

# 'Academic freedom' cloaks support for U.S. aggression

By ABIE WEISFELD

The sentiment against the use of university faculties for war-related research has been evident for a couple of years now on Canadian campuses. On some campuses there have been campaigns to end that war research particularly in the light of the U.S. government's foreign policy in South East Asia and the government of Canada's acquiescence in that war. Just as there was the beginning of a campaign last year here at York, at the University of Waterloo the Vietnam Mobilization Committee (VMC) also called for an end to war research at a senate meeting. The following excerpts come from a study that was the result of that campaign which was endorsed and published by the Federation of Students at U. of W.

Since the early days of the American involvement in Vietnam in 1966 there has been a constant protest against the U.S. presence in Vietnam, now South East Asia, and the Canadian government's complicity in that war. That complicity was pointed out to a population conditioned to think of Canada as a non-military power capable of only a supportive role, never taking overt military action and certainly not helping the American effort in Vietnam but trying to cool things down as a member of the International Control Commission. Now much of that image has been crumbling but surprisingly the universities in Canada have so far escaped much disillusionment under the pretext of an isolationist character based on the purity of concept called "academic freedom".

The university in reality is being revealed as a component in the functioning of a society, firmly entrenched in efforts to support the U.S. foreign policy.

We can see that there are three categories in research being done across Canada. That done by industry (largely American), the Canadian Military (the Defence Research Board, DRB), and the U.S. military.

Many of the projects have a neutral or innocuous character to them, but this basic research upon completion is applied by the military and business interests in their own laboratories to suit their purposes. It is those purposes, military victory, together with money and power, that determines the essential character of that initial research.

The second category of research is that carried on by the Defence Research Board of Canada (DRB) which is concerned with specifically military applications. The dimension of research done by the DRB is enough to surprise those with a liberal image of Canada. Of all the research sponsored by the government, DRB and the National Research Council, about half is controlled by the DRB.

Defence agreements provide for a division of labour between Canada and the U.S. leading to heavy emphasis on military research by Canada. In particular, Canada is regarded for its pioneer work in the area of chemical warfare and as a continuing centre for the testing and development of such knowledge. This division of labour is operated by the Defence Scientific Information Service. According to the Extramural Grants Manual of the Defence Research Board, the armed forces maintain a constant interest in the results of research; and Canada takes part in a reciprocal exchange of scientific information with the defence organization of other countries."

"The Defence Scientific Information Service (DSIS) is a part of the Defence Research Board Headquarters in Ottawa. Its services are available to Canadian scientist and engineers working on DRB grants or contracts. It specializes in documents which result from defence sponsored research in the U.S.A., U.K., Canada and to a lesser extent in other friendly allied countries."

"This material for the most part, cannot be found in university or company libraries . . . It is received under agreements which in some cases place restrictions upon its use."

"DSIS also distributes to the defence communities of the U.S.A., U.K., Canada and any other NATO countries, copies of reprints and reports of research carried out by or under the sponsorship of the DRB." In conclusion it states, "The Defence Research Board fully appreciates the contributions that Canadian universities can make to these continuing objectives."

In support of the study's point the U.S. Dept. of Defence supplied the following article reprinted from Canadian Dimensions (Jan.-Feb.-March 1968 vol. 5 nos. 2 and 3) makes clear Canada's involvement with the U.S. war machine.

"In view of the unsettled world situation and the mutual interest of the U.S. and Canada in the defence of North America, due to their close geographical proximity United States defense economic cooperation with Canada must not only continue but be expanded so as to achieve the following objectives: greater standardization of military equipment; greater integration of military production and equipment; wider dispersal of production facilities; establishment of supplemental sources of supplies; removal of obstacles that prevent the flow of defence equipment between the two countries; the determination of Canadian production



facilities available for the supply of U.S. current and future mobilization requirements; and the furnishing of planned mobilization schedules to Canadian contractors producing for the U.S.A. as guidance in the event of full mobilization; ensure the most economical use of defense funds, and accord equal consideration to the business communities of both countries."

U.S. Dept. of Defense  
Directive No. 2035.1  
July 1960.

The study then continues to take on some of the arguments used by administrators to justify their policy of sponsoring war research.

### Rationalization of a War Research Policy

In two instances when an administrator was confronted with the facts about a certain aspect of war research in Canada, the reactions were both similar, and predictable.

In the first instance, Ed Broadbent (M.P.-NDP) asked Trade Minister Jean Luc Pepin on December 4, 1968 about the moral implications of a military oriented research and development program funded by the Canadian government. His reply was:

- 1) "Most of the defence equipment has a civilian commercial content . . . And the defence industry brings about technological programs and management technique, which are vital in industrial development . . . We now have 175 companies involved in the production of defence equipment . . . You dread this: I find it normal."
- 2) "In effect our alignment with the U.S. through NATO obligates us to be responsible for military production and procurement."
- 3) "This system (of defence production sharing agreement with the U.S.) give us better and less costly armaments."
- 4) "This has contributed of course to our balance of trade and payments with the United States and with the rest of the world."
- 5) "All big industrial countries do it irrespective of political or moral creed."

Broadbent's reply was, "Surely research, however profitable in its side effects, is concerned with death, not life. My point was that we have been so denoted, on both sides of the cold war, to this kind of benefit that we no longer even think of the meaningful moral questions." Secondly, it was ludicrous to rely on spin-off effects from military research and development which is what he was asked about in the first place. In fact, few Canadians realize that Canada is the fifth largest trader in armaments in the world, pulling in half a billion dollars a year.

At the University of Waterloo where a significant amount of war research is being carried on, the Vietnam Mobilization Committee confronted the Senate in the fall of 1970 with some aspects of this research. The vice-president, Dr. Petch, defended such research by saying that:

- 1) the research is non-classified and therefore legitimate
- 2) the spin-off benefits from such projects are valuable to society which is just another way of saying that it is scientific progress.
- 3) it is not up to the university to allow such research but is the choice of the researchers under the umbrella of "academic freedom"

The first point seems to imply that if an immoral policy is being carried out and it is known to a small segment of the population that the policy couldn't be immoral or it would of necessity be secret. Well, there is more than one way of blinding people as to the reality of a situation and if the information about such research could be kept secret without offending a segment of the population it most likely would be. Before the publication of the U.S. military projects in the Congressional Record in 1969 no university official admitted that these research projects existed.

The second argument brings up the question of whether or not scientific progress is based on military activity, whether it is possible to have a society which does research for the social needs of its people and not a foreign policy condoning

genocide in Vietnam, nuclear weapons escalation, and chemical and biological warfare development. Obviously there are many alternatives to military scientific research, many of which are presented as spin-off benefits of the war research that is being defended. It's all an amazing reversal of priorities where projects on the elimination of pollution are hard to find and the military is a main sponsor of research. Critics of such a policy do not regard technology or science as a rampant evil, but the use of science by the military in co-operation with government as the cause of the perversion of science.

To the suggestion that the money presently being used to assist industry in military production be used instead for research into pollution control processes, Pepin replied to Broadbent saying, "Although the area of pollution is important, one could make a case for other areas as well . . . The companies have the final say on which area they will spend their money and the government assistant funds." Broadbent replied, "That last statement speaks worlds about the manner in which the present government establishes its scale of priorities."

As for the last point made by Petch, the cover of academic freedom merely supports the status quo whereby a rich military can lavishly sponsor research unlike any socially necessary agency. The administration's concept of academic freedom in effect means that the majority, the students and the professors, must allow a few researchers to work for the U.S. military and similar institutions against our will. Is the university neutral and isolated from society? Obviously not, when links such as those with a foreign military agency form an integral part of the university. In a brief presented by the University of Waterloo's administration to the Committee on University Affairs in November 1970, applied research is defined as that "which clearly states a specific problem . . . The problem is specified by the sponsor and not by the research worker and progress and accomplishment are evaluated by the sponsor." Where does any concept of "academic freedom" fit into the schema where the researcher has no choice in the purpose of the project or the direction.

What is needed then is unconditional research grants to enable the researcher to escape the sponsor's determination of the goal and their supervision of the project. The overall research policy as well must not fall under the control of an administration or board of governors which presently overlooks the ongoing war research. Rather the population itself must have a say in the determination of a research policy since it is they who produce the wealth and facilities for others to carry on their research. The basis of a research policy not responsible to an institution's determination, which is opposed by the overwhelming number of students and faculty must be student-faculty and general population control over that policy. Only then will academic freedom become a reality and not a facade over the policy whereby those with money get their work done regardless of the intent and wishes of the university community.

cont'd on page 4

Canadian Military Research Projects Awarded to York University  
April 1, 1972 to June 30, 1972

	Source of Funds	Amount of Funds	Title of Project
Bell, D. V.	Defence Research Board [DRB]	\$10,000	Political Violence in Canada
Carswell, A. I.	DRB	7,000	Atmospheric Properties by Laser Propagation and Scattering
Chin, A. K.	DRB	8,650	Physical Fitness and Adaptation to Cold and Altitude Stresses
Darewych, J. W.	DRB	3,000	Variational Calculation of Collision Phenomena
Duley, W. W.	DRB	3,000	Electron Emission from Metals Subjected to CO <sub>2</sub> Laser Irradiation
Filseth, S.	DRB	4,500	Combustion Chemiluminescence
Goodings, J. M.	DRB	3,200	Studies of a Plasma Orifice Probe
Haynes, R. H.	DRB	7,000	Macromolecular Aspects of Mutagenesis and DNA Repair in Microorganisms Treated with Mustard Gas Analogs
Hobson, R. M.	DRB	6,500	Ion-Electron Dissociative Recombination Coefficients
Laframboise, J.	DRB	3,500	Langmuir Probes in Turbulent Wake Plasmas and Plasma Effects on Topside Souther Antennas
Nicholls, R. W.	DRB	4,000	Interaction of Laser Radiation with Macromolecules
Nicholls, R. W.	DRB	18,000	High Power Molecular Lasers
Schiff, H. I.	DRB	11,000	Reactions of the Constituents of the Upper Atmosphere
Welge, K. H.	DRB	7,000	Photodissociation of Molecules of Aeronomic Interest

### Statistics

Academic Year	Agency	# of Projects	Amount of \$
1965-66	DRB	1	\$30,460
	Dept. of Defense		
	Production [DODP]	3	39,022
	U.S. Military	3	60,324
1966-67	DRB	5	17,000
	DODP	4	52,747.06
	U.S. Military	5	66,474.21
1968-69	DRB	6	21,200
	U.S. Military	3?	80,373
			[\$153,000 in the Congressional Record]
1969-70	DRB	13	100,050
	DODP	1?	510.62
	U.S. Military	2	17,425.71
	NATO	1	354.24
1971-72	DRB	14	96,350
	DODP	2	?
	U.S. Military	1	64,686