

Profiting off war: Fredericton's connection

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Bruns history

by Mark Morgan

Fredericton's presence in the 'business' of war

by Asaf Rashid

The US is leading a war on Iraq that is, by the standards of international law, criminal. When looked at from an ethical standpoint, where all humans deserve the same rights to live free from the torment of war, it is completely immoral. When looked at as a part of a dozen years of brutal economic sanctions and no-stop bombing raids, it is genocidal. Any country assisting the criminal US state or any other of its criminal coalition is guilty of being complicit in the injustice. Assistance can take many forms, from direct participation as Canada is doing, to providing materials for the illegal war as Canada is doing. Canadian government officials have been completely dishonest with the people they claim to represent when they say that Canada has decided to side with international law and "not get involved" in the combat. In addition to there being Canadian troops and warships intermixed throughout the war zone, numerous Canadian companies are going along with business as usual, selling to US military interests. At the other end of these deals,

civilian blood is being spilled. The Canadian Commercial Corporation, a Crown corporation, is particularly notable, in this regard, for its services in obtaining contracts for Canadian companies to produce various goods for the US military. They are quite shameless about it, even considering the current situation in Iraq. Check their website and look under "success stories".

It is a relatively ill known fact how closely linked the military industrial complex in Canada is to that in the US. As described by researcher Richard Sanders, coordinator of the Coalition Opposed to the Arms Trade, "Canada is selling billions of dollars worth of military equipment to the US. US orders for Canadian military equipment are guaranteed to increase because of the war. Although Canada claims to have one of the world's strictest sets of guidelines to stop the export of our military goods, Canada has absolutely no restrictions whatsoever on any of our military exports to the US. No Canadian government permits are required. Canada's guidelines state that military exports to countries at war, or preparing for war, are 'closely controlled'. However, in the case of the US-led war against Iraq, Canada's military exports will show a 'closely controlled' increase."

Even in quiet little Fredericton, the

military industrial complex is churning its engines. It is of note that New Brunswick has the fastest growing defense industry out of any province in the country, currently worth about \$82 million. One major institution of interest with regards to Fredericton's military-industrial complex is the New Brunswick Aerospace and Defence Association (NBADA), which recently hosted a presentation (in Dieppe NB) by Lockheed Martin (the richest arms producer in the world). In addition, there are a number of corporations with a presence in Fredericton that together have very significant economic ties to the US military either directly, or through being in various parts of the production chain for "Top 100" US defense industry companies. These corporations with a presence in Fredericton include Adtech Manufacturing Ltd., Bombardier Aerospace (Engineering Services Centre), Caris, Content Alive, Fujitsu Consulting, L& A Metalworks Inc., Learnstream Inc., Measurand Inc., and Precision Metal Works, Ltd., Xwave. All of these companies and their interests are described on the NBADA website (www.nbacodef.ca).

Such ho-hum dirty business is reminiscent of the big business ties between Nazi Germany and the US corporate interests in WWII. In 1942, under the Trading With the Enemy Act,

the US government seized several companies in which Prescott Bush, George W. Bush's grandfather, had an interest. Prescott at the time was an investment banker with Brown Brothers Harriman (BBH), which had funneled U.S. capital into Germany during the 1920s and '30s.

If the war on Iraq—a representation of an overall much larger series of conflicts worldwide—is to be truly stopped, the "business" of war needs to be challenged. The entire machine of war, with all its component parts, needs to be challenged. There are bomber planes flying over Iraq, and heavy machinery churning out rounds of ammunition while civilians die. Where do they get produced? Who is involved? People who are interested in truly dismantling this war machine need to continue to share knowledge on all the complex interconnections between and within military industrial complexes worldwide. These are dirty ties and they need to be cleaned up to prevent more injustices of war from occurring. As a part of this process in Fredericton, on Saturday April 5th at 12:30 there will be a rally/march/popular education/creative protest starting from in Front of City Hall. It will be a chance to learn about some "interesting" places located in Fredericton and some things they are up to.

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