

Adjournment Debate

be none in biotechnology. The options for many of these people are really quite unpalatable. They involve giving up a life's work in areas where they are recognized experts internationally or leaving the NRC and, in many cases, Canada to find equivalent work. What are the implications of this kind of decision making by the Government?

Research teams that are broken up are lost for perhaps a generation or longer. Those left behind have the job of picking up the pieces, trying to refashion research programs and units into coherent programs. The morale of staff is already much lower and the administration must try and sort out the chaos these cuts have precipitated. The Minister says the morale decline is our fault. Let him talk to people at the NRC and he will find out who they blame. People at the NRC are asking, with reason, if the Government is out to eliminate the NRC. This kind of procedure means a much less efficient research effort, again the exact opposite result the Minister says he wishes to have.

● (1815)

The Minister said that the work Dr. Polanyi did for which he got the Nobel prize was done at the University of Toronto. Of course it was. However, Dr. Polanyi came to Canada to work at the NRC. If the NRC was in the condition then that it is in today as a result of this Minister and his Government, the future Dr. Polanyis would stay away from the NRC and this country.

We say the Government should rescind those cuts. The Minister should at least let the committee dealing with science and technology meet immediately to hear from people at the NRC, and scientists in the community, and see what they really believe about what is going on regarding scientific research and development.

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to respond briefly to the Hon. Member's inquiry because I very much share his concern for the future well-being and effectiveness of the NRC and the science community in general.

The combined budget of the NRC, roughly \$400 million, is a fraction of the total expenditure by this Government on research and development and science-related activity. That amounts to roughly \$4.2 billion. However, the NRC remains Canada's lead agency for scientific research. As the Hon. Member has indicated, there are a number of Departments and agencies now engaged in all kinds of fundamental and applied research. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, as well as our resource Departments dealing with forestry, agriculture and mining, as well as the Department of Communications, have major research facilities. Of course, much of the research affected by these reallocations is now done in universities.

Unlike the way it used to be before World War II and immediately after, a lot of the fundamental research is done in universities. This is where it ought to be because scientists have

the responsibility of teaching our young people. That is one of the great priorities of our nation today. We have to develop the highly-qualified personnel we will need in the next century. That is why we introduced a program which will deliver to the universities \$1 billion in additional funds for research over a five-year period. Yes, it does have to be matched by the private sector but, again, it is a critical priority for us to make sure that the research is done and the results are quickly applied and diffused.

There are linkages between the universities and the private sector and certainly the government laboratories and the private sector. The private sector is assuming more and more of its responsibility to do its own research in science-related activities. That is why we brought in such innovative tax measures. Some \$500 million this year alone will be spent through tax incentives to encourage the private sector to do more of its research. As well, we are spending hundreds of millions of dollars in so-called subagreements with the provinces to channel scarce public resources through the provinces to the private sector for quick diffusion.

We live in a changing world. We are on the threshold of the dawning of a new age. All of us have to adjust to that. All of us have to recognize new priorities. Let me just identify three priorities which have come out of this painful process of consultation in which I have involved myself over the last two years. First there is highly-qualified personnel teaching our young people in the R and D and science-related effort we are making. Then we have the development of strategic technology. Then of course we have space, which will be the single largest repository of new knowledge and new technology.

● (1820)

There are some cuts in the NRC, but they will be offset immediately because they do not come into effect until the next fiscal year. They will be offset by the new tasks which have been assigned to the NRC. There will be 250 people in the biotechnology centre in Montreal. My friend says there is no new money. Eight hundred million dollars is being spent on space and the NRC will play a lead role in that.

I am hoping that the Hon. Member will help me to maintain and build on this great institution and to restore the morale that he and some of his colleagues have been attempting to destroy.

MULTICULTURALISM—FUNDING OF TORONTO ORGANIZATIONS
(B) GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Madam Speaker, congratulations on your appointment to the chair. I would like to refer to questions which I asked both the Secretary of State (Mr. Crombie), responsible for multiculturalism and the Minister of State for Immigration (Mr. Weiner) during the last week. There is a crisis in multiculturalism as it affects this Conservative, Tory-blue Government. It emanates largely from the two reports which I tabled in the House. One of these reports was from a Tory group consisting of Members of