

Government Orders

provide a solid technological information and resource base. It must create job opportunities for young scientists, engineers and technicians and contribute to the training of a technically well-qualified labour force to meet the needs of all the sectors of our economy.

The NRC will continue to carry out world-class research as it has done in the past 75 years, well aware of the necessity to remain relevant and to satisfy the needs of the nation.

• (1220)

Such are the priorities which are being considered while the National Research Council is preparing its next long-term plan. This process aimed at defining the NRC's major development orientation over the next decade should be completed soon and will require consultation with the NRC's main customers and partners, as well as the users of its research abilities.

As the science minister mentioned in the House on many occasions, the National Research Council will continue to play a vital role in the future.

It is responsible for bringing together various research and development partners and for building some forms of co-operation conducive to a maximum utilization, an optimum use of Canada's research and development resources.

This is especially true of the long-term precompetitive-type research and development which the NRC is ideally suited to carry out and support. However, the NRC's whole range of activities may benefit from this approach.

The hon. members are well aware that the NRC is preparing a long-term plan which will define the strategies and initiatives which will give it the opportunity to assume this role, and the government is looking forward with great interest to reading it.

Mr. Speaker, the NRC can expect a brilliant future and an increasingly important role.

This opposition motion does not take sufficiently into account the NRC's current major achievements, and it overlooks very attractive opportunities which will be available in the future.

I, therefore, strongly urge the House to turn down this motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the hon. member that in listening to her speech I felt she made a brilliant case not for a cut-back in the National Research Council but for an enhancement of its budget. She talked about—

Mr. Beatty: You are even frightening the babies in the galleries.

Mr. Mills: Well, having four of my own, Mr. Minister, I did not mean to frighten the child.

It is precisely because of this child that we are here today. This government has lost its sense of vision.

My colleague said this morning that it was 1961 when John F. Kennedy said, "We are going to put a man on the moon". He was able to galvanize the will of Americans in science, educators and labour. Everybody pulled together.

This member has made that same case. This is one of the most powerful instruments which this national government has to galvanize this nation, galvanize it in a way that the productivity we need to be world class is there.

So my question to the hon. member who made such a brilliant case for the National Research Council is this. Why should we cut back on the funding of a national instrument that is so vital in terms of our ability to become world class competitors in science and technology?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Science and Technology)): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said that I talked as though we were improving the budget for the National Research Council.

I must remind the hon. member that if he looks at the budget figures, he will see that, excluding everything to do with the Space Agency, the funds for the National Research Council have increased.

But it is true that the management of the National Research Council wants to make the NRC much more efficient, to deal with what must be done in the fields of research that must be emphasized in the coming years.