

TRADE

EXPORT CONTROL POLICY—IRAN—ALLEGED USE OF
CANADIAN-MADE HELICOPTER ENGINES

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. It is supplementary to the very serious matter raised by my colleague with regard to the use of Pratt & Whitney engines in war helicopters in Iran.

Mr. Crosbie: A very serious matter indeed.

Mr. Axworthy: It is a serious matter. Perhaps the Minister of Transport does not take anything seriously, but this is a serious matter.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs asked for some proof. He must be aware of the fact that last summer the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute named Canada as one of the major suppliers of war materials to Iran. I know that the Minister is fully aware of that international organization and knows that it has a good reputation. It has named Canada.

At that time the Canadian Government made no response to that particular proof which was provided by that institute. At the same time the Minister promised in this House that the Department of External Affairs would undertake an investigation into the use of Pratt & Whitney engines in military helicopters in Iran. We have not received a report from the Minister on the results of that investigation.

The onus of proof is really on the Minister. What were the results of the investigation which he promised to undertake?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have three quick things to say. First, the export control law of Canada is much tighter now because we made it tighter than the loose law that existed under the Liberal Government of which the Member who placed the question was a nominal member.

Second, he exaggerates, as he knows, the SIPRI report.

Mr. Axworthy: I never lost a convention though.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): He has not lost a convention but he is planning to and, by golly, when it happens he will.

Mr. Axworthy: That must be the voice of experience talking.

Mr. Crosbie: Go down to Harvard, Lloyd. Join your brother down in Harvard, buddy. Where is Tom when he's needed?

Mr. Axworthy: Tell us about losing conventions.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The right hon. gentleman will complete his answer. I would ask Hon. Members beside him to refrain from expressing their opinions unless they have the floor. The right hon. gentleman.

Oral Questions

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The third point I want to make is that we have no proof. The Hon. Member has no proof that there is a shipment of Canadian parts to Iran. If I have proof, and if I have means to stop that kind of shipment, I will stop it.

We have already secured the agreement of Pratt & Whitney with regard to direct shipments from this country to Iran. I assume that it is now being alleged that there is a diversion in third countries. I have already indicated, in answer to one of his colleagues, that I have instructed ambassadors of Canada to those countries in which a diversion might occur to seek all the information which may be available in those third countries in an effort, first, to find the facts.

Second, if the facts are as alleged, we will determine whether we can, by influence, change practices outside our jurisdiction which we do not have the legal power to change because they are outside our jurisdiction.

EXPORT CONTROL LOOPHOLES

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, the Government promised to do that a year ago and it is now doing it all over again. The fact is that the so-called export controls which he says are so tight have major loopholes in them. One of the loopholes is that there is no provision for an end use certificate which would require trans-shipments to be recorded by the industrial supplier.

Why does the Minister not simply change the rules and regulations as he committed himself to do before the committee on external affairs a year ago? At that time he promised to look at that provision and come back with proposed changes. The Minister is simply not doing his job and is being caught out red-faced and red-handed on this issue.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of things to say about that. The Member referred a moment ago to a request by the CBC for information from my Department under the Access to Information Act. He did not say that the request was for all material since 1980. That is a very large request and it was submitted only ten days ago. He did not bring those facts to the attention of the House of Commons.

Second, he makes reference to end use requirements. If he is paying any attention to the facts, he will know the situation with regard to the voluntary assumption of end use requirements in the case of Pratt & Whitney.

Third, he referred to loopholes in the law. There are fewer loopholes in the law now than there were when he was a Minister of the Crown because the Government has tightened that law.

Mr. Axworthy: They didn't use engines when we were in government.