

without interruption. I am sure that all of the other members of the committee will have ample opportunity to ask their questions later. I believe this procedure is much more useful in the sense that it allows for more continuity of debate and discussion than if a member is interrupted in the process of his questioning. Is that agreeable to you?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Chairman: Senator Grosart, will you begin the questioning?

Senator Grosart: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Minister, May I add my words of welcome to those of the chairman? I am always glad to see you in this or other committees. I also wish to thank you, firstly, for the nice things you said in your presentation about the committee's work and also in your remarks this morning; and, secondly, for the interesting rundown you have given us of some of the areas in which the government has implemented recommendations of the committee. I also appreciated your explanations of those areas in which, for various reasons, recommendations of the committee have not been implemented. We did not expect that all our recommendations would be implemented, but I am sure we are all thankful for the degree to which they have been.

Finally, I wish to thank you, Mr. Minister, for your preview of the intentions of MOSST in its future activities, which brings me to my first question, relating to an article which appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen* on Monday. The article said that the federal cabinet is facing proposals for massive cuts, et cetera. The article says "truly Draconian ones," quoting somebody, and one of the matters that it says is being discussed by the committee is the phasing-out of the Ministry of State for Science and Technology over 12 months and a freeze on all research spending and many other grant programs. My first question is, therefore, are we working with the still-breathing corpse or a dead one?

Hon. Mr. Drury: Neither.

The Chairman: Can you explain that?

Hon. Mr. Drury: The term "corpse" is a corruption of a French word and is rather inappropriate.

Senator Godfrey: Particularly with regard to one that breathes!

Hon. Mr. Drury: MOSST has recently gone through a period of re-organization and restructuring, looking to a productive existence now and in the future. The story that appeared in the *Citizen* I can only classify as a complete canard—a duck.

Senator Grosart: I am very glad to hear that. Now we know that our hearings can continue. We had some doubts about it when we read that article.

The first question I would ask you, Mr. Minister, is with regard to what has been called by somebody, "the silly semantics" of the arguments about the role of a co-ordinating or concerting body in science policy. "Silly semantics," as it has been called, involves the argument as to whether it is "science policy" or "a policy for science". Your deputy has used this argument to explain certain shortfalls in the current role of MOSST, and I think you have allowed yourself to fall into the same trap on one or two occasions.

The reason I ask this question is that there is some indication of a deterioration of the role and activities of

MOSST over a period of time. I seem to have reached the conclusion that this may be due to the strawman that has been set up. Is it "science policy" or is it "a policy for science"? I will not quote the occasions on which this argument has been developed. I only say this: Is there any sense in it at all? We do not talk about whether we have a "trade policy" or a "policy for trade," or an "immigration policy" or a "policy for immigration," or "a monetary policy" or a "policy for money." What is the sense of trying to make this distinction as an argument in favour of MOSST, not doing the full job that we recommended it should do?

Hon. Mr. Drury: When one talks about "silly semantics", I think, really, it is in an endeavour to get a clearer understanding of how to answer the question, "What is our science policy?", and to indicate that the answer is not a simple one, any more than it would be if the question were, "What is our trade policy?" We no longer ask the question, "What is our trade policy?". We got over that difficulty a long time ago, and now talk about specifics. Perhaps we have not yet succeeded in getting over what you call the "silly semantics" hurdle, nor in recognizing that a one-line phrase will not suffice to describe a science policy.

Philosophically, I hold the view that science and technology, whether in the natural field or the humanities, are good and worthwhile to the extent that they can serve to resolve some of the problems the larger, so-called social problems, or national problems—that we face, rather than to the extent that science should exist for and in itself. There is in my mind a great deal of doubt about this. We have seen the decline of religion in the world, not because religion as such is any less virtuous than it used to be, but perhaps rather because it has been less useful in recent times in providing solutions for the growing problems that face us than it used to be. As a consequence, it has been in decline. One really should look at science and technology in the same way, and the measure of support for and faith in them should have a direct relationship to their usefulness in solving problems rather than to science and technology for their own sake.

If one looks at the subject this way, then the whole approach to so-called science policy becomes one of, "Where and how can science and technology be helpful?" If they can, they should be supported. If they cannot, they should not be. Therefore, while a view of science and technology as being capable of solving problems, in my view, will get you a rational, viable state of science and technology, supporting them merely for their own sake, because this is merely an act of faith, is liable to fail.

My own understanding of the history of science and technology if I can use this term, in the years immediately following the war, has been one of blind faith in and reliance on science and technology as being likely to provide the answers to all our problems. It takes time to discover such answers, and we have not gone as fast in resolving our problems as perhaps people hoped for. Consequently, there has arisen a disenchantment with science and technology as being the universal answer to everything. Here, the test of usefulness of their contribution to the solution of social problems has been applied, and we have not, in the scientific field, been able to provide satisfactory answers.

I would suggest that our task is to re-establish the place and usefulness of science and technology. We should address ourselves, really, to a hard calculation of likely useful results rather than merely saying, "You must give,