

enough to burn a hole through flesh) such systems may not be out of the question given the potential for future technological breakthroughs. It behooves the international community to address this possibility sooner rather than later. Interest groups should continue to ensure that due publicity is given to any R&D on such weapons with all its attendant concerns.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Special Weapons and Tactical Police Teams

The movement on the part of many armies towards acquiring more effective small arms is being imitated by police forces and various other domestic security organizations. At one time most police forces were equipped only with handguns, together with a few shotguns and rifles stored in police arsenals for special situations. Today many police force arsenals rival those of the military in terms of quality, given the former's efforts to procure the best possible small arms and ammunition. Moreover, manufacturers now design and market their products with this new market in mind. As mentioned earlier, the P 90 sub-machine gun and its ammunition are both actively marketed to law enforcement agencies, and a number of police forces in Europe are already using them. Many police forces, including Canadian ones, currently use the M-16A1 and the H&K MP-5N 9 mm SMG – a small arm used by the US Marine Corps for FIBUA operations.¹⁰⁸ The merits of police forces, border guards and other law enforcement and security agencies being armed to the extent that they can deploy units approaching the armament levels of a modern infantry platoon are various.¹⁰⁹ There is however one aspect of the diffusion of SALW which must be considered: the greater the diffusion, the more possibilities exist that these weapons and/or their ammunition will fall into the wrong hands and/or be misused. If the police use of such weapons is deemed legitimate by the domestic population but the state's ability to provide personal security to its citizens is considered inadequate, there may develop a concomitant pressure within the domestic population for individuals to arm themselves with similar weapons. Furthermore, considering the similarity of ammunition wound effects within both the domestic and international contexts, it may be time to revisit the concept of "unnecessary suffering and superfluous wounds".

¹⁰⁸ See: <http://www.hqmc.usmc.mil/factfile>

¹⁰⁹ See: Kenneth Whyte, "Keystone Killers," *National Post* (Monday, January 11, 1999), p. A14. This article notes the alarming increase in the use of heavily armed Canadian police emergency and tactical response units in so-called day to day policing. It also notes an apparent commensurate increase in civilian fatalities, with a number of victims unarmed at the time of the incident (events involving, for example, individuals who were mentally incoherent at the time or who were wrongly identified). These problems are not necessarily a SALW issue, except perhaps from a psychological perspective.