

*Procedure of Legislative Program*

Why are imports currently cheaper than domestically-produced goods? Who ever told us that the floating dollar was supposed to increase our ability to manage our own economy? Who told us, following the last international monetary meeting, that our dollar would not float up to a level that would be injurious to our exporters and at the same time make imports more attractive in price competition with our own products? Who gave us those assurances? Where is the strategy of a government which set up a situation whereby, by its own admission, we now have less capability to take proper stimulative measures to deal with unemployment? The government has brought this about, even though we were told we would have more flexibility to do our own thing.

We have a floating dollar, but according to these ministers we have no capability to expand consumer demand in Canada. The government has reached the stage where it is simply wallowing around in its own contradictions. We not only have unemployment and inflation—we have sort of got used to that—and we not only have our dollar rising, but at the same time we have a deteriorating position in our trade. We are not used to the latter; that is a rather novel condition in Canada. Thirdly, although a floating dollar was supposed to give us the capability in Canada to expand our economy as we saw fit, or contract it, we are now told by the government that we have no such capability today.

It is no wonder that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce now talks about announcing an industrial strategy policy later rather than sooner. But the announcement we are all awaiting, Sir, is the one from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) setting the date for a general election—because based on the record and the state of economic affairs at this time, and the complete incapacity of the government to live up to its undertakings, we can only hope that that announcement will come sooner rather than later.

Surely as a first step toward being able to develop and implement a national industrial strategy a government must have its own house in order. It must have the will and the capability to co-ordinate the whole range of policies involved in such an undertaking.

**Mr. Stafford:** We have that.

**Mr. Stanfield:** The government has the capability to create more contradictions in our economy than any previous government in Canadian history. It has exhibited neither the will nor the capability to reconcile the different aims in our country. On the contrary, we have seen example after example that this is likely to be the most unco-ordinated government that ever came to office in Canada. We have seen national economic slowdown policy in conflict with regional development policy. We have seen fiscal and monetary policy in conflict with trade policy. And we have seen a tax reform policy and a so-called competition policy which have unsettled the entire private sector of the economy. Talk about the right hand not knowing what the left hand is supposed to be doing! Here we have a situation where the right foot and the left foot keep colliding in going into the same mouth.

Where do the provinces fit into the government's planning, or lack of planning? Again, in terms of industrial

[Mr. Stanfield.]

strategy it appears that a number of provinces are trying to shape some basic policies of their own in the absence of any federal initiative or any indication of where the federal government is going. This was the position expressed by the Premier of Alberta in a major address to the legislature of his province. I do not think that premier was being partisanly political in his remarks. His message seemed to me to be very moderate and responsible. His government would like to see some leadership in this area from the federal government, but in the meantime his government would have to make some moves on its own.

Indeed, what else can any province do? The federal government has not even indicated what it means by "industrial strategy." On that score it cannot play the old trick of throwing the ball back to us, because in my remarks during the Throne Speech debate I gave a pretty full accounting of what my party believes this term to involve and the goals we would associate with the pursuit of such a strategy.

But the government, Sir, has not given us any definition, has not given us any idea of what its concept is. I would like to know if the government envisages making a selection of industries which have good futures, or making a selection of certain sectors which it decides have good futures and encouraging those industries or sectors. Is that the sort of strategy the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce has in mind? I do not know. But I am certain of one thing at this point, and that is my very frank scepticism of the government's capacity to follow through on its promise in the Speech from the Throne that it was going to present this country with a strategy for economic development.

For example, we were promised "policies for the use of science and technology designed to contribute not only to industry but to the qualitative improvement of the life of Canadians." Where are these policies, Mr. Speaker? Nobody can say. Nobody knows where they are. These days the only spokesman on the government side—I do not know whether he is on the government's side, but he sits on that side of the House—regarding any kind of strategy position is the hon. member for Duvernay (Mr. Kierans). He says that we have plenty of manpower and a scarcity of capital. I am not overlooking the proposals made by the hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer), but I am referring now specifically to the hon. member for Duvernay.

• (1540)

**Mr. Béchar:** Take both of them with you.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** His heart is not over there, either.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Somebody on the other side is offering both these hon. members to us, but I do not know if he has authority to do that or if he has direction over their decision. I think he had better concentrate on getting some action from this government.

The hon. member for Duvernay says that we have plenty of manpower and a scarcity of capital, and that therefore we should develop labour-intensive industries with a vengeance and withdraw emphasis altogether from the field of resource development. Whatever else it may do, I hope the government will not take this attitude in