

Subsection 1.—The National Research Council*

Encouragement of scientific research on a national basis has been one of the continuing functions of the National Research Council of Canada. From its inception in 1916, the Council has maintained a system of post-graduate scholarships for the assistance of students who have shown promise of research ability. These scholarships have also provided a measure of aid for the development in Canada of trained scientific personnel to meet the academic and industrial needs of the nation in the prosecution of fundamental and applied research. Nearly 1,600 graduate research workers have been trained by this means.

A further measure of assistance has been given through financial grants-in-aid to Heads of Science Departments in Canadian universities who have been enabled thereby to provide facilities for research that holders of post-graduate scholarships and other advanced students could do in various fields.

Development of the National Research Council.—From temporary laboratories established after the Research Council Act, 1924, permanent National Research Laboratories were established at Ottawa, Ont., in 1932 with Divisions of Applied Biology, Chemistry, Mechanical Engineering, and Physics and Electrical Engineering. These Laboratories were constructed and equipped primarily to carry out research on general subjects of national interest which universities and industrial laboratories could not be expected to undertake. Provision was also made for work of a fundamental nature in pure science in order that some contribution might be made by the staff in these basic fields.

At the outbreak of war in 1939 practically every university and industrial laboratory in Canada offered its facilities to the Government and the story of how these laboratories and staffs were welded into an informal but highly effective co-operative association is a tribute to the organizing capacity of Canadians and to their voluntary collaboration in time of war. The war history of the National Research Council is in preparation but the work is not yet sufficiently advanced to permit of a comprehensive review being given at this time.

The scope of the Council's activities broadened considerably during the War. The establishment of new laboratories in various centres and the assignment of projects to university and industrial laboratories enabled the Council to promote co-operation in research on a scale never previously attained in Canada. As a result of these combined efforts during the War, a firm basis has been laid for continued collaboration in times of peace by all the participating institutions. Thus, an important step in the co-ordination and promotion of research has been taken.

The Chairmanship of the Committee of the Privy Council on Scientific and Industrial Research is now held by the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply and the National Research Council was transferred from the Minister of Trade and Commerce to his jurisdiction in 1946. This brings the National Research Council into close touch with the problems of the reconstruction period and enables the laboratories to contribute directly to the reconversion program.

Speaking in the House of Commons on May 27, 1946, the Minister said: "The Government has decided that the peacetime needs for scientific research in Canada require that the activities of the Research Council be maintained on the same order

* Prepared under the direction of C. J. Mackenzie, President, National Research Council.