

*Space Agency*

should have beat the Americans and the rest of the world into space.

I also recall that there was a crash program to improve post-secondary education and research in the United States. Indeed, as usual, following the leader, there followed a great increase in investment in universities and a movement in the direction of accessibility. That, of course, can be credited in large part to Liberal Governments of the time. If we, rather than discussing specifically this Bill, are to discuss the failure of Canadian science policy, then the Hon. Member for Ottawa South (Mr. Manley) ought to recognize that the greatest blame for the deep hole in which Canada presently finds itself is attributable, at least in part, to those years under Liberal Governments in which science was virtually ignored.

• (1240)

We can demonstrate it just by this example, Mr. Speaker. I speak from experience. I was in university at the time, struggling to be able to do research on a pittance in terms of funding, from year to year questioning how much the universities would be provided in terms of research funding through the granting councils. Each year, I waited until February to find out what the budget would be. That was in 1979. This is not an irrational partisan here. This is a scientist concerned about research and development in this country and pointing the finger where the blame belongs.

In 1979, the Tories won the election and immediately introduced a five-year funding program for the granting councils. It was cancelled immediately upon the ascension of the then Liberal Government which followed.

When the Hon. Member talks about the need to promote science culture in this country, let us be clear that the need to inculcate a science culture is as needed in this place as it is in the country at large. We must all be devoted to it.

I am not standing before you to attribute to the Conservative Government a revolutionary impact in terms of its devotion to meeting the Prime Minister's promise, also cited by the Hon. Member for Ottawa South (Mr. Manley), that he would indeed by next year ensure that the proportion of the Gross National Product expended for research and development in this country would be doubled. Mr. Speaker, as the Member

says, it has not doubled. There are any number of areas in which we can see the utter failure of this Government to produce the commitment to science and research and development that was promised and that this country needs.

We are not today dealing with the issue of general, broad science policy. You, I know, will recognize that this Member has been on his feet many times, trying very hard to convince the Government, and indeed all sides of the House, that the kinds of considerations that the Member for Ottawa South set out before us need to become the basis for a real commitment to science and research and development in this country because there can be no doubt about it, to the extent that this country lacks economic independence, the extent to which it is unable to compete internationally are all indeed a result of too much emphasis on taking our quick crude resources and selling them off to the rest of the world where jobs are produced by selling products back to us. There is no question about that.

There is no question either that the excuse of the need to wrestle the deficit to the ground is not an excuse for the failures of this Government as exhibited until this time. Even as they say that we should not burden our youth with the mortgage for the future, this Government is in effect saying that it is better that they have no future. As sure as day follows night, if we do not turn it around, this country is going to be in serious difficulties. Although the rhetoric has been beautiful, the substance has not. You heard examples of it from the Minister on the Government's side. But no matter how grandiose the rhetoric, no matter how great the promises, if we do not meet our responsibilities in all areas of developing R and D, then this country is going to face a number of problems.

Let me for a moment iterate those problems that the Government has not addressed. They have talked about them, but not addressed them. There is of course the proportion of our GNP expended on research and development, poorest of all the industrial nations with which we have to compete. In order to turn that around, there is also the need to recognize what the root of that problem is. We have heard a great deal about too much Government expenditure on science. On the average, we spend about as much as anybody else in terms of Government expenditure on research. The fault lies in