

a short, one-time study. As well, such a parliamentary committee would consider a wider range of issues, such as how technology can be successfully transferred and implemented and how technology development will benefit Canadians in the long term. One of the fears of many people is that there will be displacement of jobs by new technology, that robots will take over and there will be a tremendous loss of jobs. The adoption of new technologies will not sweep away large numbers of jobs in spite of the short-sighted views of alarmists who seem to say that the gains in productivity we are now realizing thanks to the new technologies will somehow be bad for the economy.

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A recent study by Informetrica, an Ottawa-based consulting firm, indicates that while the new technologies will result in massive labour-saving effects, productivity increases nevertheless, and the recycling of the income benefits by the consumers, the investors and Governments will generate tremendous offsetting and provide jobs elsewhere in the economy. This study concludes that failure to adapt to the latest technologies would result in the loss of competitiveness for jobs far more serious than the direct displacement effects. In other words, if we are to be competitive in this world of change, technological change, we have to look at what must be done.

It is important to look at technological change and women. The federal Government is particularly concerned about the impact of technological change on women. The recent "Office of the Future" trials in federal Government offices will have special implications for the secretarial and clerical professions. They were conducted with that in mind in order that we would have some idea of what the impact of technological change in the office will be on women.

I recently saw a telephone system developed in Canada which has its own information screen. I can find out from that screen what my appointments are for this month, this week or this day. I do not have to phone my secretary and ask what I will be doing tomorrow at ten o'clock. I do not have to flip through the calendar to find out whether I can do something next week. It could be said that this has an implication for jobs. Does that mean that a secretary will be replaced? It is this kind of information that studies about the office of the future will give us. What is going to happen? What do we have to do? What are the social and economic concerns?

The federal Government is increasingly aware of the importance of encouraging young women to continue their studies in the sciences and mathematics. It is vital for the future economic and social well-being of this country that we encourage women to enter professions, such as engineering and scientific research and development, and to make contributions which will benefit all of us.

What about the changes that we have brought about in some of our federal departments? Let us talk about some of the recent studies on technological change by federal departments. Several federal departments have recently released studies specifically related to the impact of technology on society and the economy. One of these studies is "Employment

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Impacts of New Technologies" by the Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council. The recommendations made in this report are now under consideration by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Caccia). The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council will spend \$700,000 in the current fiscal year on its strategic grants program in the human context of society and technology, a program which promotes research and research training relating to the interaction of science and society.

The Hon. Member who spoke previously to me made some very important points with regard to the fact that it is time we started looking seriously at the possible impacts, rather than just going to sleep thinking that everything will turn out all right in spite of the fact that we are afraid. It is important that we begin thinking about the interaction of science in society. We have had the industrial revolution. We are now into the biomedical, biotechnology revolution, a whole new revolution. We have had trouble adapting to all these kinds of changes throughout our lifetime. Surely it is time we learned that as well as making use of these technologies we have to start thinking about the kind of impact they are going to have on people. If the new technologies do not benefit people, we have to ask seriously whether it is worth while having anything to do with it.

It is very important to think about public awareness. Scientists have to take the public into their confidence and try to explain as simply as they can how the technology works, why it works and who it will work for. We are entering a technological era when most career and day to day activities directly involve working with, understanding and living comfortably with science, mathematics and technology. That is important. A growing number of personal, public and professional decisions require awareness and familiarity with the activities, principles and methods of science and technology. We have to face that. The federal Government has established a \$1.5 million fund to promote public awareness and understanding of science and technology issues and their impact on society.

As the Minister of State for Science and Technology noted in his statement of May 3 before the House of Commons on a technology policy for Canada, the federal Government will be sponsoring a "Canada Tomorrow" conference in the fall. The purpose of this conference will be to bring together in one forum the issues related to the impact of technology and technological change, not only on our economic environment but also on our social environment. Dialogue and discussion of this kind will promote a better understanding on the part of all Canadians of the forces which are currently shaping our lives.

Mr. Roger Simmons (Burin-St. George's): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Nystrom: En français!

Mr. Simmons: My good friend for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom)—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Nystrom: In French, in French!