

Adjournment Debate

In Western Europe, research and development work is being done at two levels, by the European Economic Community and by individual countries. The European Economic Community's research and development project has a budget of \$17 million spread over four years, and will be up to 50 per cent financed by these countries.

In Canada, our main exports are furs and outer wear, which represent 49 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively, of the industry's exports. In the fur group, 42 per cent of our entire production is exported to the United States, our main export market since they purchase more than 82 per cent of our total clothing exports.

Actually, the countries of South-East Asia have recently penetrated the fur market. Are we going to let them have a free rein? When I think of textile research and development in my own province, I think of businesses that have succeeded in taking the initiative and creating an original product.

I am thinking, for instance, of NALPAC, in Montreal, which invented a revolutionary snow fence made of polyester.

I am thinking of TEXCEL in Beauce, which manufactures geotextiles that are immensely useful for road construction in marshy areas. I am thinking of Dominion Textiles, in Drummondville, which manufactures KEVLAR cloth for tires.

Mr. Speaker, can you imagine what our inventive geniuses could do if they had technical support through a specialized textile research centre? The centre could do regular testing on manufactured products entering Canada to examine the actual composition of such products and find out whether they are up to import standards.

It could also be a place where we would have a bank of experts. I know several people who are retired and who would be delighted to serve as consultants.

Mr. Speaker, I hope these considerations will encourage the Minister to look at the feasibility of setting up a research centre that would be welcomed by many primary textile products and clothing manufacturers.

● (1840)

[English]

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Hon. Member on his very fine and well researched presentation. It is well known in the House of Commons that the Hon. Member for Drummond (Mr. Guilbault) is very, very interested in ensuring that the textile industry progresses. He makes his presentations very well known to the Minister of Science and Technology (Mr. Oberle), as well as the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Stevens).

The Government took steps in the May, 1985 and February, 1986 Budgets to stimulate research and development, particularly by small and medium-sized companies, which comprise a significant part of many of our traditional industries, including

textiles. The fully refundable R and D investment tax credit was specifically intended to assist such companies.

The Hon. Member for Drummond may be aware that the Minister signed a subsidiary agreement on scientific and technological development with the Government of Quebec on a great day, St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1986. It also happens to be my birthday, so it must be a great day. Under the agreement, the two Governments will spend \$38 million over five years to promote research and technological innovation in Quebec firms.

There will be particular emphasis on manufacturing technologies, including computer assisted design and manufacture, new uses for traditional materials, and electronics and infometrics, all of which are of particular relevance to the textile industry. Firms may apply for the grants in order to conduct feasibility studies with regard to major new technologies or products, to acquire modern scientific equipment for research and development, and to undertake significant new R and D projects. While the initiatives must come from the firms, they are encouraged to collaborate closely with universities.

● (1845)

Research and textile fibre technology is supported at the University of Guelph and the University of Manitoba. The National Research Council maintains a team of 12 people who conduct research on textiles and textile fibres, the results of which are available to the industry. I know the Hon. Member mentioned that the textile industry may not be that interested in the NRC, but I am sure that the co-operation between the industry and NRC can improve and will do so. The field staff of NRC provides advice on research and the latest technology to the firms in the sector.

[Translation]

The Hon. Member should know that Quebec provides assistance to the *Centre québécois de la productivité* et du rendement, and that the federal Government does not want to duplicate the work of that organization.

Finally, the federal Government does much to promote technical progress in that sector.

[English]

ENERGY—SUGGESTED DISCOUNTS FOR MOTORISTS PAYING CASH FOR GASOLINE

Mr. Reginald Stackhouse (Scarborough West): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The adjournment debate is designed to give Members of Parliament an opportunity for further discussion when Members are not satisfied with answers they have received. I welcome this opportunity and thank the Parliamentary Secretary for his attendance.

My question on April 7 asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. McDermid) if the Minister would contact Canadian oil companies