

The problems of the industrial base in Ontario and Quebec mean that this economic region, too, as well as all the other regions, now has good reason and all have joint economic cause to come together again, as they did 110 years ago, with their joint and several difficulties, to reassess together their economic interdependence and to find in redesigned national policies a path out of the cul-de-sac in which most now seem to be caught.

The central thesis of my remarks, then, is that the remaking of the regional economic framework of this country ranks in stature with the remodelling of its political constitution. This will require that same generosity of spirit to which the Prime Minister called our attention again yesterday.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC OF GABON

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. Before recognizing another hon. member, and undoubtedly with leave of all hon. members, I have the honour and the pleasure to call attention to the presence in our gallery of the President of the Republic of Gabon, His Excellency El Hadj Omar Bongo.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[*English*]

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Dennis Dawson for an address to Her Majesty the Queen in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Mr. Speaker, as is traditional, it is my pleasure to congratulate the mover (Mr. Dawson), and the seconder (Mr. Wood), of the Speech from the Throne and their replies to Her Majesty. They did so with a lot more aplomb and self-confidence in their maiden speeches than I did in mine. I congratulate them accordingly. Also, I should like to congratulate the speaker who preceded me, the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. O'Connell).

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: I have always enjoyed his contributions to debates in this chamber and have found them very erudite and worth while. Given the paucity of talent in the cabinet, it has always struck me as strange that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has kept him out of the Privy Council since his election in 1974.

The Address—Mr. Andre

An hon. Member: He agrees.

Mr. Andre: I should like to direct a few initial remarks to the comments of the hon. member for Scarborough East. I am pleased to learn that he has read the very excellent report of the Science Council dealing with Canada's manufacturing industry. He has clearly adopted many of its observations and recommendations as his own. I presume that within the workings of the Liberal party there will be an opportunity to communicate those observations to some who are in a position to make decisions.

I hope the hon. member will not mind if I remind the House that during the 1972 election campaign the then minister of industry, trade and commerce of the Liberal government promised a new industrial strategy for Canada. That was one of the election promises. He said that this was being worked on and would be revealed to the nation soon after as the policy framework which would deliver us to the new utopia.

When the House returned, after considerable questioning by those of us on this side, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) was moved to indicate that while it was too much to expect an all-encompassing industrial strategy, they were working on a sector plan which would soon be revealed. Further questioning revealed that if the sector plan was coming, it would be a long time coming. Subsequent ministers of industry, trade and commerce have dropped the language entirely from their statements and comments. It was not until the Science Council's report that the subject was raised again. It is far more vital now than it was in 1972 when it was first announced.

I should like to deal briefly with some of the aspects of an industrial strategy. Basically, I agree with the points raised by the hon. member, but he could have raised a few more. For some time he dwelt on the question of Canadian multinationals being important to the development of an indigenous Canadian innovative capacity in research and development. He is absolutely right in that sense, but that is only a part of the problem. As was diagnosed in 1970 by the special Senate Committee on Science and Technology, Canada spends less on industrial research and development in science technology than any other western industrialized nation. The Canadian government supports research and development less than any other western industrialized nation. Out of the research it supports, it spends more on basic research, rather than applied or applicable research, than any western industrialized nation.

Whereas the hon. member has properly identified one problem, he did not get to the root of the problem, which is the commitment of this government to the value of science and technology as an important ingredient in our future industrial development. This has been articulated in huge volumes of studies and analyses by virtually every economic group within the country that has looked at this problem. The failure of this government to respond positively to these recommendations which have been coming forward in great volume since 1970 is one of the major reasons we are in such a difficult position today.