

Supply

Hon. William C. Winegard (Minister for Science): Madam Speaker, I would just like to make some comments upon the speech that I have just heard and remind my hon. colleague that in terms of educational spending, Canada is second only to Sweden in the world. An amount of 6.76 per cent of the GDP goes into educational spending in this country. That is not a bad record.

In terms of funding university research, I think the hon. member need have no fear. It is our intention to continue to fund the research in universities. There is not going to be any sudden drop in the way we handle the granting councils. We are going to continue to put that money in there.

We will also ensure that there is more basic directed research and that we have more pre-competitive research in this country. That will and must involve the alliances between government and industry and the universities. I have used, on other occasions, the pretty simple example that apparently my colleague does not recognize. When it came to all of the fundamental research that needed to be done to develop the compact disc, Sony and Phillips did all of that pre-competitive research together. When they thought they were at the applied research level and they could actually see a product down the line they split and went about their own ways.

So pre-competitive research is basic directed research. A lot of that can be done in the universities. A lot of it can be done in industry. It is quite wrong to think that industry is not a place where you can do basic research. It certainly is. The General Electric laboratories and the Bell Telephone laboratories have always done directed basic research and some of the most fundamental developments over the last several years have been from those laboratories and from the research that they have done.

What this country has to do and what we are trying to do is to involve industry by asking it to join us in some of these things so we can try and form the alliances that are so critical. It is our intention to make this country competitive. We can do that by support in the right places and that is exactly what we are going to try and do.

As I said at the beginning of this debate, there is more to this than just spending money in terms of government

R and D. We have our partners. They have to help us and that is what we are asking them to do.

Mr. MacWilliam: Madam Speaker, the minister reflects upon Canada's commitment to educational spending and he floats some figures around. I believe he said 6.7 per cent, the highest level of commitment to education. But I think what the minister is referring to is over-all spending.

What we are talking about specifically here in terms of the research and development is the kind of commitment that is required for just that particular educational sector, the spending in terms of R and D in this country. The figures that he has given, I believe, will be verified as being misleading because they are referring to global spending.

I have no argument with the minister in terms of certain commercial or corporate interests carrying on basic research. I think he called it pre-competitive research. The fact is that the focus of research in terms of the corporate sector is on applied research, on the commercial application. I think the minister will agree with me.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I am sorry, I must interrupt the hon. member.

It being 6.45 o'clock, p.m., it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 81(15), to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the Business of Supply.

The question is on the main motion.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Call in the members.