

—we cannot promise that by 1990 we will have moved to the point of 2.5 per cent, which would be a desirable target, nor are we able to promise that we will have the necessary human resources in order to support that level of activity in research and development.

This is a far cry from the rhetoric that we heard during and prior to the last election campaign. In 1984, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) stated, "We have to double our spending on research and development and triple our resolve to reach it." What did the Minister of State for Science and Technology say today? He said, "I do not recall the specific wording, Mr. Chairman, that was used—".

We have come a long way in the last 18 months. From the doubling of spending and the tripling of resolve, we now have, "I do not recall the specific wording—". I am sure that Canadians who are listening to this debate and who have seen what has been doing on in the House in the last couple of days will soon catch up with this game. They will quickly come to the conclusion that all that they were offered during the last election was a lot of smoke and mirrors.

I wish to refer to another statement of the Minister in the last couple of days. I again refer to the committee report where, in reference to the promise that was made for double spending on research and development, the Minister said:

● (1650)

Opposition members are accustomed to thinking in terms of promises; I am accustomed to thinking in terms of goals—

That leads to the question which I asked yesterday in the House. When is a promise not a promise? We now have the answer from the Minister of State for Science and Technology. A promise is not a promise when it is a goal.

The promise to increase the spending on research and development has now been reduced in the priorities of the Government. If there is one area in which this Government should be maintaining its promises, it should be in that area. The Government promised that it would provide renewed growth to the economy and that it would create tens and tens of thousands of jobs. What is the foundation of the renewed economic strategy? There is unanimity today that in the areas of technology, science and research we will lay the foundation for future economic growth. However, today the Minister and his Government are telling us that this must take a back seat because of the deficit.

During the election campaign the deficit was not the focus of the Conservative Party's attention. We were promised growth. Certainly, the only way in which to eliminate the deficit is by putting Canadians back to work. That was the promise. It is true, we do have a large deficit. But there are 1.5 million people unemployed in Canada. If we could put half of those people back to work, 750,000 of them, the deficit would be reduced substantially, if not completely.

How will we put those people back to work? The ways in which we can put those people back to work are through the stimulation of the economy, research and development, and the application of new technologies to our traditional industries, such as fishing, forestry and agriculture. Another way

Supply

would be to spend judiciously in the new technologies—biotechnologies and aerospace.

I cannot help but remark on the comment which came a moment ago from across the aisle, that the only way to stimulate the economy is through foreign investment. That, certainly, was not what was promised. To me, foreign investment is the approach of a Government which is bankrupt of ideas, which has no confidence in the ability of Canadians and which has no programs to create investment and jobs through the efforts of Canadians. Canadians were promised in the last election that efforts would be made to stimulate their imaginations and energies. It has been almost ten months since the election and all we are hearing from the Government is the plaintive cry that foreign investment will solve the problems.

It is for those reasons that I support the motion. I feel that the House should condemn the Government. Unfortunately, we do not have the numbers, but I am sure that if Government Members looked at themselves in the mirror and searched their souls before coming to the House for a vote, they would join with the Opposition and defeat the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Questions or comments?

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Hon. Member. I wonder how much recent Canadian history the Hon. Member has studied. Does he not realize that it was in the period from 1945 to 1957, under the leadership of the then Minister responsible for everything, Mr. C. D. Howe, and that Liberal Government, that there was a tremendous influx of American capital which took over Canadian companies? Does the Member not realize that when the Liberals returned to power under Mr. Pearson in 1962 and 1963, the then Minister of Finance, Mr. Walter Gordon, recommended to the Liberal Government that it should take a hard look at foreign investment and place restrictions on it? The Liberal Government of the day introduced the Foreign Investment Review Agency, but gave it no power. So foreign investment continued to flow into Canada in ever-increasing amounts and 95 per cent or 97 per cent of all applications to FIRA were approved.

Does the Member not know those things? Does it now show, once again, the vast difference in the opinions of Liberals between the time when they were in office and did nothing and the time when they are in opposition and say some of the right things?

Mr. Berger: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his questions. He was referring to the period between 1945 and 1957. I cannot claim responsibility for the actions which were taken by C. D. Howe and the Governments of those days. I think the Hon. Member, if he is frank, in spite of the drawbacks which he sees in FIRA, will recognize that in many sectors of the economy the past 10 or 15 years have seen vastly increased Canadian ownership.

Perhaps FIRA did not provide all the answers, but I would suggest that other actions were taken by Liberal Governments which enabled Canadians to take control of part of the econo-