

The report goes on to cite some very interesting statistics which show that most of the women who work part-time account for almost one-quarter of their family income. It drew on statistics from a 1979 study which was produced by the National Council of Welfare entitled *Women and Poverty*. It showed that if the incomes of those female spouses who work part-time in the labour force were to cease, the number of families living below the poverty line would increase by 51 per cent.

• (1510)

The Government has a full study on the difficulties of part-time workers. This Bill does not touch on that aspect of labour relations at all, Mr. Speaker. I regret that it did not touch upon it, nor will we have time in committee to study the very real changes in the structures and patterns of work which we see developing.

A second area which is not reflected in this Bill is the dramatically changing face which technology is introducing into the workforce. Here again, as in the case of part-time workers, women are going to be the ones most directly affected, certainly in the initial stages. While this Bill does make health and safety conditions mandatory and tightens up the rules protecting workers from present dangers, it does nothing to address the very real concerns in the workforce now about the potential new health and safety hazards which are emerging as a result of the implementation of video display terminals. That is something which preoccupies a great many people. It is addressed fully in the report which was submitted to the Minister of Labour but he did not deal with this issue when he brought these amendments before us.

I will close by saying that the concerns which many people have in this regard are reflected in a letter by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women to the Minister. It states, and I quote—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Order. I regret to have to interrupt the Hon. Member but her time has expired. There is a period of ten minutes for questions or comments.

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would ask the Hon. Member if she would please read that letter to me because I believe it should be on the record. At the same time perhaps she could explain why there was no mention at all of part-time workers, technological change and changes to the Labour Code during the Throne Speech of 1979 when she was a senior member of the Conservative Cabinet.

Miss MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, I always find it so interesting that the New Democratic Party continues to dwell in the past. One of the things about technological change is that it is happening now and will be happening in the future. It really is something to which we have to direct our minds on an ongoing basis. I do not know where the Hon. Member was in 1979 and, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I guess I do not very much care. However, I do care about the fact that this is an issue which has emerged with frightening clarity in very recent years and which is not being dealt with at this time.

Canada Labour Code

I would like to respond to the—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Order, please. I do not know how long the letter is, but—

Miss MacDonald: It is only a few lines.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): All right.

Miss MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I quote from a letter which was written on April 27 of this year by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women:

National Action Committee is concerned with establishing compulsory standards in the Canada Labour Code which will ensure that all women exposed to VDTs and working in sectors under federal jurisdiction are guaranteed decent working conditions.

That could have been brought into the legislation, Mr. Speaker, but that proposal was not included.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Hon. Member is aware that the provisions of this Bill dealing with technological training presumably only apply to an employer who is bound by a collective agreement. It does not seem to apply at all to people who have no collective agreement. Does the Hon. Member feel that that is an adequate response to technological change?

Miss MacDonald: No, Mr. Speaker, I do not by any means. The question of technological change addressed in collective agreements only covers one part of the labour force. Because of the concerns which people have about the impact of technological change, it has to apply to everyone. I realize that the amendments in this Bill only apply to 10 per cent of the labour force. Nevertheless, if we had directed this Bill totally to those persons who are under federal jurisdiction, to that 10 per cent of the labour force, it would have been a demonstration to those in the private sector and to those under provincial jurisdiction to do the same thing. The federal Government has a responsibility to lead by example and that has not been done adequately in this Bill.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member will note that Clause 29 of the Bill which amends subsection 150(1) of the Act only applies to employees who have a collective agreement. Surely if they have a collective agreement, they could, by private contract in the collective agreement, deal with technological change. I am wondering, then, why that clause is there. It seems to me that the people who need assistance are those who have no collective agreement and have some real desire to have notice of technological change. However, this Bill provides only for people who have an agreement and I really cannot see why they would need the clause in the first place.

Miss MacDonald: Well, I believe they would need the clause. I would really want to see it included because in many cases when collective agreements were being negotiated—unfortunately so much of the technological change is happening with increasing rapidity—people did not even think to include this matter in the discussion and negotiations which