

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there have been many statements made in this House by present ministers and their predecessors, including myself as minister of industrial development and also as minister of industry, trade and commerce. The issue may well hinge on whether we are talking in the singular in terms of an industrial strategy, or talking, as the sectoral report suggests, of having a number of related strategies, each of which is moving ahead within a general, over-all framework.

● (1125)

If we look at the statements which have been made with regard to industrial strategies on, for example, the shipbuilding industry and the forest industry within the last few weeks, it can be seen that the Board of Economic Development Ministers is in fact pursuing a series of industrial initiatives in all of the key sectors. Whether one wishes to put an umbrella definition on that as being a total industrial strategy or whether, as the responsible minister has said—and I agree, and I am sure all our colleagues on this side agree—one goes at it on the basis of analysing each individual key sector and developing it in the way which is now being done is, I suggest, more a matter of semantics than anything else.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I say, with respect, to the minister that the question is much greater than a semantic one.

I will go back to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Science Council correctly pointed out that dealing with different sectors of the Canadian economy or different aspects of our economic difficulty, whether it is inflation on the one hand or unemployment on the other, is not enough. The Science Council says that these have to be seen as symptoms of a larger structural difficulty.

I would like to ask the minister who has responsibility for the Science Council why the Government of Canada cannot do what France, Japan, Norway, Sweden and most other industrial countries have done, that is, have an over-all industrial strategy which integrates economic policy. That is the only way, as the Science Council has pointed out, that we can achieve long-range full employment in this country.

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, it has already been made very clear by my colleagues, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the President of the Board of Economic Development Ministers, that we are approaching this in key sectors. We are approaching it from the point of view of the interests of both management and labour. Labour and management in each of these sector task forces made recommendations.

The government was not sitting there saying, "We are going to decide what should be done". We were saying, "We would like to hear from you." To each of these sector task forces government personnel were attached, but government personnel were not writing the rules; they were listening and taking notes; they were part of the process. I am sure the hon.

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member would agree that labour has something very important to say about the development of an industrial strategy for Canada.

Mr. Fraser: When did you ever listen to labour?

Mr. Gillespie: If the hon. member does believe that, he should be supporting the government's efforts to involve the labour movement in the enunciation and articulation of separate strategies for separate industries.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, the minister really should go out and have another glass of sherry.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Will he, just for once, deal with the substance of the matter? The Science Council points out that the government has never had a coherent industrial strategy because it has, and I quote, "an ideological aversion" to planning in a sensible way. Why is it that other industrial countries can recognize that there is a need to match resource development with industrial output, that there is a need to integrate inflation policy with full employment, and that there is a need not simply to have a shipbuilding industry in one part of Canada and a plastics industry in another part, but to integrate the two?

Why is it that other industrial countries are able to do this, but this government—which has been around for many years—has not been able to do that in the past and is refusing to do it for the future?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the key performing parts of the Canadian economy, the industries themselves. The government believes that labour and management should work together. The forest products industry is a very good example. It is a massive industry. It is one of our most important exporting industries. As a result of the consultation which took place between labour, management and the government with respect to problems and opportunities, the government announced a program of support for the industry which will help it become competitive and modernize for the future.

We believe in a selective approach like that and in dealing with each of the key sectors. The automotive sector is another important one, as the hon. member knows. He has also mentioned the shipbuilding sector. We believe in working with the parties involved. We would be more likely to develop a viable and strong shipbuilding industry through consultation that by working in some back room as perhaps some of the hon. member's supporters believe we should.