

Space Agency

rivalries in the scientific community that did not exist before and need not exist.

We must improve existing incentives for the performance of industrial research. We must remove the obstacles to fair tax treatment of industrial consortia and wrestle to the ground the intractable problems of the definition of scientific research and experimental development in the Income Tax Act. We must use government procurement strategically to help create a viable advanced technology sector, and I must say that the cancellation of the unsolicited proposals program sends a very negative signal to the private sector in respect of the use of government procurement.

We must apply strategies to accelerate the commercialization of domestic and foreign technologies. Research, including applied research, as well as international marketing are expensive and require government support, direct or indirect. Our advanced technology sector must receive support similar to that received in other countries if it is going to gain a foothold in the global market.

We should not use our scarce resources to reinvent the wheel. Rather, our fundamental research should be world-scale and push back frontiers of discovery. Basic or fundamental research has a key role in the development of a scientific community and in setting a standard for a science culture to develop in this country. We do need to innovate and to tinker, but in our rush to be relevant we must not abandon the pursuit of excellence in science.

In addition to a science culture in Canada we need to beget a generation of entrepreneurs. We must recognize that entrepreneurship is a cultural process and has a social value. Entrepreneurs are risk-takers, men and women who take a chance and in so doing provide a pay cheque for others. They should be recognized as economic heroes.

In recent years practically all new jobs in this country have been created in the small business sector. Working in a small business, self-employment, entrepreneurship, owning and building a company of your own, must become credible options for our young people. Entrepreneurs are not born, they are developed.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps most important, there must be resistance to the temptation to put high

technology in the political pork barrel. It is too important, the sums of money too vast, and the public cannot take much more before cynicism is irreversible. Resources allocated to science, engineering and technology should be considered an investment rather than an expense. It must be invested wisely and carefully.

This is an exciting Bill. It is an exciting development in Canada's participation in space. We in our Party support the establishment of the Canadian Space Agency and look forward to it successfully pursuing its objectives and continuing Canada's success relative to the rest of the world in this important area of space. This step must be considered just a small step in the interest of science, engineering and technology. What we await from this Government is the giant leap that will bring Canada into the 21st Century.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Lake St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, let me first take this occasion to congratulate my former academic colleague on his ascension to his present position of Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Winegard). His experience in the academic world and his understanding of science is unchallenged. I hope he will be successful as an advocate for science, both basic and applied, in the Cabinet.

Let me also congratulate the Minister for the introduction of this Bill. We do not intend to unnecessarily prolong the debate because we think in most respects it is a good Bill.

Let me as well congratulate the Minister for his rhetoric. Indeed, I thought we were going to hear once more about the thousands points of light but I must confess I was intrigued by what he had to say about space flight and we on this side would encourage all Members on that side to become astronauts, and perhaps not return!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCurdy: I found it interesting as well to listen to my colleague from Ottawa South. I believe I heard him recall the launching of Sputnik I. I do not know if that is a recollection from the womb or not, but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I can remember standing by my laboratory bench and hearing first about Sputnik, and subsequently experiencing the sense of panic that traversed the entire USA—because that is where I studied—over the fact that this backward, foreign and virtually enemy nation