

We were elected to the House not to watch things stand still, but to do better things for Canadians. I am very anxious to see that too.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. On April 14, his colleague, the Minister of Supply and Services, was quoted as saying that in acquiring the British firm Plessey and thus Canada's Leigh Instruments, General Electric and Siemens, "failed to show any regard for their obligations to their employees in Canada".

Would the minister tell the House why financial conditions were not imposed by Investment Canada to protect Canadian workers prior to approving the indirect acquisition of Leigh?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, first let me say that Canada has always welcomed new investors and will continue to do so. We believe that it is responsible for a lot of job creation in this country. Unlike what the former government did we believe that we can be helpful. Once again we welcome those investments.

What happened with Leigh Instruments is that it was the subject of a takeover in 1988 by Plessey. It was a takeover well accepted by the company because it opened markets and new technology for the company, particularly with Micronav Landing System.

The latest takeover in 1989 by the General Electric Company has been made out to be an indirect takeover. It was done in a way that Canada could not do anything about at that time. To link that to the fact that Leigh Instruments had to declare bankruptcy last week is false. I prefer that my friend wait for the report by the trustee to know exactly what the cause of the bankruptcy is.

Mr. John Manley (Ottawa South): Mr. Speaker, Canada's willingness to welcome foreign investors in the circumstances has to be questioned when some of our best firms are being scooped up by foreign buyers and stripped of their technology and their cash.

The question from a policy point of view is this: Why is the government permitting foreign buyers to clean out strategic high technology firms like Leigh Instruments of

their cash and of their intellectual wealth, leaving Canadians out of work and Canada out to lunch in the field of high technology?

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I never trust Liberal policy in terms of investment and I will not start today. We know exactly what it gave in 1982, 1983, 1984. My friend is wrong. The Plessey takeover was good and was requested by Leigh Instruments for new technology. The best example, Mr. Speaker, is that Micronav got the contract about MLS because they had the expertise and technology of Plessey. If it is a bad deal we should have had that kind of deal 10 years ago; it would have been better for Canada.

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TRADE

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister for International Trade I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. I have confirmation from industry sources that a large Toronto-based vegetable oil refinery has purchased 10 million pounds of subsidized soya bean oil from the European Common Market.

In view of the fact that Canadian supplies are adequate, Ontario soya bean processing plants are running at less than capacity, and some western oilseeds plants are shut down, can the minister advise this House what action will be taken to stop this dumping and to protect the Canadian-based oilseed producers and processors?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would have to look into that and perhaps the hon. member would allow me to take that question as notice.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Lambton—Middlesex, a short supplemental.

Hon. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that Spain has imported the soya beans from Brazil, United States or Paraguay, processed them and used the meal as a protein supplement in livestock and poultry feeds and yet are exporting the oil to protect their own olive oil industry, can the minister assure this House that those beans were not produced using pesticides, herbicides and chemicals that