

series of strategies in place. Some of them we do not even know about, some have not even been yet, and some we perhaps should not use." This is the kind of science policy we have which parallels the chaotic thinking of the government in regard to industrial strategy.

● (1550)

I sometimes wish the government had devoted a portion of the resources that have been poured in to the Prime Minister's office to industrial strategy and planning, and in giving some thought as to where this country is going. In this way perhaps we could have a planned program for parliament, with planning for the next election, and then these little flow charts in this office might tell us where we are going, when legislative items should become effective, and what kind of goodies we can expect before the next election. If the government had devoted a portion of its thinking to trying to figure out where this country is going, perhaps we would not be in the kind of mess we are in today.

Admittedly, when you look at the rest of the world and at Canada it is not obvious that we are in a mess. This country is pretty prosperous compared to many other countries, but with our inflation and our level of unemployment we are living off the fat that nature provided our country. The question that arises is, what happens when that fat is used up and we do not have the gas, oil, or iron ore any more? Will there be enough brains in this country to enable us to do some thinking, instead of just extracting things out of the ground and living off them as we have been doing?

We have created a kind of welfare state. I have always been in favour of a welfare state. The reason I, and others like myself, have wanted the kind of underpinnings that come from unemployment insurance, old age pensions, and family allowances, is that with that kind of background the government would be able to innovate, be adventurous, and get the country into existing and new fields while ensuring that the security of human beings was being looked after. This government has not done that. It has been satisfied to live on with the welfare state, and we have had the natural resources to do that. We have been living off those natural resources. I guess the minister could say, like Louis XIV, "After me, the flood. In my time we are all going to be all right."

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I think it was "the deluge".

Mr. Saltsman: Let us be correct about it. I would not want this reference applied to the minister unless it were absolutely accurate. So we have an "after me the deluge" liquidator minister. This is a serious kind of indictment that is being made and I am surprised that the minister would undertake this kind of onerous and unsavory role, sitting as head of this department.

I think it was a great and excellent idea of former Prime Minister Pearson, who should be commended for what he was trying to do. He came to the conclusion that industry was suffering as a result of its association with trade and commerce, and that a new ministry should be created and devoted to industry in order to give industry the kind of

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attention it required. He realized that in the future we were going to need a separate ministry of industry.

This new department was created and the government went on a great manhunt, recruiting some of the most able people in the country from industry and government to staff this department. These people then sat around but did nothing because they were not told what to do, and they did not know what to do. They went around pleading for something to do. They wanted to do something. They finally reached the point where, in the absence of government direction and in the absence of any kind of national plan, set of priorities, or anything else to do, they sat around scratching each other, doing crossword puzzles, or doing something else. They certainly were not working because there was nothing for them to do. Finally the whole idea was liquidated, and it was the responsibility of the present minister to accomplish this.

Now we have a different thing. We have a new minister and a new Department of Science and Technology. We had a full-time minister before, but that did not make any difference. From time to time somebody in that department would drop a hint that hon. members should ask questions about the department in the House in order that the department would get some attention. These people want things to happen because no one seems to care enough about the department to even criticize.

The department is being totally neglected. No one pays it any attention. The money is being spread around because no one wants to upset anybody in Canada. The money is being spread evenly throughout the whole science community in Canada, but no attention is being paid to what is or is not a priority. If you have a lot more money than Canada has, I guess you can shunt money around this way, giving a little bit to everybody. It helps to support everybody and really amounts to a bit of scientific welfare, but nothing more than that. It keeps people happy and does not get them mad at the government, but it does not produce any results. It cannot produce results. All it produces is frustration, but helps no one because no one has any idea where the country is going in this area of science and technology. This is the kind of situation we are facing.

As I said, we are not going to go down the drain tomorrow because we are still not out of natural resources. We can go on living off those natural resources for some time yet. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner), now supported by the minister of industry, says the reason we are in trouble and the reason our exports of finished products are falling off is because labour rates in Canada have gone up. That is nonsense. I am sure that increased labour rates have contributed in some way, but the point is that the imbalance results from our pre-occupation with the exportation of natural resources and raw or unfinished materials.

In order to help out the rest of the world we have a responsibility in this area of exportation of raw materials, and it makes some sense to continue a certain amount of this, but this is always at the expense of our own manufacturing industry. There is a simple equation involved here which somehow or other no one seems to be able to get through his head. You cannot do two things simultaneously; that is, you cannot increase your exports and decrease