

Two points of view

Litton

By Roy Johnstone

The Lee government has recently announced that Litton Systems of Canada wants to set up a radar assembly plant at the Charlottetown industrial complex under the banner of "jobs for islanders" — our provincial and federal representatives have rushed off to Ottawa to lobby the federal government. They hope to influence the awarding of the Low Level Aid Defence (LLAD) contract to Litton's benefit. (Litton is part of a consortium including a Swiss company Oerlikon and a U.S. company, Martin Marietta)

But has anyone really asked why Litton has chosen Prince Edward Island for its manufacturing site? I would like to suggest that Islanders are being tested! We are being asked to welcome Litton but what do we really know about this company? Rene Dubois once stated that it's important to "think globally but act locally". I think this principle is particularly appropriate to the Litton question.

What do we know of the global industrial military complex of which Litton, Oerlikon and Martin Marietta are major players. Litton Systems of Canada is 100% owned by the parent corporation in the U.S.A. and it ranks in the top 10 U.S. military corporations with sales in excess of 16 billion

(nearly 15 times PEI's total provincial budget). It provided guidance systems and weapons release systems to the U.S. aircraft that killed thousands of peasants in Vietnam. Litton is a key player in maintain U.S. interventionist forces in Central America and the Middle East. Litton was involved in the construction of a Honduran training base for the U.S. backed forces invading Nicaragua. It is also extensively involved in the design and production of electronic warfare systems and the guidance for the Cruise missile. Oerlikon is also a multinational company based in Switzerland and it recently spend \$200 million on improving the killing precision of the 35 mm guns it manufactures for the ADATS system. This is the same gun the Argentines used against Britain in the Falklands/Malvinas conflict. Martin Marietta is also one of the U.S. top military corporations involved in high tech military U.S. space shuttle, Pershing and Cruise missiles). Doesn't it concern Islanders that the profits from Litton's plant here will contribute to an escalation of the arms race and to more killing in other parts of the world?

What is the relationship between local events and companies like Litton moving the the Maritimes? As we witness more and more farm bankruptcies, as we

read that the Charlottetown hospital doesn't have the funds to maintain full services, as unemployment increases, we experience the effects of policy decisions made by national and provincial governments. These decisions are a direct result of a growing emphasis on military spending. Many economic studies have been done that confirm that military spending generates less employment and diverts funds from more socially beneficial uses. If we look at the impacts on the poorer countries buying these military goods we see even more desperate results — famine, disease and illiteracy.

What is the ADATS system that the Litton, Oerlikon and Martin Marietta consortium is manufacturing? Are we told it's for Canadian defence forces in Europe but in fact Litton has made commitments to manufacture this system even if it doesn't win the Canadian LLAD contract. President Keating has predicted that 90% of these Air Defence and Anti-Tank Systems (ADATS) will be exported (see note on Oerlikon above). Under the guise of 'defence' this radar plant will provide key components for a highly accurate mobile weapon system which will be sold to any country with the money. When questioned about Litton's foreign sales

Canadian President Ronald Keating replied:

"We have sold to Chile when the U.S. was against selling to Chile. We sold to Argentina and all those places. We would sell to Libya and Iraq if they required something" (Libya is allegedly the country which supported the recent bombings against civilians in Rome and Vienna).

Litton is one of the worst labour law violators in the U.S. It has harassed, fired and threatened violence against union organizers and supporters. It has a long history as a 'runaway company' closing more than ten plants because of attempts to organize unions. Six international unions including the AFL-CIO joined together to publicize and protest Litton's anti-union activities. Litton has also been charged with huge cost over runs, falsifying customs data and violating federal advertising law in the U.S. This company has a long history of misrepresentation and fraud which has been paid for by the taxpayer. Do Islanders want to have a company with this history in their community?

The Premier has stated that Litton is bringing progress to PEI. But is this the kind of progress that Islanders want? The Premier is promising that Litton will

reduce the Island's rate of unemployment over 4% by 1991 but he is mistaken. He has calculated the total number of jobs to be 832 but over half of these are persons, that is, one person working for one year, hardly the long term employment that we need. Most likely the jobs will go to people in training programs who are presently not unemployed, and for the most part these will be the lower paying assembly line jobs. Litton's technological transfer will mean workers will be moving here from Toronto and other unemployed people will be hired who are not living on the Island. Litton is going to hire the most qualified and experienced people it can find, unfortunately it's unlikely that many of these people will be from the ranks of the chronic unemployed. It's true, some Islanders will get jobs but at what cost in taxpayer subsidies and grants? If Litton gets the largest portion of provincial and federal monies will other sectors of the Island economy suffer? What impact will this have on unemployment?

If our democratic principles are to more than mere platitudes we must be given answers to our questions and the freedom to speak out our concerns. We need a full public debate on this important issue.

War and peace

By Jim Lai

Mankind has had a long history of war and conflict, broken by generally short periods of peace. Historically, if a country had a strong defense, she might have a prolonged interval of peace and prosperity. There are many examples one can cite.

The Great Wall of China, the only man-made structure visible from space, is a monument to the warlike nature of mankind. When it was built over twenty-two hundred years ago, up to a million lives were lost in its construction to buy the subsequent five hundred years of peace for the Chinese people from northern invaders. Inevitably, parts of the Great Wall fell into disrepair; afterwards China was periodically ruled by the various northern invaders.

Smaller countries have their share of misfortunes too. For

example, Finland, being a marshland state, has had been involved in war for about one year in seven on average during the last seven hundred years, her last war ending in 1945. One can imagine how the Finnish suffered during those war-torn times.

Considering historical evidence, the belief that the threat of war can be removed in a generation or even a few decades is incredibly hollow and empty.

The threat of a nuclear war has been much publicized recently. Many have cried out against nuclear weapons, saying that they pose an intolerable threat to mankind. In the 1950s, great minds like Einstein and Oppenheimer spoke out against the further build-up of nuclear weapons, but they were dismissed as naive scientists by practically all North Americans. With the readily available nuclear technology and present stockpiles

of nuclear weapons, it is too late to turn the clock back to an era of a lesser nuclear threat.

The nuclear weapon was developed during World War II by the American government in fear that the Nazi government would develop the bomb first. The development of the nuclear bomb justified by the inhuman nature of the Nazi party. If the Nazi government had developed the bomb first, the lives of literally millions of freedom fighters could have been wiped out in a firestorm of hatred. In any case, the development of the bomb was inevitable with the advent of quantum mechanics, which is the basis of our modern technological civilization as we know it.

Since that time, enough nuclear weapons have been stockpiled by the superpowers to destroy the world more than twelve times over. Some say that nuclear weapons

have a destabilizing influence on the world. Whether or not nuclear weapons have made the world less stable is arguable. As one liberal-minded American news commentator said, without nuclear weapons we might already have had a Third and even a Fourth World War according to recent history. Recall that World War I was precipitated by a mere assassination of a royal figure.

One must draw a line between offensive and defensive weapons, aggressors and victims, and unjust and just wars. Those who blindly oppose all weapons and all wars are only marginally better than the warmongers they are fighting against.

Gorbachev's recently announced so-called "Grând Scheme" to eliminate nuclear weapons within fifteen years is no less a hoax than the recent escapade involving icons and blood in Quebec. There

are people who will readily and blindly believe in the untenable without giving the matter any thought. Such people are naive and easily fooled. They are bound to be disappointed. What reasonable person would bet that nuclear weapons will disappear from the face of the earth in fifteen years?

The Russians will never give up their nuclear weapons and allow the billion-strong "Yellow Peril" to trample their country into the ground. The Americans will never give up their nuclear arsenal and let petty countries such as Libya gain an equal footing with her. Even Libya may have the ability to produce nuclear weapons, perhaps by hiring unemployed young nuclear scientists from around the world.

Even if all nuclear weapons were somehow eliminated, they could be manufactured again, **continued on page 5**