hours of the aircraft, although the research and development and capital costs are borne by the government. The aircraft are operated by a group of pilots, aircraft mechanics and instrument operators of the Canadian Forces known as the Canadian Forces Airborne Sensing Unit. The cost of operating this unit is borne by the Canada Centre for Remote Sensing which does the tasking and mission-planning and also carries out an extensive research and development program to develop new sensors and applications which are intended for use not only on their aircraft but also in possible future Canadian remote sensing satellites. The aircraft program also provides detailed information to help interpret the satellite date and to give data the satellites cannot provide.

Steps are now being taken to transfer the operational aspects of the airborne program to a private company which will be able to bring these services to a larger number of users both in Canada and abroad. It is hoped that the government will, in this way be able to create in Canada an industrial centre of excellence in new remote sensing technology which will develop into a viable industry. The Canada Centre for Remote Sensing will continue to carry on the research and development and provide the technical back-up to the selected company.

In conclusion, I would like to say how pleased I am that Canada is remaining in the forefront of this new technology which has such important implications for a large country like Canada. I consider it would be difficult, if not impossible, to properly map and monitor our vast territory and continental shelves without the help of remote sensing aircraft and satellites. It is important to do this, not only to properly plan our vast new development projects and to monitor environmental degradation where it occurs, but also to exert visible management and sovereign control over our hinterlands and continental shelves for which we have wide responsibilities.

I also think it important that we work toward an integrated space program for Canada. Although our space communication technology is well advanced, the same cannot be said for our remote sensing, weather satellite, geodetic and oceanographic satellites. I am convinced that these satellite systems will play an important role in the future growth and development of the great land mass of Canada.

This brief description of only one area of Canada's scientific effort is indicative of hundreds of other activities by the federal government in science and technology. Just as we are very far advanced in this field, we are in many others in the field of science and technology. Therefore I think the motion before us tonight should be rejected by the House of Commons.

Mr. Joe Clark (Rocky Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I was interested to listen to the extemporaneous remarks of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Foster). He listed some of the programs of a scientific kind which the department is carrying forward and seemed to suggest that because the government was carrying out certain individual programs which involved scientific activity there was, as a consequence, a science policy.

It would indeed be incredible if in the year 1975 any country were not undertaking certain projects which contained some scientific component, but to suggest that because various scientific activities are going on here there is a national science policy is only to strain our credulity. I am sure the parliamentary secretary was doing no more than his duty, filling in time, when he suggested there was in fact something more than unrelated policies operating outside the necessary context of a national policy.

One of the best illustrations of the current state of science policy in Canada, and particularly of the role which has been played by the Ministry of State for Science and Technology, is that the only occasion this session on which the minister has come to the attention of the House or of the country was on the occasion when it was revealed, as a result of the initiative taken by my hon. friend from Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre), that his department was being used to hide the allocations in the estimates set aside for security operations. In other words, the only occasion on which the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Drury) has been involved in public debate relative to his responsibilities as minister for science had to do with his role as minister of secrecy, trying to hide estimates and mislead the House as to the nature of the estimates we were being asked to approve.

It is a truism that in any country in 1975 science policy should be at the very centre of its affairs. It is particularly true of a country like our own which is still in its formative stage and in a situation where the negative effects of science—the dangers of science so aptly alluded to by my hon. friend from Calgary Centre—can cause so much harm. Thus it is particularly important that science policy should be at the centre of our national thinking and not off at the side.

In the light of this need, it is interesting to view the short life of this ministry of state. It was brought in as a public relations gesture, as an attempt to be fashionable, an attempt to show that this was a modern government concerned with the future. It was then farmed out as a training ground for a junior minister. And now it has been downgraded again and entrusted to a minister who, whatever his capacity, whatever his contribution to the country, is a man whose future is in the other place if anywhere at all, a man whose achievements are behind him.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Clark: That is a simple statement of fact about a man whose ability in the House I respect. But he has not brought to this future-oriented portfolio the direction and drive which it should receive if science policy is to play a central role. Science and technology has never been a full department and now it is simply an adjunct to a department.

All this is a symbol of the approach taken by the government not simply to science policy but to anything which requires it to set long range policies, to take hard decisions and to stick by them despite the political buffeting of the day and the attraction of short term priorities which might seem politically expedient. The ministry was established because it was thought fashionable to do so; but there has never been on the part of a Liberal government