

being done in other places in industry or in universities or even in other government departments? Have we any mechanism to review that and to do something about it?

Hon. Mr. Drury: We are in the process of trying to establish what I would call a data bank in the branch of the National Library run by the National Research Council. Here is kept on a very large computer all, or as much as we could get, of the current research efforts and results in Canada. The government and its agencies have easy access to this computer. Currently the National Research Council is trying to work out economic techniques to give universal access to this information with a view to avoiding duplication, with a view to avoiding, in a sense, re-inventing the wheel. So far we have not managed to devise an economic, widespread access to it. All we have so far is government access to it. Any researcher in any field in the government can now easily and readily call on this data bank to discover what is the existing state of the art, and consequently not do or re-do unnecessary work.

Senator Carter: But supposing the data bank shows that there is overlapping, what do you do about that? Or can you do something about it, the way you are set up now?

Hon. Mr. Drury: It depends somewhat on the purpose of the particular research being done. There is some research engaged in as a teaching tool—as a means of teaching a man to be a researcher. In this case duplication is not a disadvantage; in fact, it may have a great advantage. In the case of private industry, they are the ones who make the choices on a competitive basis; they decide what research they want to do and what area they want to work in. So there may well be two companies in a similar line of activity who will be doing the same research work. This is what a competitive system produces, and I do not think this is the kind of thing that we should try to cut out. To the extent that we can do so, we would like each of them to know what the other has been able to accomplish so that there will not be wasted effort, but to stop them engaging in this activity does not seem to be desirable.

Senator Carter: How would you go about stopping them? That is what I am getting at.

Hon. Mr. Drury: Well, we don't.

Senator Carter: You can't.

Hon. Mr. Drury: I don't think it is desirable.

Senator Carter: That is pretty dogmatic. Surely there must be something going on that is useless or that has outlived its usefulness. Are you saying that it is not desirable to stop that?

Hon. Mr. Drury: What has outlived its usefulness or is, in effect, useless, depends again on where it is being done. If it is being done in private industry, it is of little use for the government to say, "You fellows don't know how to run your business. We in Ottawa know better."

Senator Grosart: You do that all the time anyway.

Hon. Mr. Drury: It does not really get much credence.

Senator Grosart: I want to come back to the central point, and perhaps I can illustrate it by reading a sentence from paragraph 22 on page 7 of the presentation that MOSST made to the committee. It says:

a science budget in the conventional sense (i.e. as a basis for resource allocation) cannot reasonably be

accommodated in the existing structure and procedure of the Government;

The opposite was very central in our recommendation. I think there has obviously been a misunderstanding of our recommendation, because it seems to me that this presentation says that you have already accommodated it within the existing structure. Then you say in the next paragraph, paragraph 23:

The Government can however, through the Ministry of State for Science and Technology, ensure that plans and budgets for scientific activities are screened by competent analysts...

And that is MOSST, and that advice is introduced. Then you say again at paragraph 42 on page 13:

The separate preparation of data in connection with science expenditure proposals was initiated with the Treasury Board...

And then you say in paragraph 44, at the bottom of the same page:

Thus, science budgetary information was, for the first time, made available with Main Estimates data.

Then in paragraph 46 on page 14 you say this:

... TBS has advised departments, who have not done so, to consult MOSST before putting forward submissions.

All this would seem to say that you have a visible science budget in advance of the authorization of expenditures by Treasury Board. But in paragraph 20 on page 6 you state:

The Senate Committee felt strongly that MOSST's role as described in the Order in Council came... "within the framework of the coordination model", and lacked the authority needed for an effective central agency. The Committee recommended that the Ministry's role be within the framework of the "concerted action" model and specifically that the Ministry's terms of reference be modified to give it budgetary authority in relation to science.

And then in the next paragraph you use the word "authority" again.

What I want to suggest to you is that we never suggested anything of the kind. We never suggested budgetary authority. What we said was that MOSST should assess and review the science budget. What I would like to ask you is this: Does this mean there is a visible science budget, because you say that MOSST reviews them, reviews the proposals and then advises Treasury Board. So I am asking if there is now a visible science budget available to MOSST in advance of the authorization to spend public funds on scientific activities. Perhaps that could be answered yes or no.

Hon. Mr. Drury: I will answer it "yes or no". What do you understand by "budget"? What is a budget?

Senator Grosart: As you know much better than I do, Mr. Minister, a budget is a series of proposals for spending, for which authorization by Parliament is asked. That is the budget. The main estimates take in every single request to Parliament for authorization to spend money. That is what a budget is. I am not taking it out separately and saying, "This is a science budget." It is a budget for science expenditure. What I am suggesting is that you say here clearly that you have this, yet somewhere else you say you