

Robots 'will take only the most miserable jobs'

Nicola Woolcock

Workers should not worry about being made unemployed by robots because most jobs that would be killed off were miserable anyway, according to a former employment minister.

Lord Young of Cookham, 85, one of Margaret Thatcher's most trusted ministers who also advised David Cameron, told the CogX artificial intelligence conference in London that more jobs than ever would be automated in the

future but that this should be welcomed.

"When the spinning jenny first came in it was almost exactly the same," he said. "They thought it was going to kill employment. We may have a problem one day if the Googles of this world continue to get bigger and the Amazons spread into all sorts of things, but government has the power to regulate that, has the power to break it up, and that's exactly what they used to do.

"I'm not the slightest worried about

it. Most of the jobs are miserable jobs. In the 1980s we had very high unemployment. I quickly realised that many people who had lost their jobs suddenly found they were getting almost as much from benefit as they were earning. The job they had might have been out in the cold but this way they could stay at home and work in a pub for a couple of days a week earning even more money.

"So what technology has to do is get rid of all the nasty jobs."

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