

*Supply**[English]*

Society is alarmed because public opinion surveys show that many Canadians do not appreciate sufficiently the importance of science to our nation. They do not understand as well as they might, what it might contribute to the well-being of our country. Their meeting is to promote scientific awareness by the media and to get scientists to go to the schools to explain to our youth, those young men and women who are in universities, what it is that science does for our country and what it does, in fact, for humankind.

The greatest concern that we should have today is asking the following question and attempting to answer it. How can research and development, science and technology contribute to the furthering of the economic, social, and cultural well-being of Canada, taking into consideration problems of intolerance, conflict, war, and pollution? What can research and development do to make us respond more meaningfully, more sensitively, and more sensibly to those particular issues? How bad is the situation right now with respect to research and development, science and technology and all of those other related fields?

In today's issue of *Le Devoir* we read the following:

*[Translation]*

Last year local firms were authorized to import 473 experts to hold high technology jobs and perform related duties.

It goes on to say:

At the same time enrolment in science, engineering and information programs have fallen dramatically.

• (1740)

*[English]*

What is the government doing to change this course of action? Let us look at the record. This record, by the way, is taken from the Prime Minister's National Advisory Board on Science and Technology. I want to make that point clear.

In looking at gross research and development expenditures as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product, we find that Canada is the lowest among Canada, the U.S., Germany, France, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Japan. In industry funded research and development as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product, it is the lowest. In government funded research and development as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product,

it is second lowest. In government performed research and development as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product, it is in the middle. What is higher education research and development as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product? Second lowest. What are the number of domestic patents granted per 100,000 inhabitants? Second lowest. What are the international patents granted by population? The lowest. What about advanced degrees awarded by population? We are in the middle. When it comes to scientists and engineers in labour force by population, we are the lowest among those countries. What about the number of technology intensive industries with the positive trade balance? We are the lowest. I stress that this was taken from the Prime Minister's National Advisory Board on Science and Technology.

There has been a lot of reference already to the rhetoric of the government on research and development, but one of the things I need to repeat is this:

To keep abreast of technological change, Mulroney says Canada must double its spending on research and development by 1985—from the current 1.13 percent of GNP to at least 2.5 percent.

This was taken from *The Gazette* of March 19, 1983.

Here is another from *Where I Stand* by Brian Mulroney:

The Trudeau government has the nerve to announce a new objective: 1.5 percent. This illustrates how our national government is illogical and how it lacks an earnest commitment toward this cornerstone of our economy.

Do remember that spending slipped from 1.4 down to 1.32. I could go on and I shall just by sharing this final quotation:

The starting line for me is the technological dimension. Either we go into the game and become important players in this major league, or we become a nation that will, during its entire lifetime, play in the Junior B circuit.

That was Brian Mulroney in 1983. We are no longer in the Junior B circuit, we have slipped. We have slipped and we have slipped badly.

What has the Prime Minister and his government done to worsen the situation? You will all know, and I have quoted several times, that if we take the reductions that he had committed not to change—the minus 2 per cent in 1986, the minus 1 per cent in 1989–90, followed by the freeze—we are talking about a reduction for health and education of \$39 billion fewer dollars. That is quite apart from the \$39 million reduction for science and technology.