

scarce and slow-growing, and an estimated half-million trees a year are needed to meet potential demand for taxol. Foresters and geneticists are working on ways of increasing the tree's growth rate and its yield of bark. This type of research, which depends on bio-diversity, will become more and more important as medical, pharmaceutical and chemical researchers discover more uses for natural resources.

Industry-university research is not only in science and technology. In Vancouver, the Financial Executives Institute, the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and the British Columbia Institute of Technology co-operate on research in financial issues and provide each other with resource personnel.

Universities have a unique place in our civilization. Just as the university was the centre of learning and culture in the 12th century, it is a centre for learning and culture in the 20th century. The university has endured through 10 centuries of change by providing continuity -- by bestowing skills and knowledge from one generation to the next, to meet the ever-changing demands of society. Furthermore, by pursuing knowledge in all fields, by exploring the new and challenging the old, by questioning and offering answers and by building new knowledge on old, the university was a centre of innovation long before business knew the meaning of the word.

The university and the college have endured in Western society by developing and passing on the technology that frees humanity from drudgery and enables it to advance. Universities and colleges have endured by teaching reason, and by teaching the critical abilities essential for informed judgments, for adapting to change, for advancing intellectually, for solving problems.

That endurance, that challenging of the status quo, that embracing of the new and challenging, that spirit of disciplined enquiry, that commitment to sharing and spreading knowledge across generations and national boundaries -- all these can help Canadians achieve their potential and compete in the new world economy.

Canada's post-secondary learning institutions already do a world-leading job in educating and preparing Canadians for the future. Almost five of every hundred Canadians is enrolled in a post-secondary institution -- the second-highest ranking in the world, after the United States. A university degree is not uncommon in Canada: 11.1 per cent of Canadians over 15 years old have degrees. Another 21.4 per cent have a post-secondary diploma. Canada spends about \$9 billion a year on university education, and another \$3.6 billion on colleges.