[*English*]

Further steps are to be taken as follows:

1. The procurement practices of the federal government will be changed to ensure their effective use in support of industrial research and industrial development in Canada.

2. The government is expanding its contracting-out program by adding $1.5 million in each of the next two years to the unsolicited proposals fund of the Department of Supply and Services which is designed to allow industry to meet government research needs.

3. As a further stimulus to employment in research and development, an additional program involving $3 million this year will be instituted for highly qualified manpower under Canada Works. It will create jobs for unemployed scientific and technical personnel in the performance of research projects in universities at the request of Canadian firms. It complements the science and technology employment program in industry which I announced in April, and is directed especially at small businesses which do not have an R and D capacity of their own.

4. Increased co-operation between government and industry and between universities and industry will be fostered through the establishment of institutions and the reinforcement of other mechanisms specifically devoted to the transfer of ideas, innovations, information, skills, manpower and technical capacity; by the addition of $5 million to the Program of Industry-Laboratory Projects (PILP) of the National Research Council and the extension of the program to other government departments, and by the expansion of the National Research Council's technical information service for small businesses through the employment of senior students in science and engineering. An amount of $350,000 will be directed to this program in the current year.

Increased co-operation will also be fostered by the establishment of a clearing-house role for Canadian Patents and Development Limited to facilitate the transfer of information between industry and government laboratories; by further emphasis on the transfer of technology to industry as an objective of all government research activities; by the establishment, in consultation with the provinces, of up to five regional university-based industrial research and innovation centres over the next few years. An amount of $2 million will be made available for the purpose this year.

5. The establishment of centres of excellence across Canada responsive to national needs. One of the main objectives of the centres will be to achieve better integration of government, university, and industrial research activities. They will be based on the natural and human resources of each area so as to assist in the further development of the industrial capacity of each region. As one illustration, the new ice tank of the National Research Council will be located in St. John's, Newfoundland, within the developing complex of facilities for cold water engineering. The government will spend $6.8 million this year toward the establishment of such centres. Their successful establishment and operation will require the closest co-operation between the provinces, industry and the universities.

6. The budget of the three granting councils for funding research will be increased by $10 million each year. This increase will be for research efforts in areas of national concern and will supplement the funds provided to the councils for this purpose in 1977-78.

● (1652)

The details of the foregoing measures can be found in the document entitled "Measures to Strengthen and Encourage Research and Development in Canada".

In addition to the measures already announced, very important initiatives will be taken by other departments in the area of research and development. For example, the Department of Fisheries and the Environment, the Department of National Defence, and the Ministry of Transport all have major interests in these areas. In particular, my colleague, the Minister of Communications (Mrs. Sauvé), has significant proposals which she will be announcing in the near future.

In addition, I believe these measures will complement and support the initiatives to strengthen small business in Canada proposed last week by my colleague, the Minister of State (Small Business) (Mr. Abbott).

In view of the increasing evidence that research and development intensive companies grow more quickly, have higher productivity, better price performance, and are competitive in international markets, these policies and measures I have announced will help to strengthen our economy and provide jobs now and well into the future. I believe also that the policies and measures lay a good foundation for a new spirit of co-operation among government, universities, and industry.

Mr. J. Robert Howie (York-Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, in terms of our gross national product we have the worst record of any western nation when it comes to investing in research and development. We invest less than 1 per cent of our gross national product, while our objective, as set out by the Senate Committee on Science Policy, should be 2.5 per cent, and our goal must be to achieve that level by the mid-1980s. This is the fraction of the gross national product now spent in the United States, the United Kingdom, and West Germany, and achieving this goal will require a major commitment of our natural resources and significant new directions in science policy. Even then we shall arrive only at the same commitment now enjoyed by our competitors.

The minister's identification of 1.5 per cent of gross national product—the written release refers to gross domestic product—for our research and development expenditure in Canada by 1983 is like the awakening of wisdom, but the limited objective and his shotgun approach in announcing a number of recycled old policies—some of them unrelated—cause me to be concerned that the wisdom is shortlived.

Most certainly, we hope for the success of every single program the minister has announced, and only time will tell whether the statement, which is more general than specific, is more cosmetic than real.