

7.16. INTRODUCTION

WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT

The Military or Defense industry uses most of world's latest technological activity. The entire world spends much of its money in the new development of military weapons. Engineers involve either directly or indirectly in designing and developing of these new weapons.

There are several reasons for an engineer to join the military services. The first and foremost reason is that of patriotism and prudential interest. The latter can be threats or compulsion from the government or the ruler of the country.

There are also several reasons for an engineer to refuse the war work. Because fundamentally the purpose of designing war weapons is to kill human beings. Therefore many reasonable engineers feel that the activity of weapons development as unethical.

Every engineer has to decide by examining his or her own conscience whether to work or not to work in defense-related industries.

7.17. ROLE OF ENGINEERS IN DEFENSE INDUSTRY

- ✓ Defense industry is one of the areas, which provide number of jobs opportunities to engineers. Engineers are capable of innovating and developing new weapons. Weapons are designed for one purpose – to kill human beings.
- ✓ On the one hand, many of the rational engineers feel that they cannot work on designing weapons, which are ultimately used to kill the human beings. Even though they are not the ultimate users of those weapons, they find it morally unacceptable to work on such areas.
- ✓ On the other hand, similar morally responsible engineers feel that working in defense industry is ethical. Because they feel it as a honor to work for their nation/government.
- ✓ In fact, the above two different views about working in defense industry are well justified by various ethical theories.
- ✓ Also the engineers should not be attracted by incentives and advancements that are being offered in the defensive industries, they must have the potential judgments to serve in defense works that would jeopardize the human community.

"Moral disarmament is to safe-guard the future; material disarmament is to save the present, that there may be a future to safeguard." – Elihu Root

7.18. THE ENGINEERS INVOLVEMENT IN WEAPONS WORK

- ✓ Engineers, who have engaged themselves in manufacturing of war weapon and antipersonal bombs, have developed compromising attitudes about their involvement, though there are aware of consequences of war weapons.
- ✓ Sometimes engineers are forced to involve in weapons work for their survival and livelihood of their family members.
- ✓ Thus every engineer who accepts job in a war-related industry should seriously consider his or her motives in doing so. They should think morally before getting involved in weapon's production.

7.19. DEFENSE INDUSTRY PROBLEMS

Many nations give privileges to defense industry, without even thinking, on serious problems that arise in large military build-ups. Some of the problems are:

1. The problem of waste and cost overruns is a major one in the defense industry.
2. Another problem faced by the defense industry is the 'technology creep'. The technology creep refers to the development of new weapons, such as the cruise missile, which can change diplomatic arrangements even as they are being negotiated. Thus it affects the political stability of a country.
3. Secrecy creates problems for the defense industry. If the secrets of planned funding were leaked to prospective contractors, then it may lead to high cost and poor quality of defense materials and weapons.
4. Many countries allocate funds for the defense sector than that of the other public welfare schemes.

In a nutshell, engineers should examine both his individual conscience and the social and political issues of weapons technology, before involving in the weapons development.

REVIEW QUESTIONS**Multinational Corporations**

1. What are Multinational corporations (MNCs)?
2. What are the merits and demerits of MNCs doing their business in underdeveloped and developing countries?
3. What are the ethical issues that may arise in MNCs?
4. What are the three senses of relative values?
5. Discuss the different forms of relativism with respect to MNC?
6. List out the international rights suggested by Donaldson.
7. What are the various ways of...