

program that perhaps has worked quite well and we are trying to suggest that is the whole effort. Let me give a couple of examples. My hon. colleague previous to this speaker, and I want to link it to this one, pointed out the \$5.1 billion expenditure. Compared to what? Of course, \$5.1 billion is a lot of money.

When you look at the Prime Minister's advisory committee on science and technology, on 10 measures Canada is lowest on five. It is second-lowest on three and on two, it is in the middle. So, I ask \$5.1 billion compared to what? If my hon. colleague who has just spoken really thinks that they have done particularly well, I would suggest that he does what I do. Talk to the universities, talk to the granting councils and ask them one simple question; do you prefer the generosity of the Liberals over the generosity of the Progressive Conservatives? Do you or don't you?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Duhamel: While my New Democratic colleagues are laughing—be careful because I will trot out some statistics about your generosity in research and development if you like. If you like, I would be delighted.

I would like to make one final comment with respect to the successes on pharmaceuticals. You could ask the elderly and the sick if the prices have gone up. Ask them what they think. Just in case you have not spoken to them recently I will tell you what they have told me. It has gone out of sight. That is what they told me. Are they wrong? Are the elderly and the sick wrong?

Mr. Thorkelson: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his question. He talks about \$5.1 billion which we spent compared to what? I would say that that is the amount of money this government spends on R D. We are comparing ourselves with other countries. We spend money on R D and industrial competitiveness in our universities to educate young students coming up. The figure is very good when you compare it with other countries and consider that a lot of other countries spend a lot of money on R D in defence.

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Where does it go? We spend our money where it counts the most.

With respect to his questions and comments about granting councils, the granting councils have done a very good job. I would agree that they can do more. That is not the whole picture. The whole picture or a number of things we have talked about today is fostering industrial competitiveness. It is the private sector being involved. It is education and universities and so on.

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The Patented Medicines Prices Review Board has done a comprehensive study which shows that drug prices have not increased as much as the Consumer Price Index. I think that is significant by any measure. The pharmaceutical industry has been responsive in its endeavours to balance R and D and its need for profits to further invest. It has not gouged the consumer.

In terms of R and D there is always more that can be done and we will do more. We all want to do more and in the future that will come about.

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): Madam Speaker, I want to support the motion. The motion is that we have to recognize research and development in this country as being the lifeblood of a successful and prosperous economy. The motion also calls for Canada to increase its level of research and development in order to ensure economic growth.

I have listened to the debate today *ad nauseam* and I have to admit that we really have a pass-the-buck government here. It wants to pass the buck on research and development over to the private sector to the corporate agenda. It wants to pass the buck on funding for post-secondary education to the provinces.

The federal government is trying to withdraw from its statutory commitment to advance these kinds of programs in terms of a consistent and national presence in our scientific communities and our research and development. Instead, they want to pass the buck. Well, it will not work. It will not work for a number of reasons and I will get to those reasons very shortly. Before I do that, I want to say that we are living in a very complex society, an information-based society, a technology based society. We have seen the government in its attempts to deal