

Government Organization

that the process of reviewing policies is quite normal, and when one is completed, it would be only logical and reasonable to start another one on the same topic the day after because things are changing very quickly.

It was with this in mind that the Department of Industry was set up apart from the Department of Trade and Commerce in 1963, and it will be for the same reason that the two departments will be merged soon into a single Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Therefore, there is no contradiction.

In 1963, on the eve of the Kennedy Round, it was generally acknowledged that industrial expansion should be more aggressive in Canada, more able to withstand world competition, capable of promoting the development of manufacturing industries and of increasing the number of jobs available to our labour force. It was thought, in some well-informed circles, that the federal government should help the industry to meet these new conditions. In view of the circumstances prevailing then, a new start had to be made, new fields had to be explored, new priorities had to be established, etc. Those were the factors which brought about, in 1963, the establishment of the Department of Industry, and those objectives have been attained.

May I also point out the particular circumstances? In 1963, the Minister of Industry was at the same time Minister of Defence Production, therefore, a very busy man with two departments to head. Today, the expanded Department of Defence Production, now the Department of Supply and Services, has its own head.

We must also recall that in 1963 the Department of Industry looked after regional development. This sector has become the responsibility of a separate department.

Therefore, before accusing us of sometimes being illogical, consideration must be given—that is what I am trying to prove—to particular circumstances which prevailed in 1963, and to changes which happened since then, in the conjunction of circumstances inherent to every situation.

Anyway, the transmission of the new function to a new and separate organization, in 1963, helped it—I am referring to the Department of Industry, of course—to gain influence, prestige and the necessary instruments to work in re-orienting our economy. All those things remain in the new structure.

I have already mentioned a certain number of important programs operated by the Department of Industry. But there are several others which I would like to mention, especially that famous automotive agreement entered into by Canada and the United States, which has proved very successful, as well as the agreement on machinery which enables us to import industrial equipment duty-free.

Through that Department of Industry, there is now a better co-operation between the business world and the government.

We are therefore facing a new combination of circumstances which compels us to amalgamate those two departments and once again it seems to me that there is nothing inconsistent in that.

Anyhow, the opposition said in 1963 that the Department of Trade and Commerce should also be a Department of Industry. The least we can expect from members of the opposition tonight is that they approve the merging of the two departments. Personally, I hope that the debate will be shorter than the one on the establishment of the Department of Communications.

● (9:20 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. Hees: Mr. Chairman, I think we have all listened with a great deal of interest to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. I must congratulate him on his presentation because in it he proved that he has the primary quality of a Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce, namely that of a salesman because he came very close to selling parliament the idea that the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce is something new. In fact, what he said tonight was proof that industry, trade and commerce should never have been split up by the government six years ago. As I listened to the minister speak tonight I said to myself, as one often does on hearing something familiar, "I recognize some of my own speeches, there." If hon. members would look back through the *Hansard* of those days they would find the minister was saying exactly what I said in the House of Commons about the function of the then Department of Trade and Commerce. I want to congratulate the minister on taking an old product, a successful product, one which was made successful by others than himself, and introducing it to the world as something brand new, something exciting, something which will bring results which were never achieved before. I congratulate him. He is undoubtedly