

Oral Questions

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that co-operation and leadership. I am wondering if he could go a step further because yesterday my riding which was linked by telephone to Vilnius where the newly elected Lithuanian Parliament voted unanimously to change the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic to become the independent democratic Republic of Lithuania.

In addition to the resolution, would the minister today give full recognition to the Republic of Lithuania by giving it full diplomatic recognition?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the House was pleased that the hon. member, his colleague from Winnipeg Transcona, and the member for Scarborough Centre were able, in private capacities, to be in Lithuania to watch the elections and report back to their caucuses.

I have had some conversations with some of the members respecting those developments. This is an historic day. I have discussed with Soviet leaders, prior to the vote, the attitude that they would take.

I have received specifically from Mr. Shevardnadze can undertaking that there would be no crackdown. I think all members of the House would agree that we should encourage the Soviet Union and Lithuania to move as speedily as possible toward a situation which recognizes the *de facto* and *de jure* sovereignty and independence of Lithuania.

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SCIENCE

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for Science who has been recently elevated, for which I congratulate him.

I wonder if he would elevate himself to answer this question. The Prime Minister is to receive an award tonight for scientific leadership from the Weizmann Institute.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCurdy: Mr. Speaker, those on the other side seem well informed. Perhaps they can tell us why this award was received. Is it for cutting Canadian expenditures for research as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product from 1.4 per cent in 1985 to 1.32 per cent in

1989? Is it for cutting the government's share of science and technology expenditures by 4 per cent over four years? Or is it for cutting the EPF transfers in support of universities? Which of these constitutes scientific leadership?

Hon. William C. Winegard (Minister for Science): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his congratulations. In turn, I would like to congratulate the Prime Minister on receiving this award.

There are no doubt many reasons why the institute decided to award the Prime Minister this distinguished award, many of them no doubt are centred on the fact that this is a Prime Minister who established the National Advisory Board on Science and Technology and chairs it for the first time ever in Canadian history.

This is the Prime Minister who, working with that board, established the Canada Scholarship Program, the Centres of Excellence Program, and who managed to put in \$350 million or more into the industry-university matching grant program. This is the Prime Minister who ensured, as I said to my hon. colleague just a moment ago, that we went from 4.46 per cent in 1984 to 4.89 per cent of total program expenditure on science and technology in 1989. That is not a bad record.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, the quality of excuses is not strained, and I can understand why there was such a lack of enthusiasm on the other side with respect to the award. But let us look at the record.

On February 8, the parliamentary secretary to the hon. minister promised that there would be no new cut-backs at NRC.

An Hon. Member: What is the supplementary?

Mr. McCurdy: Do not get too agitated over there, you will get your turn some other time. We have a document to which my colleague in the Official Opposition referred which states that in this correspondence between the head of the NRC and the former head of the Science Council the next five year plan for NRC will propose a strategy of privatization and divestiture and planned reductions in permanent employees at NRC. How can he reconcile that to the statement of the parliamentary secretary to the hon. minister and to any significant thrust in the direction of building up Canada's R and D capacity?