

Supply

will bring together business and labour jointly to find ways to increase productivity and to advise the Government on economic and labour matters. I congratulate the individuals from management and unions who have worked so hard to bring this centre into being. We look forward to their advice and training because, as we know, the development of skills of Canadians is key to this Government's strategy for growth.

I see my time is running out. I would be remiss, however, if I did not emphasize that the \$1.2 billion national training program is a central element in our strategy. Under this program, almost a quarter of a million Canadians each year acquire the skills needs for jobs of the future. Canadians must be given fair and equal access to every possible facility to develop skills that will sustain them and their families in years to come. Our heavy emphasis in our programs has quite naturally been on young people. They have been the ones hardest hit by the recession and they are also the businessmen, business women, the workers of the future. We place a great deal of importance on our skills growth fund. A key component of the national training program, its purpose, is to provide enough highly skilled people to meet the future demands of the economy. To accomplish that objective, it provides financial aid to provinces and private non-profit organizations to establish or expand training facilities and to develop new courses as required.

I see that my time has come to an end, which I regret. I close by saying that while there are many uncertainties about the impact of technological change in the future for our economy, we on this side believe that there is one certainty, that is, that we must approach these problems with a sense of partnership, which I described in my remarks. That is the key mechanism, the key method by which we will properly take advantage of the opportunities which technological change provides to us.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, the NDP Members of Parliament have brought forward this motion because we face the fact, as do Canadians, that in recent years and at present we have at least 1.5 million unemployed. Unlike a few years ago when the majority of the unemployed were young people, women and the unskilled, for the first time since the end of World War II there are people in our basic industries who were never unemployed, people who never had to avail themselves of unemployment insurance benefits. Those in the auto industry, steel industry, farm implement industry or packing industry have been or are now unemployed. This is partly because we, as in most countries, have been living through a recession. Part of the reason they are unemployed is the development of new technology and of those that will occur in the next few years. This means that many of these people will never get back the work they had in earlier years. I do not say that because of some wild ideas of far-out people. That kind of analysis was made in a document prepared for the federal Government and published about six months ago entitled "The Rocky Road to 1990". Let me put on record a few of its predictions.

It said that productivity increases generated by new technology will accelerate the job loss in traditional sectors in Canada such as auto, steel and farm machinery. This evidence is increasingly apparent, that many jobs lost in the recession will never be replaced. It further states that overall, up to one-half the jobs in manufacturing will be lost and up to one-quarter of the jobs in business-financial circles will be lost. It is for those kinds of reasons that we brought forward this resolution. I will try to make clear why we believe that the Government must play a major role in solving the problems which the new technology will create for the people of this country.

The Hon. Member for Lincoln (Mr. Mackasey) suggested that Government should not play a big role, that it should be up to labour-management negotiations. The Hon. Member for Lincoln knows, as well as most Members, that only 30 per cent of the workers in this country belong to unions. The other 70 per cent do not have a union to protect them. Even those workers who are represented by unions face the fact that those things that are not in the collective bargaining are assumed by custom and by law to be part of management rights. It is for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, and others, that we say that Government must play an increasingly important role in solving these problems. We have seen in recent years the weakening of international markets for the primary goods which this country has traditionally relied on to support our relatively high standard of living, and we have been driven to seek out other sectors which offer the promise of economic expansion and jobs. This Government has plunged into supporting the development of a high technology solution. We have had massive government support for the creation of a new industrial sector which seeks to apply the inherent advantages of microchip technology, data management and manipulation to traditional and emerging enterprises and industry.

● (1750)

We must ask ourselves some pretty fundamental questions. We are told that the new micro-technologies will lead to hundreds of thousands of new jobs. We must ask ourselves, Mr. Speaker, if there will be as many jobs in the new fields as will be lost in the traditional basic industries in which Canadians have been employed. Many people think not. However, let us assume there will be many new jobs. The second question must be: Will those jobs be in the same places where people have worked in the past? In other words, if the new technology jobs are in Ottawa, Toronto or Vancouver, as is likely if we leave the development to the free enterprise system as we know it, what will happen to the thousands of workers in Hamilton who work in the steel industry? What will happen to the thousands of workers in Oshawa, Windsor and Oakville who have worked in the automobile industry? What will happen to the thousands of workers who have worked in Sudbury and Thompson, Manitoba, in the mining industry? There will be a few jobs, Mr. Speaker, according to experts, but there will be more jobs in high technology for the very highly skilled, the engineers and the people who develop the programs. Most of the other jobs will be for the relatively unskilled, because the