

need to promote the spreading of technology in Canada, if we are to become more efficient.

Mr. Speaker, no wonder why the efforts of the present government, in science and technology, have mainly aimed at supporting, promoting, implementing, and stimulating the private sector into making more room for innovation.

We developed programs that will help industries and scientists to work together and join their capital and resources in research and development undertakings.

Under their new mandates, government laboratories, NRC included, must now work in close cooperation with Canadian industry.

Some programs will help industry to acquire new technologies abroad and we set up new initiatives to help whole industrial sectors to overcome some of the obstacles they encounter in trying to become more competitive.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, allow me to quote one of our relatively modest programs: the Manufacturing Visits Program. This initiative is aimed at giving companies the opportunity to visit some of our most important manufacturing centers and observe their operations. Our Spring program can handle 150 companies. Mr. Speaker, 127 companies in only two days have already registered in that program!

I therefore conclude, that the industry is beginning to move and that it is taking up the competitiveness challenge. I also conclude this government is paving the way for a competitive and prosperous Canada.

Mr. Mac Harb (Ottawa Centre): First of all, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate my hon. colleague on his presentation. However, in order to clarify the situation, because he has just indicated that Canada is spending enough in the areas of research and development, I have here the annual report of the National Consortium on Scientific and Educational Societies which finally represents over 30 different national organizations, including the Canadian Association of University Research Administrators, *l'Association canadienne des écoles de titre supérieur*, the Canadian Association of Physicists. This

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report, of which my hon. friend must certainly have received a copy, compares the situation in Canada and other industrialized nations.

For my hon. friend's information, it deals here with Gross Domestic Expenditures in research and development expressed as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product. Here are some of the comparative data: Japan, 2.92 per cent; Germany, 2.85 per cent; the United States, 2.8 per cent; France, 2.3 per cent; Norway, 1.87 per cent; Finland, 1.8 per cent; Austria, 1.3 per cent and Canada, less than 1.3 per cent. If we compare Canada's performance with these other individual countries, my hon. colleague will certainly agree with me that we have not yet reached their level. Even if we spent a little money here and there, it is not enough as an investment for the future.

Yesterday, or the day before, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology was reported as saying that the private sector was not investing in the area of science and technology. I wish to reply to that by saying that the federal government's share in research and development financing compared to that of the private sector, according to this report, decreased from 35 per cent between 1981-85 to 31 per cent between 1986-90. If we also consider the levels of public investment in those fields, we see a constant decrease and no increase at all.

• (1750)

So, instead of saying that we do enough, why is my friend not asking his colleagues in caucus to invest a little more in sciences and technology so to set a good example for the private sector? I would like to hear his comment on that, to know if he agrees with the report or not.

Mr. André Plourde (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup): Mr. Speaker, my first words are to thank my colleague from Ottawa—Vanier and to tell him that I did not have the opportunity to read this report. Still I want to recall some of the remarks I just made in the House and say to him that our government's expenditures for science and technology have been steadily increasing, from \$1.4 billion in 1984-85 to roughly \$5.4 billion this year.