

This would avoid the gaps left by the free choice of the research community which may be interested in certain subjects but not necessarily attracted by more important national problems.

Dr. Corry: Mr. Chairman, I think it would be vital to maintain some kind of distinction such as you are making between free research and subject-oriented research, which has such a close bearing on problems of public policy that no Government that is trying to be intelligent can afford to overlook, and it must therefore see that that kind of research gets done.

I should think where it becomes apparently as urgent as it is, surely, the way to do it is through royal commissions, through individual departments of government undertaking within their authority to get these very urgent pieces of investigation made.

Perhaps the Canada Council can also serve, or other agencies like the Canada Council can also supplement this, to some degree; but the case for pretty substantial support by the Canada Council in these matters is that you can get people exploring the fringes of what is not seen by anybody today to be urgent and necessary. No one would have given Rutherford at McGill very much money from Government sources back in 1920, or whenever it was, because if there ever looked to be an unpromising line of inquiry it was this which led to the splitting of the atom.

You could translate that into all sorts of areas of investigation, where somebody will take up, if you have enough people working on it, these unpromising lines of inquiry, as they appear to be, and you will get breakthroughs of great significance. You will get it not only in the Natural Sciences but in the Social Sciences and the Humanities and, therefore, you need some agency with enough freedom to explore that kind of thing. But that this alone would be adequate for the community's needs, I would deny; it will not.

The Chairman: I was merely thinking, for instance, of the possibility of extending the scope of the Economic Council to cover the whole field of Social Sciences—something of that sort, where you have very serious but mission-oriented research which complements the sector which is the main responsibility of the Canada Council—namely freely initiated research.

Just a final, very small question which arises from your report. The Canada Council has accepted the responsibility for the exchange program with French-language countries, where apparently you are dealing with all kinds of sciences—nuclear physics, mechanical engineering, plasma physics, and all these subjects. It seems to me that these subjects dealing with the physical and the life sciences should come under the National Research Council. I am sure there is a reason for this.

Mr. Boucher: The reason is simply that the Department of External Affairs has had monies voted to it to maintain a program of fellowships and grants to foreign scholars, and this now extends beyond the French-speaking countries to include the Netherlands.

Mr. Milligan: The Netherlands, West Germany and Italy.

Mr. Boucher: West Germany and Italy next year. This program, of course, is for the support of visitors to Canada. I do not think External Affairs are prepared to decide that so much money each year will go to the social sciences and the humanities to be administered by the Canada Council, and so much to the Natural Sciences to be administered by the N.R.C. It was for the Canada Council to decide whether we would take over the program. We have agreed, we have set up special committees of natural scientists to deal with the Natural Sciences. So, there again, being an agency and not a team of experts ourselves, it is not really more difficult for us to set up committees to deal with this, and we are making recommendations for the spending of these funds in accordance with the assessments made by various peers of these applicants.

So, we do run the whole program for the Department of External Affairs, as the A.U.C.C. runs the program for the Commonwealth countries, and the N.R.C. has never thought this was really an infringement of their field, because it is quite obviously something unusual for us.

There is nothing in our act that prevents us from doing almost anything. At one stage—and this takes us back to the Killam gift—before Mrs. Killam died she gave the Canada Council a certain sum of money to run a program of assistance which extended to Engineering and Medicine.