

The Hon. Member for Vancouver East mentioned the Ludites. What I gathered from her speech is that she is prepared to see the country go that way again. Certainly she was not prepared to face up to the problem of moving forward, that there is no status quo and we cannot stand still. That approach did not work in the 19th century and it will not work in this century. Ironically, as much as electronics threatens the jobs of women, as much as many women are unprepared for the changes ahead, nevertheless I truly believe that, because of high technology, women may be able to make the breakthrough so long denied them to arrive at real economic parity with males in the work force. I truly believe that. Jobs and careers are going to be created for which no one in our society is presently trained to perform.

This summer, Sir, I had the opportunity to spend two intensive weeks in the Bell Research Laboratories. I saw the breakthroughs which can be made if people are willing to undergo the kind of training that should be made available. The one great benefit of high technology is its complete indifference to bias of any kind, be it colour, race, creed or sex. The majority of us are equal at the beginning of a new era. Women have just as much ability to train and compete in the world of high technology as men. The most important prerequisite, the most important even beyond a scientific background, Sir, is the capacity for clear and logical thinking and the ability to articulate those thoughts with precision. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that in those areas women need have no fear of holding their own with men.

There is no question in my mind and there should be none in the minds of anyone else that women can take command of the software systems which will account for four-fifths of the jobs which will become available through the technological revolution. They can do that as well as men.

I will close on this note, Sir. The potential exists for women to participate as full and equal partners in the jobs and skills of the Canadian economy, but it is no foregone conclusion. Women still face stereotyping and the barriers of traditional thought. Our schools and educational system do that. Governments, unions and employers still fail to recognize the urgent need to establish comprehensive re-education and retraining programs to give displaced workers, most of whom will be women, the opportunity to compete in these new fields.

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That is where this debate should be leading. We cannot stand back and say that others will bring this debate forward and create the structures that are needed. There has to be movement by industry and labour unions, which are locked into the past, as well as by the educational system. The leadership has to be provided by government. To date that has not been forthcoming. I would hope that as we move into the Budget debate in the weeks ahead we will see far more effort on the part of the Government to tackle this major revolution than we have seen to date.

**Mr. Riis:** Mr. Speaker, I have two or three questions I would like to put to the Hon. Member. There were some

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contradictions in her statements. I would like to point out two or three conflicts that I detected and then ask her to clarify them.

There was a very clear demonstration in the majority of her speech that the motion before us asking the Government to take action was a misplaced initiative; rather, the private sector must lead the way and we must discontinue manipulating the movement of technological change in the best interest of people. In the final moments of her speech, on the other hand, she seemed to be saying that the Government must show the leadership, provide the initiative and be the catalyst for this kind of changing world to ensure that the best interests of all Canadians are met with new technology.

She stated that women had the same opportunity as men to prepare for the technologically changing world. She then went on to say that because of the stereotyping which goes on employers, governments, trade unions and the educational institutions of Canada do not treat women equally. If they all do not treat women equally because of the stereotyping that is in place, how does this equal opportunity exist for women to retrain?

The Hon. Member went on to say that every one is at an equal point now to prepare for this changing technological world, that there are no biases based on sex, colour or religion. Presumably that would also include income.

**Miss MacDonald:** Obviously you were not listening.

**Mr. Riis:** I was attempting to listen. I may have misinterpreted some of the remarks the Hon. Member made. We have one and one-half million people unemployed and many more Canadians working on a part-time basis, causing family incomes to be extremely limited. At the same time, university tuition fees are increasing to the point where the minimum cost to a family to send a youngster to a university such as the University of British Columbia would be \$5,000. At the same time enrolments are being limited. In view of this, how can the Hon. Member say that equal opportunity exists for many youngsters in Canadian families?

Can she explain the reasons for those three apparent contradictions?

**Miss MacDonald:** Mr. Speaker, I have always found that before Members of the New Democratic Party approach any question they have their minds made up as to the answer or the discussion which will take place. No matter what happens or what is said, they interpret it to their own way of thinking.

I do not have the latitude, Sir, and you will not allow me that, to go back and repeat my speech so that the Hon. Member could listen somewhat more carefully than he obviously did the first time. If I may, I would commend to him that he read what I had to say. It may be somewhat educational. He may understand that I dealt with the question of research and development and the Canadian contribution to that. Obviously I was speaking of government when I did that. I mentioned it on a number of occasions. He was not listening. I mentioned a number of other things, such as the commitment