

Fuelling Wars! Canadian Arms Exports at Work

By Richard Sanders, coordinator, Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade

Between 2003 and 2006, Canadian military exports—totalling at least \$7.4 billion—were sold to 88 countries. One in particular—the United States—bought almost three quarters of Canada’s known military exports.

During this four-year period (for which the latest data is available) the US waged wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2004, the US also led the military invasion and occupation of Haiti, overthrowing its democracy and helping enforce an illegal “regime change” that empowered a brutal unelected dictatorship. In each case, the US brought together and led multinational coalitions of armed forces.

To analyse Canada’s role in fuelling wars, it is essential to examine this country’s military exports to the US and to those US-led allies that waged major armed conflicts. While Canada’s military exports have always been focused on supplying US institutions of war, 55 other countries received these exports between 2003 and 2006 while they deployed troops and equipment to US-led military conflicts.

When one includes Canadian military exports to countries fighting major armed conflicts¹ within their own borders, the total number of recipient governments reaches 62. This means that almost 70% of the countries receiving Canadian military exports, during the period in question, were engaged in significant armed hostilities.

Even more damning is the fact that Canadian military exports to these 62 warring nations accounted for an astonishing 93% (\$6.8 billion) of the total value of Canada’s known military exports during those four years. (See pie chart.)

However, in pretended ignorance of this reality, the “export control policy guidelines mandated by Cabinet,” state that “Canada closely controls the export of military goods and technology to countries...involved in or under imminent threat of hostilities.”² Furthermore, the most recent report on military exports from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) begins by proclaiming that:

“A key priority of Canada’s foreign policy is the maintenance of peace and security. To this end, the Government of Canada strives to ensure that Canadian military exports are not prejudicial to peace, security or stability in any region of the world or within any country.”³

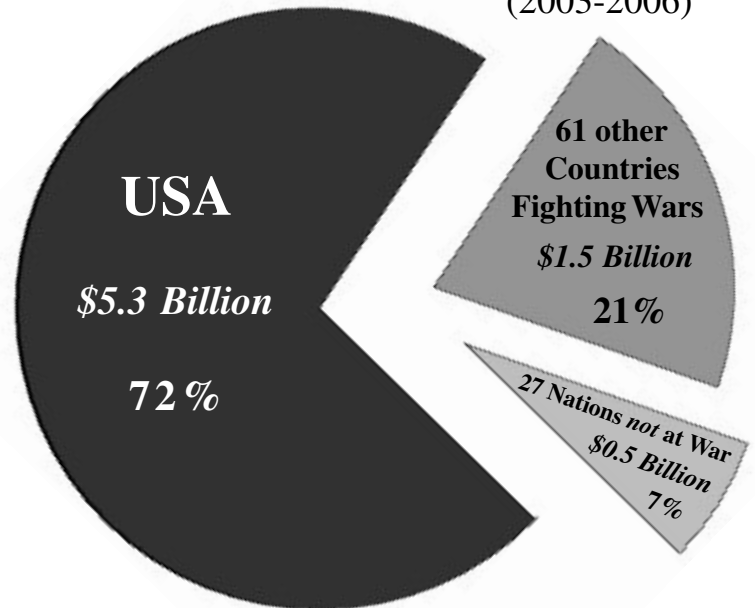
Supplying the US War Machine

DFAIT’s military export reports have always suffered from serious flaws. Most significantly, these reports have never disclosed any data on Canadian military exports to the US!

As an integral part of the “North American Military Industrial Base,” Canadian arms manufacturers are so thoroughly absorbed into the US war economy that the Pentagon has generally treated our military producers as if they were domestic US industries. For its part, the Canadian government requires military exporters to procure special permits for all foreign sales, *except those destined for the US!*

Coupled with this free flow in weapons-related technology to the US, is the fact that our government has liter-

Recipients of Canada’s Military Exports
(2003-2006)



Between 2003 and 2006, 93% of Canada’s known military exports went to 62 countries that had troops fighting in major armed conflicts. During that period, one warring country alone—the US—purchased almost 3/4 of the products and services that were exported by Canadian war industries.

ally handed out billions in grants and unpaid loans to Canada’s highly-profitable war industries.⁵ Under Canada-US trade agreements, these subsidies are allowed in only two sectors—military production and energy. To fuel its many wars, the Pentagon is glad to take advantage of this free and easy access to publicly-funded Canadian war industries.

The Canadian government’s eagerness to promote and support military exports to the US is amply evidenced online. The very first link on the Canadian government’s “Sell2USGov” web page—called “U.S. Federal Departments and Specialized Markets”—is the US “Department of Defense.” In this and a myriad of other ways, our government promotes exports to all branches of the US military, various spy agencies, the US Defense Logistics Agency, the US National Security Agency and US Missile Defense Agency.

Thanks in no small part to the Canadian government’s generous support to domestic war industries that are always eager to tap into the US market, Canadian products are deeply embedded in most major US weapons systems. Canadian technology has therefore played a significant part in all of the wars, invasions, bombing campaigns and regime changes led by the US.

Between 2003 and 2006, Canada exported \$6.9 billion in military goods and services to countries then fighting in Afghanistan, Iraq and/or Haiti. This was 92.7% of Canada’s total military exports. The US share of Canada’s exports to countries fighting in these three conflicts was 78%.

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Canadian Military Exports to Countries with Troops Fighting in Major Armed Conflicts (2003-2006)

Countries	Canadian Military Exports			Troops Deployed in Major Armed Conflicts			
	2003-2005	2006	2003-2006	Afghanistan	Iraq	Haiti	Internal Wars
Armenia	-	5,265	5,265		✓		
Australia	271,506,169	51,804,263	323,310,432	✓	✓		
Belgium	15,770,734	14,463,521	30,234,255	✓			
Bosnia Herzegovina	-	10,270	10,270		✓		
Brazil	5,806,964	738,800	6,545,764			✓	
Chile	3,280,023	5,515,116	8,795,139			✓	
Colombia	2,058,303	1,177,088	3,235,391				✓
Czech Republic	304,961	347,537	652,498	✓	✓		
Denmark	20,739,314	763,156	21,502,470	✓	✓		
Estonia	53,976	-	53,976	✓	✓		
Finland	3,720,711	4,205,082	7,925,793	✓			
France	39,776,637	14,575,798	54,352,435	✓		✓	
Georgia	-	15,442	15,442	✓	✓		
Germany	30,612,034	15,605,755	46,217,789	✓			
Greece	11,775,423	8,421,944	20,197,367	✓			
Hungary	-	1,600	1,600	✓	✓		
Iceland	6,602	13,509	20,111	✓	✓		
India	960,793	692,872	1,653,665	✓			✓
Indonesia	32,000	115,680	147,680				✓
Iraq	20,188	-	20,188		✓		✓
Israel	4,679,679	994,653	5,674,332				✓
Italy	32,209,842	7,186,305	39,396,147	✓	✓		
Japan	19,434,092	9,713,192	29,147,284	✓	✓		
Jordan	405,102	6,580	411,682	✓		✓	
Korea (South)	82,548,712	18,374,365	100,923,077	✓	✓		
Latvia	212,846	87,558	300,404		✓		
Malaysia	29,802,290	784,668	30,586,958			✓	
Mexico	2,128,564	15,573	2,144,137				✓
Mongolia	1,234	-	1,234		✓		
Morocco	668,493	2,549	671,042			✓	
Netherlands	24,550,126	13,381,503	37,931,629	✓	✓		
New Zealand	257,855,517	11,956,408	269,811,925	✓	✓		
Nicaragua	389,052	44,698	433,750		✓		
Nigeria	94,800	-	94,800				✓
Norway	26,716,748	4,678,458	31,395,206	✓	✓		
Peru	2,715	17,309	20,024			✓	
Philippines	-	22,706	22,706		✓		✓
Poland	11,062	20,235	31,297	✓	✓		
Portugal	605,053	75,465	680,518	✓	✓		
Romania	1,000	2,142,457	2,143,457	✓	✓		
Russia	2,915	55,710	58,625				✓
Serbia & Montenegro	1,412	-	1,412				✓
Slovakia	-	58,5927	58,5927	✓	✓		
Singapore	31,884,476	2,315,731	34,200,207		✓		
Spain	11,987,704	7,552,848	19,540,552	✓	✓	✓	
Sri Lanka	28,058	57,412	85,470			✓	✓
Sweden	22,743,054	12,565,098	35,308,152	✓			
Switzerland	3,622,996	1,485,486	5,108,482	✓			
Thailand	5,800,083	378,335	6,178,418		✓		✓
Turkey	2,643,474	5,220,415	7,863,889	✓			
Ukraine	-	-	42,400		✓		
United Arab Emir.	5,303,276	4,428,314	9,731,590	✓			
UK	258,210,911	80,151,594	338,362,505	✓	✓		
US	4,001,000,000	1,333,000,000	5,334,000,000	✓	✓	✓	
Totals	5,219,769,568	1,635,774,250	6,867,786,768	6,768,511,152	6,590,720,895	5,455,009,066	19,316,824
US Share of Totals	76.7%	81.5%	77.7%	78.8%	80.9%	97.8%	0%

Internal Counterinsurgency Wars

Canadian war industries also export to governments fighting major armed conflicts within their own borders. However, this fuelling of internal counterinsurgency wars is negligible when compared to Canada's role in equipping foreign troops fighting wars *outside* their borders.

Between 2003 and 2006, 12 governments received Canadian military exports while they engaged in major armed conflicts within their boundaries: Colombia, India, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, Russia, Serbia & Montenegro, Sri Lanka and Thailand. These exports totalled a mere \$12 million over those four years. This was only about 1/6 of 1% of Canada's total known military exports to countries at war during that period.

Among the twelve governments waging "Internal Wars," four also had some troops deployed to either Afghanistan, Iraq and/or Haiti between 2003 and 2006.

Ploughshares: A very different analysis

In an article called "Fuelling Wars?", Ernie Regehr, a co-founder and former executive-director of Project Ploughshares, provides a very different analysis from the COAT research which shows that 93% of Canada's recent military exports went to countries at war. Although using the same DFAIT data on Canadian exports, Regehr's article begins with the encouraging view that: "In contrast to the United States, Canada largely manages to avoid exporting major Canadian military commodities directly to countries at war."

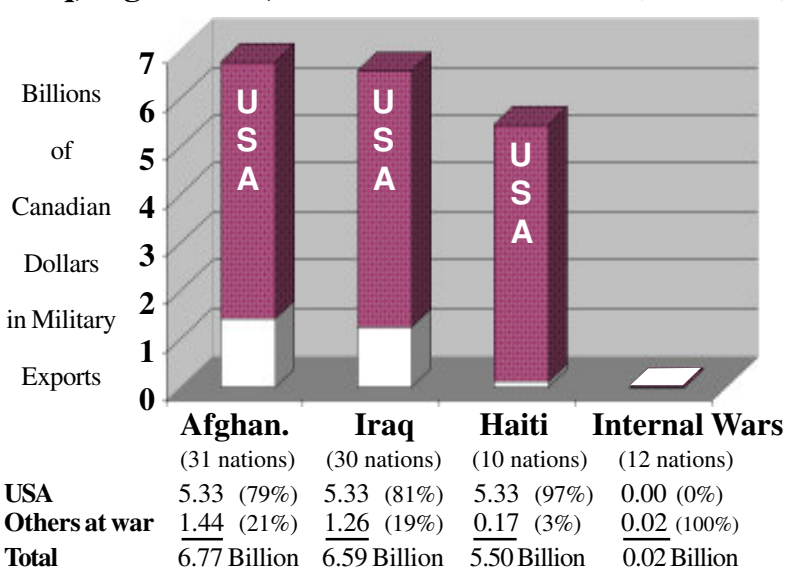
This view is based on an error in defining which countries are "at war." The analysis is correct if one only counts countries defined by Ploughshares as those "hosting" wars, which excludes all countries deploying troops to foreign wars. This approach is found in Ploughshares' documents like *On the Record: An audit of Canada's report on military exports, 2003-05*. It states that in respect to whether Canada is living up to its promise to control military exports to "countries involved in or under imminent threat of hostilities," "it is possible to assess the record of Canadian military exports from 2003 to 2005 against the states affected by armed conflict as reported in Project Ploughshares' *Armed Conflicts Report* during the three-year period."⁴

Although these annual Ploughshares' reports all list countries "hosting armed conflicts on their territory," they *do not list* the many *other* countries waging major wars *outside* their borders. This is what created the unfortunate blind spot used by Regehr to present the opinion that few Canadian military exports are going "to countries at war."

In "Fuelling Wars?," Regehr notes that between 2003 and 2005, "Canada sold to 11 of the 28 countries that were at war according to the Ploughshares annual Armed Conflicts Report." But, the 28 countries listed by Ploughshares were those which they said were "hosting" wars. Ploughshares' list did not include the US, UK or dozens of other countries collectively deploying thousands of troops to foreign wars.

Regehr goes on to say that between 2003 and 2005: "Total Canadian sales (to non-US customers)...reached \$1.69 billion, of which \$13.6 million went to countries in conflict—in other words, *less than 1 percent of Canadian military exports went to countries in conflict* dur-

Canadian Military Exports to Countries Fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti and Internal Wars (2003-2006)



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ing those three years... And, as a proportion of total Canadian military exports (including sales to the US), the proportion going to countries in conflict would be *less than 1/2 of 1 percent (of course, if the US were included as a country in conflict, re its forces in Iraq, then more than half of all Canadian exports should be reported as going to countries at war).*" (Emphasis added)

There should, of course, be no question about including the US in a list of "countries at war." Regehr neglects to mention any of the dozens of other countries—aided by Canadian technology—that waged war in Iraq. What's more, he makes no reference to Haiti or Afghanistan. Although the Afghan War has drawn troops from almost all NATO nations, no NATO members appear in his analysis because they are not "hosting" wars and are therefore not considered "at war" or "in conflict." By only counting Canada's arms exports to countries "hosting" wars, Regehr contends that our government is doing a good job keeping military products away warring nations. But, as COAT research shows, 93% of Canada's military exports between 2003 and 2006 were sold to 62 countries (not just the 11 noted by Regehr) that were helping to wage the world's biggest wars.

References

1. "Major armed conflict" is where 1000+ are killed per year.
2. *Report on Exports of Military Goods from Canada 2006*. DFAIT, 2009. www.international.gc.ca
3. *Report on Exports of Military Goods from Canada 2003-2005*. DFAIT, 2007. www.international.gc.ca
4. Kenneth Epps and Kyle Gossen, *On the Record*, p.25. Project Ploughshares, 2009. www.ploughshares.ca
5. Richard Sanders, "A Brief Overview of Industry Canada's Corporate Hand-Outs," *Press for Conversion!* Oct. 2003, pp.44-45. coat.ncf.ca/our_magazine/links/52/52-44-45.pdf