

Now I come to our older workers. Many older Canadians now find that they need new skills in mid-career. These Canadians are still travelling along the old road; that is, school, one career, and then retirement. They have crashed headlong into the future world of work. How do we equip these people for new employment opportunities? How do we keep our work force skilled, current, employed and employable? One avenue which we will explore is that of skill development leave. We also recognize that business must be more involved in training. Training as well for those with special needs should be available if we are to meet our responsibilities to all Canadians. With regard to new employment opportunities, one way to encourage the private sector is through an employment tax credit.

In any discussion of opportunities, Mr. Speaker, there must be an emphasis on what the future means to women. The reality of working women in this country still lags behind the accepted principles of social and economic equality. In this context, I noted this morning's report from the Economic Council of Canada. I am encouraged by the trend that it shows, but we must continue to do much, much more. One cannot be satisfied with the results we saw this morning.

Women need real choices in the future. They should be able to choose both to work and to have children. That is what I mean by real choice. Like all Canadians they must be able to train and to have retraining without suffering economic disadvantages. These are economic realities, and the problem of child care and parental leave are inexplicably linked to the problems of employment for women. But it is not only a so-called women's issue. I cannot emphasize this enough. This is a major employment issue.

The new technologies remove many of the obstacles, real or imaginary, to women. For the first time a revolution in the workplace has occurred which does not impose any physical barriers. In fact, some of the skills that have kept women in low-paying jobs will now be tickets to new opportunities. The computer managed world is one which I think can be of some immense help to women. For women to make the most of it, training opportunities must be expanded as access to the new machines increases. The age of the microchip is still young. For women, I think this is a critical opportunity.

Future prosperity will not be achieved easily, Sir. It never has been, but it is achievable. With the mobilization of our economic and human resources, with a shared sense of purpose and a shared responsibility, we can and we will attain it. The process has begun. The consultations on which I am embarking this month will lay the groundwork for a new atmosphere of mutual trust and co-operation. While they apply in particular to the provinces, I have five objectives clearly before me.

First, to remove obstacles to employment growth and to promote mobility in a growing labour market.

Second, to develop approaches to training which are capable of providing the skills and flexibility required in the years ahead. It is especially critical that we apply this philosophy to small business, the powerhouse of today's employment growth.

The Address—Miss MacDonald

Third, to simplify federal programs and wherever possible to harmonize them with the efforts of the provinces.

Fourth, to ensure equitable access to training and employment opportunities for all Canadians.

Fifth, to reach a consensus on fair sharing of responsibilities between the federal Government and the provinces and our economic and social partners.

These consultations are critical to our development of a workable co-operative training and employment creation strategy. That is what I am aiming for, Mr. Speaker.

But we will also act immediately when obvious need confronts us. The \$430 million I have already allocated for Canada Works this winter is an example of such action today. The \$1 billion this Government has allocated to employment and human resource development signals our determination to meeting our commitments tomorrow.

The creation of an effective employment strategy for Canada is long overdue. Our need for such a strategy becomes even more critical with every passing day. We are entering a new era in work, a new era in living itself. Our success depends upon our own intelligence and indeed upon our resourcefulness and our willingness to work together.

As a government we have a faith in the future, undiminished by the magnitude of the task and the challenge that confronts us because we know Canadians will work together to accomplish these goals.

All of us share a common tomorrow, and I believe we all share common hopes of that tomorrow. We are all social and economic partners. Our purpose is to secure prosperity for all Canadians. This is the vote for change that was recorded on September 4, and I am optimistic we shall achieve it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): We shall now proceed to the period allotted for questions and comments. I would like to recognize Members in the following order: the Hon. Member for London-Middlesex (Mr. Clifford); the Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom); the Hon. Member for Bourassa (Mr. Rossi); the Hon. Member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Baker); and the Hon. Member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. Dingwall). After that, we will see if there is time to recognize any other members in the ten-minute period.

Mr. Clifford: Mr. Speaker, I would like to convey my congratulations to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) for working out such wide-sweeping plans for this most serious problem in our country today. I was pleased to note that the pricey plethora of patchwork programs that has been imposed upon Canadians in the past is going to end.

Mr. Manly: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.