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# Research Lethargy Cheating U.S.

**W**ISE men have observed that few humans utilize all of their capabilities. Individual shortcomings result in national losses.

After two centuries of rapid agricultural, industrial and technological progress, it is being said that the United States is trending downward in both technology and private enterprise. This serious allegation reflects adversely upon every American and is a peril to our future.

"Although we have more capability in science and technology today than ever before, we are using it less, in comparison with the total possibilities," says Dr. Simon Ramo, scientist and business executive, in *Nation's Business* magazine.

A high rate of technological advance is not automatically synonymous with happiness, Ramo writes, but lethargy in research and development is penalizing the U.S. society because it is based so strongly upon them.

Research could "lead to additional economically and socially advantageous products whose production

would create more jobs," he said. Other developments could result in lower costs to combat inflation, develop substitutes for materials in short supply, and enable us to get what we need without damaging environment.

Why are these methods not used? Dr. Ramo cites the "anti-technology wave" as one reason, but adds that a more serious limitation is confusion as to the proper roles for private enterprise and government leadership or control.

Many citizens are convinced that business is socially irresponsible, and look to government alone to provide solutions. Others are fed up with government spending and big government, so they distrust those in position to take official actions.

"As a capping indication of the confusion," Ramo says, much of the population distrusts both private enterprise and the government, taking a totally negative stance."

That is why "we have hardly scratched the surface" in technological know-how on growing, processing, storing and distributing food.

That is why we are not getting the transportation that "we should be capable of technologically."

Ramo says we are approaching environmental problems through "a highly fragmented system of sponsorship, planning and control." We are not fully utilizing electronic synthetic brain power that "can make each human being smarter at his job."

He writes "we know that, at a price, we can obtain gas and liquid fuel from coal", but cooperation of private and public organizations is not well directed to accomplish it.

Fully applied, new technology might double U.S. oil reserves, "but the present level of controlled pricing of old oil precludes such a doubling; government policy, not the limits of technology, sets the pace," the scientist-executive states.

"Ours is a hybrid society," Dr. Ramo concludes. "Private enterprise can provide for only a part of our needs. A creative, cooperative relationship between the private sector and government should be sought for the rest."