

*Supply*

government or another. One of the difficulties of debating the particular issue of technological change is that there are so many facets to it. One could talk with a certain amount of knowledge I suppose on a multitude of things and it would take days and weeks. However, what I also like about the NDP motion is that they use the term "technological change", rather than "high-tech" or "technological innovation" or "new technology". That reminds the House that technological change has been part of the industrial scene for a long, long time.

I want to predict perhaps the future rather than dwell too long in the past, but I also want to remind Hon. Members of the House that technological change in the 1960s had as wrenching an impact on the work force as technological change will have in the 1980s or 1990s. It is, if you like, a different sector which is affected. In the 1960s the main cause of concern, worry and uncertainty was the technological change occurring in the railway industry through the introduction of diesel power in an industry which had been dominated by steam. We had the spectacle, unfortunately it was necessary, of railway workers lying down on the railway tracks at Wainwright and Nakina, transfer points from the West, because the diesel made those points redundant. The trains no longer had to stop there.

● (1700)

In the Freedman Report Judge Freedman said that workers who were affected detrimentally by the introduction of technology should have a right to negotiate that change. In 1968 in the House we introduced a compromise which said in effect that workers should at least have the opportunity to negotiate the detrimental impact of technology. We recognize that we cannot prevent technology, nor should we. However, if we are an employer or a government we have a moral obligation, if not a legal one, to do everything in our power to minimize the negative impact of technology. This was true in the airline industry when we brought in something of which we all approve today. In the reservation section, which was not computerized, there was fear and concern on the part of the workers that these computers would do away with their jobs. I had the Minister of Labour move in to prevent a strike in that sector.

I am glad, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP has raised this important issue of technological change. It is something in which I have been particularly interested in my years on the Treasury benches and since. It is the reason the Liberal Party introduced into legislation the obligation of the employer in the federal area to negotiate change. It was the fundamental reason behind unemployment insurance. We recognized that even in times of great prosperity technological change would create hardships and the loss of jobs for people who had a right to presume after 20, 30 or 40 years that their jobs would not disappear. It is the reason the Liberal Party brought in additions to proposed assistance to the textile industry which make it obligatory under law to provide a pension to workers who have been linked to the textile industry for 30 years, have reached age 55 and are without work. The Government

financed, with no strings attached, the modernization of the textile industry. Eventually that feature was made part of the shoe industry as well.

I am not going to dwell on the wrenching effects of changes in the pulp and paper industry which make one-industry towns redundant. I would like to suggest that in the eighties major work stoppages in our key industries will be an exception rather than the rule. Based on history, because of technological change, productivity will improve. I would also like to say, for a reason which I would like to develop in the time remaining, that we will see a tremendous increase in management, labour and government joint committees. In other words, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the adversarial concept which dominated the relationship between management, labour and government in the past will gradually be replaced by a more realistic relationship. I do not believe that that change in relationship between management, labour and government will be the result of legislation. It is too simplistic a solution. I have heard it mentioned here in the 20 years I have been here. Like other people in the House, I have participated in seminars in no less than 14 countries in the world. You cannot borrow other people's labour legislation. You cannot legislate that type of co-operation. I am certain that the future bodes well for the country and that we will have increased labour-management consultation because technological change has been going on since before the turn of the century. Each time major innovations are introduced into the country, they have a dramatic effect on the social mores of our nation. Perhaps what is more important at the moment, it has a dramatic effect on the characteristics of the work force.

A few years ago, Mr. Speaker, just before the recent recession I did a lot of reading on the make-up of the work force, as did many other people. What effects did the growth of technology have on the work force? In the early part of the century it took two-thirds of the Canadian work force to produce the goods that all of us needed or wanted. Today it takes little more than one-third. Perhaps my figures are slightly out of whack, but I believe in the United States it is one-third. The one fundamental change that technology has created in this country is to change the characteristics of the work force. Only one-third, as opposed to two-thirds a few decades ago, is producing. The two-thirds who are not producing goods are producing services; government, education, health, law, leisure and convenience. The service sector has become the fastest growing sector of the economy. Industry no longer dominates this country. The largest group in the labour force is no longer the blue collar worker or the semi-skilled worker; it is the white collar worker. He now outnumbers the blue collar worker by more than five to four.

As we look to the eighties and technological change, it is significant that the fastest growing category within the white collar workers group is the technical and professional worker. Of the technical and professional workers the college trained group is growing twice as fast as the total remaining work force. Among scientists and engineers the group rate is tripled.