

Oral Questions

branch plant economy, or is the government going to rely on importing these new technologies from abroad?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the House has heard the Minister of State for Science and Technology indicate many times in past months the policy of the government in the area of research and development. He knows that we are increasing funds to be spent in that area at a considerable rate. He knows also that there have been many policy statements by the minister. In so far as Dr. Smith's publication this morning is concerned, I have not had time to take notice of it. However, I am sure the minister will be in the House presently and will be prepared to deal with it.

PUBLIC FUNDING

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Madam Speaker, this is a question of over-all government policy. What Dr. Smith is saying in the report is that, despite a few moves, Canada is falling far behind Japan, France, the United Kingdom and the United States. Because these other countries are investing a lot of public money and there is a lot of public intervention in the economy in these fields, is the Prime Minister prepared to say today whether or not our government is prepared for significant public intervention and public investment to guarantee there is a future for Canada in these new industries so that goods are produced here in Canada and not imported from abroad?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the hon. member is asking for a declaration of intentions. It should be clear, from what I understand the report itself says, that Canada until now has been doing very well in certain fields of high technology. For instance, in communication satellites we are among the best in the world. In transmission of high voltage electricity we are among the best in the world. In many areas of computer technology we are the best in the world. We will continue being the best in the world under the aegis of this government.

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FISHERIES

BANNING OF SEAL PRODUCTS BY EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY—PROTECTION FOR CANADIAN FISHERMEN

Mr. Maurice Harquail (Restigouche): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. He will be aware of the surprising decision that was taken by the European Parliament some months ago with respect to banning Canadian seal products in the European Economic Community. Can the minister inform the House what action or position the government will be taking with respect to protecting the position of Atlantic Canadians concerning these products?

Mr. Parent: Good question.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, we became convinced that the European vote was very much the result of misinformation and misunderstanding. We offered to open the issue of the EEC on the basis that the population of seals was not in danger and that a scientific committee of a reputable international organization would look into the question. We have also told the Commission that if they want to send reputable scientists, pathologists and others to have a look at the method used to kill seals, we are perfectly open to that proposal. We believe that good information will solve this matter, and not emotion and photography.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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EDUCATION

PROVISION OF FEDERAL FUNDING

Mr. Gordon Gilchrist (Scarborough East): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Every knowledgeable Canadian knows that product and process research precedes and leads to increased sales of goods and increased jobs in the country which does the research. Research is done by people, trained people, people whose skills are developed in our community colleges and universities. Why has the minister undermined the very future of Canada by drastically cutting support for the education of young Canadians in his disastrous budget, and will he reverse his ill-considered cutback immediately?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the first part of his question which was very informative. I wish the second part had been up to the same standard, especially when the hon. member said that we had made cutbacks to the support of post-secondary education in the provinces. We have not made any such cutbacks. We debated that issue very fully in the House of Commons. That bill has been enacted and is now the law in the land.

Mr. Gilchrist: That is one of the minister's black is white answers, Madam Speaker.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ADVICE GIVEN BY CHAIRMAN OF SCIENCE COUNCIL

Mr. Gordon Gilchrist (Scarborough East): Madam Speaker, I want to follow up on the questions asked by the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville concerning Dr. Stuart Smith, the new chairman of the Science Council of Canada. Dr. Smith is proving to be more a thinking Canadian than a Liberal and has called for a commitment to technological