

Universities

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Why is Canada so involved in chemical and bacteriological weaponry research?

There are two reasons: first, Canada was one of the first countries to explore the military possibilities of this type of warfare and has an international reputation as being a pioneer in the field. Second, nerve gases, chemical defoliants, non-lethal gases, and viruses are saleable commodities with an immediate market in the United States' war in Vietnam.

And every time Canada sells weapons, the university research is paying off for DRB. War is good business.

Two of the other three research establishments, at Ottawa and Downsview (just outside Toronto), study current problems in the Canadian armed forces. Among the projects now being done are studies of human capabilities and limitations, plus other behavioral studies.

The final establishment, at Valcartier, Quebec, again does marketable research. The scientists there study lasers, armaments, surveillance equipment, explosives, and they do weaponry systems analysis.

From these seven defence research establishments come the finished weapons, ready to be mass produced and sold.

At this point, the 2,500 employees of DRB have performed their functions well: the ultimate decisions involving contracting (for mass produced weapons) and selling, rest with the actual board members of the Defence Research Board.

The actual board is split in two parts: ex officio members (government representatives) and appointed members who represent universities and industries. These men are very powerful: they decide what research should be pursued and which universities and what industries receive defence contracts.

Not surprisingly, there is a substantial amount of patronage toward the institutions these men represent.

Board members at present include high administration officials from University of Winnipeg, University of Saskatchewan, Université de Montreal, and Laval University.

Industrial representatives include or have included directors of de Havilland Aircraft of Canada, ATCO (Calgary), Canadian Westinghouse, and RCA Victor Company of Canada. All these corporations are major recipients of defence contracts.

Most corporations receiving Canadian defence contracts are foreign-owned and controlled, with the bulk of them in the US and others scattered around Britain and Western Europe.

Among the major contractors are General Electric, Westinghouse, Hawker-Siddely, Litton Industries, Bendix, Sperry

Rand, and General Dynamics (America's biggest defence contractor). All business with these companies is done, of course, through their Canadian subsidiaries.

Most of these corporations do research, design, and mass production in the electronics and aerospace industries. The more overt weaponry contracting is done through crown corporations like Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and Canadian Arsenals Limited.

The research done and the weapons produced, the final step for the Department of National Defence and the rest of the government is to find a country at war who needs a stockpile of arms.

The days of smuggling guns to banana republics is long gone. Today, in the sophistication of power-bloc warfare, there are treaties and alliances and defence-sharing programs that are socially acceptable. The two main markets for Canada's military exports are NATO and the United States.

In 1970, Canada made over \$400 million by selling arms to other countries.

The Defence Production Sharing Agreement signed by Canada and the US in 1959, while touting mutual defence for the protection of North America, binds Canada to American foreign policy. Canada, is, as Canadian defence analyst William Cobban says, a contracted appendage of the American military machine.

How this agreement works is quite

simple. The US is fighting a war, so they need certain weapons. Under the Defence Production Sharing Agreement, there is very little duplication of work. For example, Canada is a specialist in chemical and bacteriological warfare.

If the Pentagon needs a new chemical defoliant, they get in contact with Canadian defence experts who get to work on perfecting the defoliant and then sell it back to the U.S. Or if the Americans have developed a new nerve gas, then they occasionally bring it to Defence Research Establishment Suffield (in Alberta) and have it tested by Canadian scientists on Canadian soil.

So the Pentagon orders weapons, DRB produces them, and people die in Vietnam. And this vicious cycle is supported and endorsed, directly and indirectly, by Canadian universities.

It makes one wonder about the purpose of universities. The ivory-tower concept of value-free science, of research in the name of humanity, is a thing of the past.

Canadian universities serve a military-industrial complex based mainly in the US. This complex has two basic aims: to keep down any threat to the established order at home (particularly in Quebec), and to provide any equipment to anybody as long as there are profits to be made.



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