

## Re: Litton editorial

By Glen Boswell

Mr. Johnstone's anti-Litton article of a week ago makes for interesting reading. He is right, of course, on the point that he shouldn't just allow Litton to set up shop on the Island without closely examining the pros and cons of such a move. We also shouldn't accept arguments at face value, but rather should study them to ensure we are not being manipulated or misled. Let's take a close look at Mr. Johnstone's arguments.

I found a large portion of his article to be filled with irrelevant and appeals to emotions rather than cold hard facts.

For instance, the fact that Litton's parent corporation ranks in the top ten of U.S. military corporations is hardly significant since we already know that Litton will be manufacturing military equipment if it locates on the Island. Would we breathe any easier if its parent corporation wasn't in the top ten? Mr. Johnstone also tosses in the little tidbit that its sales were nearly fifteen times that of P.E.I.'s total budget. That is hardly surprising given the size of this province and the high cost of military hardware. Again, what does it have to do with Litton coming to the Island? Mr. Johnstone trying to put us in awe over the size of the corporation? Why not quote some General Motors sales figures. After all, we sell Chevrolates on the Island.

I was also intrigued by the fact that Litton is somehow re-

sponsible for the deaths of thousands of peasants. Their guidance systems must be of poor quality because it would appear that they had nothing at all to do with the deaths of well over one million North Vietnamese soldiers. I will not fall into the trap of arguing over Vietnam, however, because once again, it has nothing to do with the issue at hand. Weapons, unfortunately, are designed to kill. It is equally easy for a soldier to point one at a civilian as at an enemy. The decision to point it lies with the army not the manufacturer. Vietnam is an old emotion-arousing play used by those who wish discredit someone or something by merely showing association and using that as an indication of guilt. Vietnam was a tragedy, but that tragedy has nothing to do with the manufacture of weapons guidance systems.

This leads us to another use of emotionalism to cloud logic. Mr. Johnstone mentions that Oerlikon spent 200 million dollars to improve "the killing precision of the 35 mm gun its manufactures for the ADATS systems". You may have noticed that the word "kill-

ing" seems to leap out at you from that line. I suppose that it is meant to shock the reader. As I said before, weapons are designed to kill and I fail to see what use an inaccurate weapon would be.

There are other flaws and inconsistencies in the arguments but these are only the dressing of the real issue. What do we find if we

look behind the arguments to see what they imply.

By his reference to the cruise missile, I would assume that Mr. Johnstone is an anti-nuclear advocate. That is fine in itself but if he also opposes the manufacture of conventional weapons then he must be opposed to the manufacture of any weapons. That may also seem like a noble position but it unfortunately involves an eventual starvation of the armed forces which leads to a lack of protection.

I cannot believe that anyone is truly naive enough to believe that a country without an army is one that lives for peace. Poland paid the ultimate price for her lack of defense in 1939 and she is yet to be free of outside influence. The Swiss have maintained their longstanding freedom and neutrality largely due to their excellent defense capabilities.

Renés Dubois was right. We should think globally and act locally. That statement, however, has more implications than Mr. Johnstone realizes. As it now stands, Canada is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As a member, we are entitled to be protected by the alliance and are at the same time obligated to contribute to its strength. Prince Edward Island is a province of Canada and is thus entitled to the same protection. Conversely, we are also responsible for the same obligations. Canada requires an army to contribute to NATO and to effective-

ly defend itself. What right do we have as Islanders to rely on the protection of NATO and the Canadian Armed Forces and yet refuse to allow the manufacture of military equipment on our soil? Are we not being hypocritical if we say that weapons are evil so we will not contribute to their manufacture, while at the same time saying that it is alright to manufacture them elsewhere. Ultimately they will have to be manufactured somewhere because they are a necessary evil. We cannot simply wash our hands of them and yet enjoy their protection.

On the issue of Litton's alleged labour violations, I can say little because I have little information in that area. Although his arguments in this area seem to be slightly one-sided, I am prepared to take Mr. Johnstone's statements at face value.

If Litton is such a violator of

labour laws and ethics, it is up to the government and the local lawmakers to extract guarantees from the company about the cessation of such practices before Litton is allowed to set up on the Island. The federal government can also extract similar guarantees forbidding the sale of Canadian-made weapons to certain countries.

Will Litton reduce unemployment on the Island? Mr. Johnstone seems to believe that any such effect will be marginal as we do not possess the highly skilled technicians to do some of the more complex work. It is true

that most of the initial job placements for Islanders at Litton will likely be low-skilled labour positions. We will never have highly-skilled technicians in this field if we do not have companies such as Litton located here. Why should we develop any high-tech courses at our educational facilities if we have no use for such labour on the Island? High-tech invites high-tech. Litton will attract other such industries to the

Island and we can then concentrate on bringing long-term unemployment rates down. Mr. Johnstone seems to imply that the subsidies to Litton would be better spent on short-term reductions in unemployment and band-aid measures for our ailing local economy. If this is so, and he fails to see the need to bring PEI up to date in certain industries, then he invites the continued drain of young people and professionals from this Island in search of better job prospects. Not every Islander wishes to fish or farm.

In closing, I would like to re-emphasize that we cannot over-simplify the issues in front of us. We cannot simply allow the "dirty" word "military" to prompt us into rash uncalculated actions and protests. I do not say that Litton should come to the Island regardless of the costs. It must abide by the reasonable limits that we must put on it in order to ensure our welfare. If it cannot agree to these limits, then it can take its business elsewhere.

## Alcohol/Anxiety

One person who performed in the recent cabaret expressed concern about the "state" that most of the performers were in: "Just about everybody in the show was bombed." (under the influence of alcohol.)

I can relate an experience about the cabaret. When intermission came about, I took a break and went to the washroom. Inside I found people consuming alcohol. Later I saw them TRYING to perform in front of the audience. I wasn't impressed, — neither was the audience.

No wonder — except for a few shining stars, the whole show was a bomb.

Alcohol seems to be a way of life for many a student who wants to be BRAVE to face the undesirable consequences or to CALM the nerves when anxiety is extreme.

When alcohol is consumed the desired effect is not always achieved.

I'm not putting down the type of life style nor am I promoting it, I'm just saying — it is necessary — YOU be the judge.

The Watcher

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I shall be in and out of my office throughout the rest of the week. If I am not in, submissions for the paper, or any messages, may be put through the slot on the door.

Submissions for The Netted Gem should be in no later than the Monday morning of the week in which you want your material published. All submissions are to be typewritten and double spaced.

If you cannot have your material in by Monday morning, the editor will not guarantee the material's publication in that week's issue.