

the kind. There were cuts at the National Research Council, \$70 million from its budget. There was a rationale to it. The Government said we will cut the division of energy. I could not understand the rationale but some people said renewable energy has other sources of funding. That was the Government's argument.

The Science Council had its budget cut in half from \$5 million to \$2.5 million. We were told that at this time of restraint we cannot afford to have even one single national agency to reflect upon science and its needs or to try to focus the thinking of Canadians and of Canadian Governments in the area of science.

The other shoe dropped this week with the tabling of the Estimates. We see the only department that will increase its spending substantially in the coming year is the Ministry of State for Science and Technology. When it comes to empire building and having public servants in the pay of a Government department to propagate the Government's view of things, there is no shortage of funds.

The funding for the Natural Sciences and Engineering research Council was to be the test of the Government's commitment to increasing spending on research and development. Why do I say the test, Mr. Speaker? The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council is an agency of the federal Government which provides funds for university research. It is the largest single source of funding for university research and research training. It has an annual budget of about \$300 million which was to double to some \$700 million by 1990 under the plan it submitted to the Government. In all, about 17,000 individuals benefit directly from its programs, including over 6,000 professors and more than 6,000 graduate and undergraduate students and post-graduate fellows. This number was to increase to some 30,000 persons who would have received support from NSERC by 1990 if its plan had been approved.

This was the test of the Government's commitment because training young people for a career in science is the starting point of increased scientific activity in Canada which everyone agrees, even the Government, is essential if we want to be competitive, create jobs and maintain our standard of living. It is impossible to double our spending on research expenditures, to be more innovative or to reduce our huge deficit in high technology goods if we do not have the people to do the job.

● (1300)

This past year, since the NSERC five-year plan was submitted to the Government, has been one of great expectations, given the Government's commitment and words. It has also been a year of impending doom. I have spoken on a number of occasions in this House on the subject of the "brain drain" which has become a concern in Canada. As an example, an article in the Halifax *Mail-Star* on January 20 was entitled "Dalhousie University Losing Researchers". It indicated that at least some have gone to the United States because of a lack of federal funding for research, and uncertainty over future financial cut-backs. Several months ago the dean of the faculty

of mathematics at the University of Waterloo announced that he was going to Tennessee because of the unfavourable research climate in Canada, and because he was frustrated by having to undertake a major battle every time he needed a new piece of equipment.

All Members of Parliament including the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark), the Minister of Science and Technology (Mr. Oberle), and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), received hundreds, if not thousands, of letters last fall from people all across Canada in support of the plans of the three federal councils which provide funds for university research. One such letter was from the principal of McGill University who argued that adequate, well-planned financing of these research councils is a fully national responsibility which must be met by our federal Government.

In a statement on research and transfer payments, faculty associations from all over western Canada urged the Government to approve the plans of the three councils. The President of the University of Western Ontario wrote that it is critically important that our research capabilities be strengthened with adequate grants. He said that the most effective way is through the research councils.

In addition to having spoken in the House on this subject, I had the opportunity to appear on the CBC show, *The Nation's Business*, last February 9. At that time I called upon the Government to provide immediately the funding that had been requested by these three councils. I invited viewers to write to me to tell me how they felt about it. I promised to send their letters on to the Prime Minister. I received close to 40 letters, all but one or two of them being supportive. I would like to read to you from one of these letters from Mrs. Renée Demmer mother in Ottawa which reads:

My son will complete his post doctorate in physical chemistry in Nov/86, and after that, what? He has been inquiring about a job for November this year and everywhere he applies he gets the same reply: "no vacancy due to lack of funds".

Since he went to the U. of Toronto in Nov/85, three of the young research chemists whom he met there have left Canada for the U.S. If my son cannot get a job here in Ontario or Quebec or in any part of Canada, there is only one other place for him to go, and that would mean both my sons have to live in the U.S. because Canada will not look after her young scientists.

I have a number of other letters of this nature.

To emphasize my point, Mr. Speaker, through this single-minded preoccupation with reducing the deficit the Government has shown that it is not willing to invest in Canada's most precious resource, our people, and particularly our young people. A respected economist, Michael McCracken of Infometrica, stated after the Budget was introduced that some \$50 billion to \$60 billion is being wasted annually because we are not achieving full employment in the country. Our deficit in high technology today is approximately \$12 billion, or the equivalent of 120,000 specialized jobs.

I am waiting for the day when the Government will listen to what the people of the country are saying, understand these elementary facts, and present to the Parliament and the people of Canada a Budget and a policy which has vision and will