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sity and labour, was appointed in early November and has been asked to report within the next six months.

Public awareness of science and technology is also a critical factor in the abilities of our industries, our universities, our labour force and, in fact, our citizens to recognize the opportunities which the new technologies can offer and to avoid the pitfalls which technological change may place before us. This is as important in the resource sector as it is in any other.

● (1530)

As a first step in encouraging awareness of the effects of technological change and to encourage each sector to manage instead of just reacting to technological change, the federal Government sponsored the Canada Tomorrow Conference. This conference drew representatives from each sector in Canada, including agriculture and the forest and mining industries. The conference opened up lines of communication which had previously been unknown or had lately grown lax from disuse. This communication is vital if Canada is to apply successfully its technological potential to its future economic development. It is a first step but one which will be used to build future ties and develop further policies, not only by the federal Government but by the participants from those various industries such as agriculture, high technology, and resource industries including mining and forestry.

I want to conclude by saying that Canada is a country rich in resources. We cannot ignore the advantages we have in this area. The federal Government has long invested in the future of our resource base by investing in research for our resource industries. Almost 40 per cent of the Government's R and D intramural expenditures are spent on our natural resources, and we will continue to provide this kind of support.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Are there Hon. Members rising to ask questions of the Hon. Member who has just spoken? If not, the Chair recognizes the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen).

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) confesses that he is perplexed as to why we put forward this motion. He says he cannot understand it, then by rote he rhymes off item after item of Government money going into NEED programs and the like. This is the first opportunity in some time that I have had to speak of my own riding of Yukon, some 237,000 square miles, if I am still permitted to use that term in this place. That part of Canada this Government has virtually closed down. No amount of NEED programs, no amount of paper jobs and no number of speeches along the lines of the one of which the Hon. Member for Algoma has just divested himself, will cure that ugly fact.

The most recent project which provided some glimmer of hope for the hundreds of unemployed in Yukon was turned down in early November by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Munro). I speak of the north slope development where there exists a substantial potential for the development of oil and gas, but which requires construction of a port on the north slope of Yukon. I think it is an

apt way to start my contribution to the debate by reading this telegram sent by the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce in Yukon to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau):

Dear Mr. Trudeau:

The following resolution was passed at the monthly membership meeting of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce on November 8th:

"That the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce request that Mr. John Munro be asked to resign and further that a new Department of Northern Development completely separate from Indian Affairs be formed."

The Chamber passed this resolution due to Mr. Munro's announcement on November 7th prohibiting development on Yukon's north coast.

The following points are relevant:

1. The Minister is charged with responsibility for northern development, as well as Indian affairs. The Yukon economy is severely depressed, due to the shutdown of the mining and transportation industries. New development is required to provide jobs for the many native and non native people who have become unemployed over the past two years. For the Minister to turn down potential new jobs and business opportunities under such circumstances is a renunciation of his responsibilities for northern development.
2. The decision is also a powerful psychological blow to Yukon, as the proposed north coast developments offered a glimmer of economic hope to the Territory. Members of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce have asked themselves in the past whether the federal Government is interested in the existence of a viable private business sector in the north. We see development proposals going through extensive hearings and reviews which give the impression that development, jobs and taxes are not welcome in the north. Most recently, we see federal Government Departments, led by the Northern Affairs Department, proposing new regulations for the placer mining industry in Yukon when even the Government's own studies show that the regulations will put 16 per cent of the present operators out of business. If the Government persists in these actions and adds to the rolls of the unemployed, while refusing to let new projects proceed, we cannot expect to solve the unemployment problem in the Territory or expect private business to survive. Under such circumstances we find it very hard to be optimistic and we await with trepidation the Minister's decision regarding implementation of the placer mining regulations.
3. The Minister has responsibility for the way in which development proposals are handled. Each proposal in Yukon is dealt with on an ad hoc basis. Each has to meet rules, regulations and concerns that are expressed by Department employees at the time of application and which may differ from application to application. Nobody is sure of the ground rules or of the possibilities of success when they make an application. We understand that both applicants in the current issue were encouraged by Department of Northern Affairs staff to proceed with their applications and that both had met the various concerns identified by Departmental staff.

I will be reading into the record a departmental document to show the truth of that assertion. It continues:

The refusal of their proposals after a protracted period of discussion lasting many months, and on the basis of issues that had not been identified before, leads to waste of investment money and effort on behalf of the applicants. It also discourages future development proposals, as proponents will not know what the ground rules are, will have no faith in the bureaucrats knowing what the issues are and will face inflated and additional costs with no assurance that they will see any return. In conclusion, I repeat again that Yukon is suffering severe economic problems. Unemployed residents must move south to find work and our young people graduating from school must do the same. Initially this situation was caused by the international economic slowdown. However, the uncertainty in the placer mining industry has been caused by the federal Government and in the north coast case we cannot understand how a Minister of your Government can turn away a potential solution to the economic problems of Yukon by disallowing new industrial expansion in the Yukon by Canadian companies.

We urge you to obtain Mr. Munro's resignation and to establish a new department responsible solely for northern development headed by a new Minister who is aware of the need for northern development.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!