

Science and Technology

sight it uses when it can put \$37 million into a firm and then have it go down the drain. When it goes down the drain it is surrounded by rumour that the government wanted it to go down, that it was not willing to do certain things, and that it believed there was no future in the electronics industry. What happened at first? Why did the government not see this to begin with?

I do not think one can see anything clearly unless one has some idea where a thing fits. In one's personal life one must have some set of rules or attitudes, regardless of what the minister uttered today when he said it is much better not to have any rules—I hope I am paraphrasing him accurately—not to have any rigid plan, or any sort of program for the future, but that the best thing is to handle each problem as it comes along.

That is a tremendous recipe for chaos—handle each problem when it comes along—especially in a world as complex as our own and in a society as complex as the one in which we live. Probably the chances are that a lot of the investment, planning, and work will have to be done by the government, but unless some of this planning is done there is no future either in science or in the development of secondary industry.

If members look back, including members of the Progressive Conservative Party, they will recall that virtually all the major and important industrial and scientific investment that took place in this country was public investment. It was only when a government was aroused to the urgency of a situation that we were able to get the kind of investment necessary both for industry and for science.

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, like the previous speaker, I wish to congratulate the sponsor of this supply motion blaming the government for the lack of a meaningful policy in the field of science and technology.

Mr. Speaker, it is an unfortunate fact, but a fact that must be viewed realistically. It cannot really be said that in Canada, our scientific future, our technological development is ensured by the leadership of the federal government in this area. Previous studies have already listed the government's achievements in the field of science and technology but the findings published relating to science policies in Canada are still on the shelves. Those studies are gathering dust and there again, nothing is forthcoming.

● (1610)

This motion introduced by the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) brings up again many issues, Mr. Speaker, contrary to what it says. On the one hand, this motion blames the government for the lack of a meaningful policy, but on the other hand, it urges it to take effective financial and other measures with regard to technological and scientific research in Canada in order to help the Canadian people.

Mr. Speaker, as I do not wish to take too much of the time of the House, I shall only put a few questions to the minister. In matters of science and technology development in Canada, no matter what we are doing presently in that field, a question comes immediately to mind: automa-

tion is here to stay and we cannot go back to the pick and shovel era in order to provide jobs for all workers in Canada. Then, the machine is going to replace man more and more in primary, secondary or service industries. Has this government which, according to the minister, has a meaningful science policy and has set up an income security mechanism for the individual that will be progressively replaced by machines, looking into the impact of science on human beings, on the Canadian people?

I think this is a high priority and, to my knowledge, this government has no income security policy. Furthermore, as the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) said recently, full employment has now become a hang-up in Canada, a kind of slavery. No matter what you do, the important thing is to work to justify an income, which is exactly the opposite of what the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Drury) said earlier.

An income mechanism must be provided. I shall not dwell on this. I should like to remind the minister who is now listening to me to read *Hansard*. Quite recently, the Social Credit Party introduced a motion urging industries to establish profit-sharing schemes for the benefit of their workers, precisely to increase our production and improve its quality. Such mechanisms will have to be set up where man is replaced by machines. Everyone knows that we are going towards a leisure society or civilization and that work is not an end in itself but only a means, even though a very small one, to obtain an income.

In my constituency, as in others Mr. Speaker, there are many industries. In my constituency, the major industries are furniture and textile factories. We also have an extremely important foundry, the Sainte-Croix Foundry. There are many other industries, including boat and mobile home factories, but the major industries manufacture textiles and furniture.

The minister is certainly aware that such industries employ a very large number of workers and that those are the industries which would profit most from technology and scientific research.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, as I have often said in this House, when I speak to industrialists in my constituency I find that every one of them complains about the lack of support or advice from the government and government specialists to improve their production, not necessarily as concerns quantity, but as concerns quality. Those industrialists would like to modernize their plants, improve their production and equipment. The government, instead of dealing with this problem, instead of really promoting research, avoided the problem and through a department it set up—that of Regional Economic Expansion—grants a subsidy to the plant to modernize or expand. That does not necessarily mean, Mr. Speaker, that the quality of production will be improved or diversified since those subsidies are only granted as a first criteria on the number of jobs created and not necessarily on the quality of production.

I think an effort could be made within the Department of Regional Economic Expansion to use those subsidies, at least in part, to encourage in each plant research departments designed to increase production, both with regard to quality and quantity, and particularly to diversify it. Several plants produce without necessarily having a