

Harmful Effects of Trade on the Pacific Use of Technology

This is an unmissable scientific analysis of the influence of human activities on the destruction of sustainable life on Earth; as summoned by NL from "Science and the Corporate Agenda", a highly recommended book by British professors Chris Langley and Stuart Parkinson.

Very few doubt that the globalized tendency is to accumulate wealth to dominate the world. The authors of this excellent research confirm this when they say:

"It is no secret that the links between the commercial sector and science and technology are increasing. Many policymakers, business leaders and members of the scientific community argue that this is positive for both science and society." Those who profit from a trade without thinking about its harmful effects should read this:

"There is growing evidence that the science marketing agenda brings with it a wide range of detrimental effects, including biases, conflicts of interest, a narrowing of the research agenda and a misrepresentation of the results of the research activity."

The findings that Langley and Parkinson share are the result of having penetrated deep into the harmful effects detected in 5 dominant sectors:

1. Pharmaceutical products; 2. Tobacco; 3. Military / Defense; 4. Oil and Gas; 5. Biotechnology.

In this first article we will comment only two summaries of such harmful effects of commercial influence on science, engineering and technology (SET): *I. In the military and defense industry. II. In the oil and gas industry.*



I. In the military and defense industry.

I.1. Negative influence on the direction of the research agenda.

I.1.1. Strong support is created for a weapon-based high-tech security approach that marginalizes the consideration of alternative approaches.

I.1.2. Public financing of military research and development (R & D) is large compared to several important civil sectors, such as health and the environment. Much of military R & D is used to finance work within the industry, which is forging ever-growing links with universities. This reduces available scientific and technological resources to address urgent non-military problems in areas such as poverty reduction and environmental protection.

I.1.3. Corporate participation confers a business spirit on the research environment, which can make it difficult to alter native and non-commercial ways of understanding security problems.

I.1.4. The presence of military corporations as funders or consumers of experience on the university campus (in training or teaching) is associated in the minds of researchers and policy makers with a sense of prestige. This encourages the search for more financing of this type.

I.2. Negative influence on the direction and results of specific research studies (both intentional and unintentional).

I.2.1. Consortia involving military companies and / or their governmental partners reduce non-military work that could be undertaken individually by researchers.

I.2.2. Some limited evidence that less peer-reviewed publications have military support.

I.3. Negative influence on a greater openness in research studies.

I.3.1. R & D financed by the military, government and corporate sector in universities tends to be carried out in a less transparent manner than work not financed with military funds.

Secrecy and evasion can prevent a more open and healthy discussion of the investigation.

I.4. Negative influence in public perception and interpretation of research results.

I.4.1. Military corporations strongly promote a high-tech approach based on weapons in public forums, when dealing with security problems, including R & D in support of that approach.

I.4.2. To carry out their lobbies, the military corporations use their own managers, as well as the representatives of the military and aerospace industry as a whole.

This is how their security agendas and their priorities related to R & D come together, both in the public and private sectors.

Pakistan and India face the possibility of a nuclear war

India has called for the safe and immediate return of the fighter pilot captured by Pakistan after incursion into Kashmir against an extremist group in its training camp. It was in retaliation for the death of at least 40 Indian troops in a previous attack.

For its part, Pakistan claims to have shot down two Indian military aircraft, and captured one of its pilots (right photo). Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, asked without euphemism to his Indian counterpart:



"Can we really afford a miscalculation with the weapons that both nations have?"

Translated and Adapted by The Editor of the link: Tribune News Service, 02/28/2019.

(Read Part II of this article on NL#60)