canada. Is that not a good idea? Do we have to buy everything? Does the hon. member want to buy all of these light armoured vehicles from other countries? Does he want to buy all rifles from other countries? We are going to be making these. We do not have a big enough market here in Canada to make them just for the Canadian market. If we are going to be world class and have a centre of excellence in this particular product, we have to export. That is what this bill is allowing to happen.

This bill is a bureaucrat's delight in the sense that there are a number of permits that have to be achieved before any kind of export can take place. Designations have to take place; agreements have to take place; there has to be a publishing of the regulations. This thing is so transparent it is the very opposite of hypocrisy. It is being honest and straightforward with the Canadian people.

The bill is one that does not deserve the kind of hyperbole and high temperature that the hon. member tried to bring forward.

What does it mean? In my home town the hon. member would expect me to stand up as a member of Parliament from London West. I notice the Liberal member from London East has also supported this, along with the secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Auto Workers and intercorporate council for General Motors. This means 10,000 person years of employment for not just the London area, but for subcontractors across Canada.

I want to give some sort of sense of what this would mean. If we decided to buy our light armoured vehicles, for example, from another country, close down that business, we would be saying goodbye to close to 1,000 workers in the London plant, to say nothing of the hundreds, perhaps thousands of subcontractors helping with this product. It is a benign transport vehicle with a