

Another worthwhile initiative was the announcement, on August 4, 1987, of the creation of the Department of Industry, Science and Technology. This new Department will play a major role in the formulation of economic policies geared to the development and implementation of technologies absolutely vital for the establishment of an industrial economy able to compete the international level. It will also have to increase the government's awareness of the needs and concerns of our industrial and scientific communities.

Toward the end of 1987, three committees of the Advisory Council worked relentlessly to come up with recommendations in an effort to guide the government's decisions in the field of science and technology. With regard to universities, one suggestion called for the government to fund Centres of excellence, create a scholarship program for Science and Engineering students, and increase the budget of three granting councils for research.

And that is why, in January 1988, the Prime Minister of Canada announced that the Government would spend \$1.3 billion in the next five years towards new science and technology projects carried at Canadian universities.

The three major initiatives announced since directly result from the recommendations made by the Advisory Council and show how important university research and studies are for this Government. Let's review these initiatives: there was the creation of national networks of Centres of excellence, for which \$250 million were granted, the establishment of a scholarship program in Canada for students in the field of Science and Engineering and related fields, which represent altogether \$80 million, and finally a major increase of \$200 million in the core budgets of the granting councils.

The purpose of setting-up a national network of centers of excellence is to promote co-operation between universities and industry and prevent the duplication of research as well as encourage the immediate spread of new discoveries, in order to better ensure Canada's long term competitiveness at the international level. So far, this initiative has been an unqualified success.

The Address—Mrs. Duplessis

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the number of projects submitted exceeds largely everything we had imagined, and the researchers I met recently insisted that they could never have obtained so much co-operation between the various universities without such a program.

They felt that such co-operation could only prove advantageous in every respect and the scientific community is universally grateful to the Government for providing them with this unique chance to create solid and long lasting contacts with their counterparts everywhere in this country.

So far, Mr. Speaker, university people and private enterprise are enthusiastic about the benefits accruing from the creation of the center of excellence network, and we are now involved in the review of various projects submitted by the ad hoc committees.

We can already foresee the more than positive spin-offs from the creation of centers of excellence and together with the researchers, I am delighted with the valuable impact of this happy initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I wish I could have dealt with all the other achievements of our Government in the area of science and technology. I refer here to the \$1.2 billion contract under the Canada Space Program for the construction of a space computerized engineering robot which will generate jobs representing more than 100 000 men-year and will bring in \$8 billion in revenues by the year 2000. I wish I could have dealt in depth with the Innovation strategy, the \$90 million invested in micro-electronics, as well as the space agency, with investments of \$3 billion over the next decade, which is important not only for Québec, but for Canada as a whole.

My time is running out and I'll conclude by saying—and I am sure you will agree with me, Mr. Speaker—that much has been achieved. But in this field which is progressing daily, much remains to be done, and in view of the strong determination the Government has shown over the past four years, I am sure that during the next four years, with the co-operation of everyone, we will achieve great things, in the best interest and for the future well-being of this country.

Mr. Allmand: Early in her speech, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member referred to the Constitution. May I ask the Hon. Member whether she accepts the policy enunciated by the Prime Minister to the effect that the