

Bush's new export controls: Third World, U.S. to suffer

by Kathleen Klenetsky

George Bush's war against the Third World entered a new phase March 7, when the administration released harsh new export control regulations that will virtually terminate the flow of high technology to the developing sector.

Supposedly aimed at stopping the spread of chemical weapons, the new policy—formally dubbed the Enhanced Proliferation Control Initiative (EPCI), but more aptly known as the Enhanced Population Control Initiative for the lethal effect it will have on the developing sector—is a key part of Bush's genocidal plans for the Third World under his new world order.

The 'dual use' hoax

Using the bogeyman of weapons proliferation, especially chemical and biological weapons—a bogeyman created largely by the United States, using Iraq's alleged chemical weapons capability as a pretext—the administration intends to bring about a policy of what one high European official has bluntly called "technological apartheid" against the developing sector.

Targeted by the Bush administration are what are known as "dual use" technologies, that is, technologies that are used in civilian applications, but which can also have a military use under certain circumstances. Given the state of science and technology today, the vast majority of high-technology goods could conceivably have both a commercial and a military use.

A fact sheet on the new non-proliferation regulations issued by the administration asserts that special licenses will now be required on "dual-use equipment with *legitimate commercial uses*, but also *potential* applications to chemical and biological weapons production" (emphases added). A State Department spokesman acknowledged recently that previously, only those goods with a direct military use were subject to such stringent controls.

The new controls raise from 11 to 50 the number of chemicals that will now require a special export license before they can be sold to most developing countries. Supposedly, these 50 chemicals could be used under certain circumstances as precursors to chemical weapons.

The "rub" is that almost all of these chemicals are also commonly used in a wide range of essential civilian and scientific enterprises, including the production of fertilizer, insecticides, beer, and petroleum, as well as in treatment of sewage and water.

Without access to these chemicals, countries lacking the ability to produce them themselves, as many Third World countries do, will see any hopes of economic development go up in smoke. Without the wherewithal to produce pesticides and fertilizers, they will be unable to increase food yields for their population; without the wherewithal to provide potable water and to treat sewage, epidemic diseases, such as the cholera now sweeping across Peru, will rampage through the Third World, killing millions.

But EPCI doesn't stop there. The regulations will also control, for the first time, exports of equipment that could hypothetically be used to produce chemical or biological weapons (CBW). In addition, they will restrict the export of plants that can manufacture any of the 50 chemicals on the restricted list, as well as services that might also be used in this way.

Again, much of this plant and equipment falls into the category of what is known as "dual use." "The equipment list, which reflects a three-month effort involving extensive consultations with industry, is unprecedented," states the administration fact sheet. "Never before have U.S. export licenses been required for dual-use, CBW-related equipment."

Moreover, the regulations would also enable the government to prohibit participation by U.S. citizens in overseas

construction projects that might be related to weapons production. They contain considerably stiffer penalties for those who export restricted goods without a license, including 10-year prison terms.

"The chemicals and equipment are used mostly for very innocent purposes from pharmaceuticals to beer," points out Jeffery C. Van, spokesman for the Chemical Manufacturers Association. "The same equipment that is used to brew beer can also make chemical weapons."

Hit list

As published in the March 13 *Federal Register*, the new regulations will apply to nearly every country on the face of the globe, with the few exceptions being Australia, Austria, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, and NATO member countries.

Ten countries are singled out by name for the restrictions, on the grounds that their activities "may have CBW-related implications." These ten include Brazil, Argentina, North Korea, Ethiopia, India, and Taiwan.

That the restrictions will have catastrophic consequences for the developing sector has already been recognized by some. India's *Economic Times* published a commentary shortly after Bush's new export policy was announced, charging that the Gulf war was the beginning of a war against the Third World in the theater of technology transfer. The commentary noted that since the area of weapons technology brings together many disciplines, the U.S. can now be expected to keep a hawk-like watch on developing-sector activities in numerous scientific fields, including supercomputers, software, mathematics, metallurgy, chemical technology, communications, space programs, and that old bogeyman, nuclear technology.

The Third World will ultimately be left with what the West considers technology "appropriate" for its stage of development, the commentary concluded.

U.S. industry will 'be dying'

Although the Third World will suffer the worst as a result of Bush's new controls, exporting countries, including, emphatically, the United States, will also be hard hit.

The new regulations have come under strong attack from some U.S. business groups, which contend, rightly, that they will strangle U.S. exports. Randolph Stayin, a lawyer for several U.S. industry associations involved in the export of food-processing and other equipment, warned that the product list is "so broad that it could affect all of the machinery and equipment that is used in the petroleum, chemical, water, waste-water, and food-processing industries."

Stayin, an attorney with the Washington, D.C. firm of Barnes and Thornburg, told *EIR* that the new regulations will have a devastating effect on U.S. export-oriented businesses. "Many of the firms I represent are small. They can't possibly afford to hire the lawyers it will require" to navigate

through the complex, time-consuming process that the Bush administration will now require to obtain an export license, he explained.

Furthermore, he noted, it is virtually impossible for U.S. businessmen to be able to guarantee that someday, somewhere, a piece of equipment he may have exported for some clearly civilian use might never be diverted to a military use. "We sell things like olive-oil extracting and peanut butter processing equipment," he said. "Our people can't know whether this will someday be diverted to weapons manufacturing. How can we possibly tell?"

"The Commerce Department has been encouraging U.S. companies to gear up their export capabilities, and that's what the companies I represent have done," Stayin added. But with the new regulations, the government is making that near impossible.

Eric Hirschorn, an attorney for the chemical industry, has warned that the restrictions will "bring a whole new set of industries under control. They are going to get the shock of their lives when they learn they're going to have to apply for export licenses they may not get to sell overseas." As a result of the Bush regulations, chemical companies will "be dying."

The Commerce Department has admitted that the new rules could affect between \$50 billion and \$75 billion in U.S. exports annually.

Unfortunately, most representatives of those U.S. firms affected by the regulations, have reacted pragmatically. Instead of forging an alliance with other exporting countries and developing nations to prevent the restrictions from going into effect, they have instead demanded that the administration try to extend the restrictions to the competition. "Look, with the hysteria over Iraq's chemical weapons, the administration and the Congress are going to get this policy through," one industry rep told *EIR*. So, our only alternative to being put at a unilateral disadvantage, is to get other exporting nations to adopt the same restrictions."

That suicidal perspective suits the Bush team just fine. One of their main objectives is to sabotage the economies of other advanced nations—Germany and Japan in particular—which still believe that exporting high-technology goods to the developing sector is a sensible policy, since it will aid these countries in solving the economic problems that frequently lead to political and military instability. The U.S. considers Germany and Japan to be its new enemies, because they have rejected following America's lead into a post-industrial hell-hole, and therefore are much more economically competitive.

The administration has asserted officially that it will seek a global agreement among exporting countries to abide by the U.S. initiative. According to Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher, the administration intends "to seek maximum cooperation by other countries to adopt similar controls to stop the spread of these weapons."