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In view of all these well-established activities, programs and roles, it is hard to see how the opposition can claim that the NRC no longer plays an essential role in science and technology.

Since taking power, the present government has helped the NRC strengthen all its activities in various ways, especially as regards the essential support the NRC provides for the Canadian economy.

For several years, the NRC has pursued its traditional activities meeting the great scientific and technological challenge by creating new programs and new initiatives.

When this government was elected five and a half years ago, Canada was just getting out of a serious economic recession. Canada was running an ever-increasing trade deficit in technology. There was an obvious need to rely more on technology in both traditional and emerging industries.

With that in mind, the NRC redefined its key role as "encouraging and helping Canadian industrial enterprises to adopt technological solutions" by means of a long-term plan supported by the government and published in 1985. Under this plan, the NRC undertook to place its facilities and capabilities at the service of Canadian industry, to develop its activities and to increase its ability to meet the country's needs, taking account of the necessity for budget austerity because of the large public debt which the previous government left us.

Among the achievements of the past five years, we should include steps taken by the NRC's research division to regroup their sections within the larger laboratories dedicated to a broad range of research; upgrading certain programs by creating important new research facilities such as the Biotechnology Research Institute in Montreal, the Institute for Marine Dynamics in St. John's, Newfoundland, and through participation in the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope in Hawaii; the creation of advisory boards and committees headed by industry to guide the NRC's activities and research programs; the implementation of projects on the basis of joint initiatives, memoranda of agreement and various

other measures taken to reinforce interaction between the NRC and its clients industries, government, the scientific community and foreign governments.

Industry's demand for the services of the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information has increased considerably, Mr. Speaker.

The Industrial Research Assistance Program has broadened its range of services for Canadian businesses in order to give better access to foreign technology and provide specialized services to the Canadian building industry.

We also wish to point to a major development consisting of the creation of several major multidisciplinary initiatives, making good use of the established resources of the NRC's laboratory divisions. This approach promotes of co-operation between the NRC and its partners by making the latter more aware of the full range of facilities and resources available at the NRC.

Considering the need for attracting collaborators and covering areas that are of strategic importance to Canada, the NRC promotes programs involving technologies that respond to the needs of various industrial users and sectors.

As I mentioned earlier, these very promising areas include activities related to biotechnology, materials, standards and precision measurement, industrial systems and manufacturing technologies of interest to major industrial sectors such as the construction and transportation industry.

During the past five years, the NRC made an effort to increase its participation in joint research agreements, provided NRC partners would invest as much—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member shall have six minutes remaining in her speech, plus 10 minutes for questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

It being eleven o'clock, pursuant to Standing Order 35, the House will now proceed to Statements by Members.