

*Technological Change*

story of civilization, is it not, Mr. Speaker? Those who oppose would have us go back to an earlier time; they would have us remain nomadic herders.

I would like to hear the views of my good friend to my right, the Hon. Member for Sarnia-Lambton (Mr. Cullen), who indicates that he would like to have a little time to speak on this. I realize that the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) would like to hear some other comments on the subject. My colleague has words of wisdom that the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill has never heard. The Hon. Member for Sarnia-Lambton is a former Minister of a department which was so concerned about these new opportunities that we require that he must take a fair amount of credit for the policies that are now in place. It is the policy of great foresight which this Government has launched, building on the foundation laid by the Hon. Member for Sarnia-Lambton during his period in the ministry. I have pleasure in concluding my remarks so that we may all listen with rapt attention to the wisdom of my colleague.

**Hon. Bud Cullen (Sarnia-Lambton):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his very kind comments about the foresight of earlier Governments. Unfortunately, it did not impress the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) enough to reappoint me to that particular post. Here I am today, in Private Members' Hour, carrying this particular heavy load.

I do not want to make light of the subject that the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) has introduced because it is one that pricks the conscience of all of us. It is easy to see all the benefits that would accrue as a result of technological change. Governments of all political stripe, both at the provincial and federal level, are doing what they feel is appropriate to see to it that we do not drop into some black hole as far as technology is concerned, but that we remain in the forefront and take advantage of all these marvellous improvements. Many of these are labour-saving operations that can be done better by the improvement in technology, machinery and the intelligence that is applied to the kind of scientific miracle that is taking place around us every day.

When I heard that this motion was coming up for debate today I wondered if it might not be somewhat redundant. I am given to understand by the chairman of the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration that that particular Committee has a reference to study basically the same sort of thing—the impact of technological change, particularly on the work force. If that is the case, it may be that even if all of those who wish to participate in this debate find they will not have the opportunity to do so because of the limited time, the Hon. Member may find that he has gained his victory in any event by highlighting the subject in a motion, only to find that he has been pre-empted by the Committee with the eight or nine points that he made. No doubt he will be making those points again for the consideration of the Committee.

This subject is a matter of serious concern to those of us who are charged with the responsibility of governing. We have to recognize that as a result of technological change jobs will be lost. In the automobile manufacturing industry in particular there are jobs which will never be occupied again because of

robotics and other technological changes. But these changes have to be made in the interest of being competitive, particularly in the automobile industry, in the world economy.

• (1610)

As I was listening today to the debate, I happened to glance through the most recent issue of *Maclean's* magazine. I see that the Conservative convention which is taking place at the present time has also become the victim, or the beneficiary, I suppose is more correct, of technological change, in that if the candidates do not keep up with the changes and advancements made since 1976, they feel they will be left in the backwaters somehow. We find, therefore, there are no fewer than 1,000 walkie-talkies at that particular convention. On the last occasion, those who were using walkie-talkies found themselves on the same frequency. One individual indicated it was like listening to ten telephone conversations at the same time.

The powers that be then decided that was inappropriate, that there must be a more effective and efficient way of contacting one another without the Opposition knowing exactly what was being talked about, who was talking and what the various plans were. Therefore, as a result of technology there will be different transmissions. What does that create? It creates for the television people an additional difficulty because they must be concerned about interference. Special casings must be built. So we find as a result of all this modern technology and advancements more jobs are being created at this particular convention and more expertise must be used if candidates for leadership in a political convention are not to be left in the wake of other candidates.

I suppose our prime concern, and I am sure the concern of the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville who moved this particular motion, is that it is all well and good to talk about the positive aspects of technological change and, heaven knows, there are many hundreds of thousands of them, but there will be employment fallout, the loss of employment as the result of machines or electronic devices and technological devices taking over and doing work which at one time was performed by ten people. One man or one woman operating one machine can now do that particular amount of work.

This was brought home to me most forcefully as a young man in those days when I was working my way through school. It was quite usual in the area of Sudbury to have young students working underground. Obviously, during the pre-war years there were not sufficient numbers of miners so they were hiring students to do a lot of the "bull-work", if you will. A lot of us were at the business end of a shovel and doing that which was necessary in order to muck out the ore. With technological change there were mucking machines, slushing machines, trains and trams, better drills, and more diamond drilling equipment, to the point that where 10, 15 or 20 people had been employed in a particular drift or shaft construction, much of that work was done, as the result of technological change, by about one-tenth the number.

What also came about as the result of technological change is that there were a lot of people working on new machinery, so