

directors general from Pat Mortimer, Director of the Corporate Secretariat. It read, in part:

—recent media reports have outlined changes that are planned or underway at NRC, and Dr. Perron has sent a letter to employees explaining the context of these decisions, and clarifying the direction NRC is taking.

In the current climate it is preferable to limit the number of people speaking on behalf of NRC. Should there be any further media inquiries on these or related policy issues, the primary spokesperson for NRC will be Dr. Perron or, in his absence, Dr. Ross Pottie.

That is what they said. That is a kind of gag order and I suggest it is inappropriate. What we have here is an attempt to reorganize the National Research Council.

To help my friends, I have a quotation from the time of Nero, A.D. 65, Gaius Petronius Arbiter, Pro-Consul at Bithynia in the Roman Empire. Here is what he said. It is directly relevant to what is going on with the government and its meddling with the NRC today:

We trained hard but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form teams we would be reorganized. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet every situation in life by reorganizing, and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization.

We have heard all about the demoralization that is going on at the NRC as a result of the policies being pursued here today.

There is one other scientist I would like to quote, a distinguished physicist at Queen's University, Dr. Alec Stewart. In his speech in November, 1986 to the Bedford Institute of Oceanography he said these words, and I suggest they are relevant to consider in light of the lack of promising future for our young students at the National Research Council and in the scientific community in Canada in general as a result of the cuts that have been going on here. He said:

Any healthy society, especially in lean and straitened times, must look to the future. The injury done in closing laboratories is real but small compared with the more intangible injury and damage done to young people's expectations and to future opportunities for them in Canada. Our perceptive children may see how little we care about the future—their world—and they may reasonably seek the stimulus needed for their growth outside our country.

Government Orders

Fiscal responsibility is necessary and so is an attitude that values human energy, knowledge and intellectual achievement. Both are essential for a future for Canada.

Those are the words that he used, and I submit that those words are extremely relevant for us today.

I urge the government to review its short-sighted policy, review the cuts that it has made to the National Research Council and which we hear denied with statements of the great amounts of spending, and reinstitute the good days when the National Research Council was properly funded and properly run.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment my colleague, the member for Kingston and the Islands, as well as some of the other speakers from Ottawa who have spoken out so eloquently in support of the continued and improved levels of funding for the NRC.

I come from a region of the country with its own high academic tradition, and has also benefited through the work done at the NRC by sending students here and also by having some of our graduates become distinguished scholars at the NRC. I can attest as well to the importance of this institution and the scientific work which it promotes and which it carries out.

I would like to ask my colleague to speak some more about the work that is being done at the NRC and the relationship with his university, Queens, which is another institute of higher learning that is doing a great deal of scientific research.

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, clearly the National Research Council, in its long and distinguished history, has been the basis on which university funding of research has started. In fact, it has been suggested to me by some of the scientists with whom I have discussed this matter over the last few weeks that without the National Research Council there would be virtually no university research going on in the country today. It was the NRC that started universities on the road to extensive research which turned our universities into the very capable world leaders that they are in terms of research, both here and abroad.

That recognition has been achieved largely as a result of the National Research Council's work in funding research programs in universities at the end of the war. That funding was possible because of the attitude of the governments then which was very conducive to growth of research and scientific work in Canada. Also, the NRC