

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

## AMOUNT OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING

**Mr. David Berger (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Science and Technology. The Prime Minister said in his book that a one point increase in research and development would create one million jobs and he promised to double Canada's spending on research and development to 2.5 per cent of Gross National Product. Yesterday the Minister said that he was steering away from that goal and that 1.3 per cent might be adequate. Why has he abandoned the Government's goal of doubling spending on research and development to 2.5 per cent of Gross National Product?

**Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, first I want to congratulate the Hon. Member for reading the Prime Minister's book. I recommend it to most Canadians because it lays out a clear vision for the future of Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Oberle:** The Hon. Member asked about my statements relating to spending targets. I cannot recall abandoning any target that I had announced previously.

**Mr. Berger:** I read the reprint of the Prime Minister's book. It is entitled "Where I Stood".

## GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVE

**Mr. David Berger (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister's answer is clearly not satisfactory. The science community and all Canadians are looking for leadership and direction. Does the Minister stand clearly by his Party's stated goal and, if not, what is his goal?

**Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, I spent three hours on Monday night clearly laying out the goal of the new Government. It operates in two phases. The first phase, which is now complete, was to clean up the mess that was left behind from 20 years of Liberal neglect. The next phase is to bring Canada to the new frontier and establish our presence there.

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## PENITENTIARIES

## PORT-CARTIER PRISON—AUDITOR GENERAL'S LETTER

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works. Earlier in the Question Period he referred to a letter that was sent to me, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, as well as to some other cabinet Ministers. He said that this letter from the Auditor General referred to the contracts that are in

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question before the House today. The Auditor General's office has again confirmed with me that this letter has nothing to do with that contract. Will the Minister tell us why he is quoting it and leaving the wrong impression in the House?

**Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Public Works):** I would be happy to do that, Mr. Speaker. A great number of allegations have been raised in the House about the practices that have been involved in Port-Cartier. A number of newspaper reports, and indeed questions from Members opposite, were based on statements in the Auditor General's report. It has been brought to our attention that some of those statements were in error and I wanted to clarify the record, which I did.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister just admitted that in referring to this letter in answers he gave earlier to a member of the Official Opposition, he was incorrectly referring to the letter, and he should have said that.

## AWARDING OF CONTRACTS—GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the President of the Treasury Board. There continues to be a practice in Canada of the Government giving contracts worth millions of dollars, without tender, to companies that often donate to political Parties, which leaves the impression of favouritism. Considering this, will his Government take action now to put an end to this process and have public tendering for all contracts?

**Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, first let me respond to the preamble to the question. The letter that was quoted refers to Section 7.95 of the Auditor General's report where he states very clearly:

—that in order to meet the deadline, CSC had to use shortcuts to its normal contracting procedures. For example, it entered into sole source contracts for project management and for the preparation of preliminary site plans.

That is the letter that was referred to and the Auditor General refers directly to that paragraph, saying there is a possibility of a mistake.

**Mr. Broadbent:** I am telling you to ask him.

**Mr. de Cotret:** I am telling you that in terms of—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Hon. Minister may tell the Hon. Member anything he wishes, but it must come through the Chair.

**Mr. de Cotret:** I have told the Hon. Member, and I will tell him again, that all contracts of which I have knowledge that were given in this project, were given through the normal competitive process approved by Treasury Board and they were given to the lowest bidder—

**Mr. Broadbent:** On invitation.

**Mr. de Cotret:** —or the most technically competent bidder. We are getting full value for the taxpayers' money through this process.