

Litton again

By Jason Thompson

Mr. Boswell's article a week ago made me wonder what issue is really at the core of the Litton debate. While Mr. Boswell accused Johnstone's anti-Litton article as an emotion-centered one, rather than relying on the "cold hard facts", I wondered if the issue at hand is not in reality an emotional one.

Does it not have more to do with our moral and ethical beliefs than the expertise of the Litton plant? This is the basis for the peace movement and it seems to make a lot of sense. However, many people continue to label those who argue against possible arms build-up as "far-out peace activists who are out of touch with reality and have no sense of the world's real problems." But are these people out of touch, or is it the proponents of arms build up who have become so hardened and careless that they have lost touch?

To argue that we have a contribution to make to NATO's defence capacity is like asking us to put our drop in an already full basket. How many defensive and offensive weapons, capable of blowing our world to pieces, do we really need? Our current stockpile of weapons is capable of blowing our world apart 12 times over. However, perhaps additional weapons would make some people feel safer. Why should more money be spent on defense when all this does is perpetuate the development of new offensive weapons on the other side? It is time to start reducing weapons, not increasing them and who knows, this may actually lead to some new feeling of trust among

opposing nations. How can we ever trust one another if the escalation continues. Therefore, it does not make sense to continue to add to something that is already in excess and building constantly. It is really "cold hard facts" that tell us that more and more weapons make the world a safer place to live?

With regards to the issue of unemployment on P.E.I., the facts versus our beliefs come into play again. It is true that new, highly-skilled jobs will be generated, but are these really the kinds of skills that will contribute to the betterment of our people? Once again, the issue of forfeiting our beliefs of what is right comes into play. It is understandable that in periods of high unemployment, people will jump at job opportunities, regardless of the type of employment. This stems from man's basic need for survival. Nobody wants to be unemployed but why should the jobs have to come from a military-oriented industry? Can we not make better use of our money by creating long term projects to clean up our polluted planet, or producing new ways to bolster our troubled potato industry? If we don't contribute to our primary industries such as those involved in food production, what will happen to our food supplies? Will most of our money be pumped into the military, while our families go hungry?

So Litton is a complicated issue and will continue to be so for a long time. But have we reached a point in history where we think it is pointless to argue against such an 'issue'? Those who argue for Litton seem to be saying that

the arms build up is inevitable and that we might as well jump on the bandwagon and reap the benefits. This, to me, is a hopeless ideology and I often wonder how these people can feel content, under the notion that we cannot stop the vicious cycle that we have created. But that is just the point — we created this cycle; surely we

can stop it. But it has to start somewhere and it has to start among the everyday citizens of the world. One small voice may not be heard, but several small voices together will be. The fact that peace organizations are on the rise and the protests at arms build up are common, suggests a growing attitude that our voices can be

heard. As a university student with my whole life ahead of me, certainly hope these people are correct.

So P.E.I. has now come into the limelight and has its chance to make a statement either for or against further military build up. Let's hope the final decision is the right one!



THE CROSS ROADS

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