

no permit would ever be approved to export automatic weapons from Canada to a country that undertook [an excessive] build-up of arms. It simply would not happen. If a country with which Canada had a defence production agreement began to develop its military arsenal to the point of threatening its neighbours and regional security, we would simply stop issuing export permits and suspend all outstanding ones.

Such action is within the discretionary authority of the Secretary of State for External Affairs... It has been exercised in the past in response to changing security considerations, and would be used in the future without hesitation if necessary... Our intention is to control more effectively, not to prohibit, sales of military equipment. Canada will be extremely careful in deciding which countries it should sell firearms to. We will also make known which military goods are exported and to which countries.

Consistency with arms control policies

The following are excerpts from a May 30 statement on Bill C-6 by the Honourable Barbara McDougall, Secretary of State for External Affairs.

I join the debate on Bill C-6...to respond to the suggestions that the proposed amendments to the Export and Import Permits Act (EIPA) are inconsistent with the arms control proposals made in February by the Prime Minister and Mr. Clark. No such inconsistency exists.

Under the proposed amendments, exports of automatic weapons will be subject to the same stringent controls that have long been applied to the export of other military goods from Canada. These controls fully reflect Canada's arms control and disarmament policies. They are, in fact, driven by Canada's security policy, of which arms control and disarmament are a major component. They allow, and have always allowed, the export of particular types of military equipment to particular countries under particular circumstances. At the same time, they ensure, and will continue to ensure, that Canada does not contribute to the proliferation of

weapons of mass destruction or to excessive build-ups of conventional arms.

What Canada proposed in February was that countries learn from the Gulf War that proliferation and excessive arms build-ups are destabilizing, dangerous and must be stopped. We put forward a range of proposals aimed at mobilizing the political will and the mechanisms necessary to minimize these dangers in the future in the Middle East and elsewhere. We proposed expanding and strengthening existing regimes to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We also proposed measures to promote international transparency, consultations and restraint with a view to preventing excessive build-ups of conventional arms. By excessive build-ups of conventional arms we mean the acquisition of quantities of conventional arms that go beyond legitimate defence requirements.

As my predecessor made very clear before a Committee of this House in March, we are not proposing to put an end to the arms trade. Nor are we proposing to constrain any country's ability to acquire arms for legitimate defence purposes. We have never suggested that defence needs should be left unmet. What we are proposing is that the international community should take appropriate measures to ensure that states will not in future be allowed to overarm themselves as Iraq did...

In February, this Government made a commitment to work to diminish the likelihood and risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and excessive build-ups of conventional arms. That commitment remains strong and, as I have explained, is in no way diminished by or inconsistent with the proposed amendments to the Export and Import Permits Act.

The EIPA is the main legal instrument under which the government controls exports and imports. The Act provides for control of exports on the basis of product using the Export Control List and on the basis of destination using the Area Control List.

Goods and technologies may be placed on the Export Control List for a number of reasons, including the protection of the security of Canada and its allies. The majority of items are on the List to fulfil international commitments to control the proliferation of arms and to deny potential adversaries access to industrial goods that might have a

Review process ensures Canadian exports do not contribute to excessive arms build-ups.

military or strategic application. These commitments have been made in the context of the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Strategic Export Controls.

In addition, export permits are required for all exports to countries on the Area Control List, regardless of whether the particular goods or technologies are listed on the Export Control List.

Canadian export controls are among the most restrictive of all western countries, particularly with respect to the transfer of arms. A standard review process exists for the proposed export of military equipment to any destination, except to members of the NATO alliance and a handful of other countries, including Australia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden and Switzerland. All proposals to export military goods or technology to a country aside from those just noted are reviewed by the Departments of National Defence and Industry, Science and Technology, as well as extensively within EAITC. The export of offensive military equipment requires my own personal review and approval. The export of non-offensive military equipment requires my review and approval if the country of destination is engaged in or under imminent threat of hostilities, has a record of human rights abuses, is under United Nations sanctions or is deemed to be a threat to Canada and its allies.

These amendments do not affect this review process, which remains in place