

Supply—Industry

Mr. Pugh: I thank the minister for his answer, but I would like to reiterate the stand taken by the hon. member for Peace River. I notice that the minister is indicating his affirmation because all of us in the house, no matter on which side we sit, know it is necessary to be eternally vigilant over parliamentary expenditures. I think the suggestion made by the hon. member for Peace River is a must, and I expect the minister will be looking into the question of introducing legislation to cover this very point in the very near future.

Clause agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Batten in the chair.

The Chairman: Estimates of the National Research Council, including the Medical Research Council, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1967, vote No. 1—this vote can be found in the blue book at page 314.

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, INCLUDING THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

1. Administration, operation and maintenance, \$33,468,000.

Mr. Drury: Mr. Chairman, in connection with the presentation of the estimates for the National Research Council and the Medical Research Council for the current year, I should like to take this opportunity to clarify the government's policies regarding financial support for scientific activities generally, and to correct certain misapprehensions over what have been described as our possible future intentions in this respect.

● (4:30 p.m.)

In order to place this matter into perspective, I would first point out that the federal government's total science budget has risen from \$257 million in the fiscal year 1962-63 to \$396 million in 1965-66, for an average growth rate of 16 per cent per annum. Over the same four year period, our over-all support for university research has risen from \$19.7 millions to \$42 millions—a growth rate of 30 per cent per annum. Similarly, our expenditures on industrial research and development have risen from \$21.8 millions to \$71 millions.

[Mr. Benson.]

Admittedly, we started from a relatively low level, and there is much ground yet to be made up, but I think members will agree that the trend is in the right direction and our rate of progress has indeed been substantial.

For the future, the government intends to maintain these rates of growth and this is reflected in the current year's estimates. Moreover, with respect to next year's estimates which are presently under preparation, my colleague, the Minister of Finance, has assured me that the normal growth in our over-all science budget will be accommodated.

On a more general plane, I do not believe that there can be any doubt as to the government's recognition of the importance of science and technology to the future economic and social development of Canada. A few months ago the Science Council of Canada was established to advise the government on all aspects of national science policy. Earlier, the Science Secretariat was established in the Privy Council office to assist the government in dealing with our growing endeavours in the fields of science, technology and engineering. Last year, the Department of Industry established its program for the advancement of industrial technology which I am pleased to report has initiated some 58 new development projects in its first year of operation, representing a total industrial effort in the order of \$22.7 millions. Finally, within the next few weeks, I hope to introduce legislation establishing a new general incentive for industrial research and development which is designed to stimulate a major expansion of innovation activity in Canadian industry.

If I might now turn to the estimates of the National Research Council and Medical Research Council as outlined in the bluebook, it will be noted that the item for which the largest single increase has been sought in the N.R.C. estimates for 1966-67 is the university support program, vote 10. It is from this program that the continuing Canadian scientific community will emerge, and on which our future scientific achievements will depend. A shortage of qualified scientists continues, to the detriment of industrial research and university staff. It is important, therefore, that special attention should be devoted to the assistance of scientific, engineering and medical research in universities.

There has been a rapid increase in university staff, and the graduate student population continues to increase about 20 per cent per annum. The support of these students, either through scholarships or as assistants on re-