

industry. What is the factor in industry that holds us back? As was cited by the National Advisory Board for Science and Technology—that eminent board of scientists and others—it is attributable in large part to the fact that our industry is foreign-owned. More than any of the other industrial nations, foreign ownership predominates in this country. If you look at the record of Canadian-owned companies located in Canada, they match any other industry in terms of their expenditure as a percentage of sales on research and development.

Is there any possibility of turning that around? Mr. Speaker, the Free Trade Agreement raises serious questions as to whether we will be able to use those tools that every other nation has used. I refer to direct grants, procurement, special forgivenesses, and so on. These would help our own companies to build up R and D.

It has also been mentioned that we must have the necessary trained and educated personnel in order to sustain a growth policy in R and D and, therefore, a growth policy in the economy. Even as I stand here, the transfer of payments to universities has been cut.

Once again, if one wants to look at the roots of these cuts and the failure of the federal Government to provide, in terms of its responsibility, adequate funding for post-secondary education, look back to 1977. It was a Liberal Government. Look back to five and six; a Liberal Government. We are casting the blame once more. The blame has to be spread among both parties that have held office as governments in this country.

An Hon. Member: What about NDP governments in the provinces? Tell us about that. There is no talk about their cut-backs.

An Hon. Member: You will get your chance.

Mr. McCurdy: I have riled my colleagues. I have riled them. I must be getting close to home. I will repeat, Mr. Speaker, I speak on behalf of those of us who have worked in the laboratories of this country under two regimes and seen both regimes fail us so desperately.

The Hon. Member for Ottawa South also indicated the need for having people who are trained in the technologies on the plant floor and so on to sustain the kind of transfer of technology to industry that is necessary to this country. With this, I agree. But again, the

Space Agency

Government has failed us and has failed our youth. It ultimately will have failed this country.

Mr. Speaker, this is all background. We are here to credit the Government for at least one positive step forward. In turning to the specific legislation before us, Bill C-16—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by saying that my party supports Bill C-16, an Act to establish the Canadian Space Agency and to provide for other matters in relation to space. The Bill specifies exactly where the Space Agency will be located, namely the Greater Montreal area. I would like to point out that we agree with this decision, although we may have some reservations about the specific location that was chosen and the manner in which the decision was made.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of Bill C-16 is of course to establish the Space Agency and to deal with certain other matters as described in the title. It is its purpose to establish an agency to co-ordinate certain Government research and to ensure the co-ordination of research which will essentially take place in the various other Departments of Government and in the private sphere. All of this is certainly necessary. It is clear that the dispersion of various functions having to do with space over so many Departments dictates the necessity of having some co-ordination. So we support this legislation in that respect.

• (1250)

As the Minister and my colleague from Ottawa South have indicated, Canada has a proud history with respect to space. After all, Canada was the third nation to put a satellite in orbit, Alouette I. That was followed by the Anik satellites, ending up finally with our participation in the American space shuttle program with our construction of the Canadarm which flew the Canadian flag in orbit around this earth. Canadians have a right to be proud. This was a signal accomplishment for this country. We were characterized, however, by a certain focus in our endeavours because our development of satellites has been largely committed to the need for effective communication in a vast country in which the population is widely scattered. We have continued this emphasis to