

Supply

sources predict that a reduction of one-third of all clerical jobs is imminent. Even the Liberal Government forecasts, in a Cabinet document called "The Rocky Road to 1990", grim results. This document which was put out in July, 1983 forecasts accelerated job losses in traditional job sectors, such as the automobile industry and farm machinery. As new technology is generated the report stresses the need for a highly skilled and flexible labour force. Of course, we know that most of our skilled labourers are traditionally imported. It states that many jobs lost in the recession will never be recovered. Overall up to half the jobs in manufacturing will be lost, and up to one quarter of the jobs in business and financial services. This is the federal Government's report, Mr. Speaker.

● (1115)

The report concludes that at least two million jobs must be added over the next eight years to keep unemployment at reasonable levels—and they call reasonable around 10 per cent, which we do not accept. To accommodate a growing labour force and increasing numbers of young people, we estimate that twice this many new jobs should be created.

For those who remain employed in high-tech industries there are fears as to who will direct, plan and control their lives and who will reap the profits. Technology is not neutral. It is often characterized by fast, short-term gains, central control systems, lack of confidentiality and personal rights. There is usually very little planning for people. The magic word productivity is the goal. However, we must ask productivity for whom? This analysis does not mean that the NDP is adopting a Luddite approach. We do not intend to smash the machines that threaten people. Change is here, and we all know that much more change is imminent. Much of it is exciting for those who are included and involved in the process. We welcome technological advances provided the goal of those advances is to promote the welfare of our society as a whole and that productivity gains are shared by all Canadians.

We do not want to develop a high-tech elite who are the new aristocracy of Canada while millions of our citizens remain unemployed. Those on unemployment insurance and welfare who have little consumer money for consumer goods will cause small businesses to fail through lack of customers.

For several years Heather Menzies and other researchers have warned that traditional women's jobs will be the first to go. The examples of redundant jobs, which I summarized earlier, primarily are jobs in the service and clerical sector where women are concentrated. As men and industry are displaced by robots, they will also be competing for fewer and fewer jobs. Yet studies show that women who in increasing numbers are the sole supporters of their families will remain in the labour force. We are not going to disappear, as we did after the Second World War.

I would like to quote from the magazine called "The Facts" put out by the Canadian Union of Public Employees. It states:

The lack of growth and job loss will have a disproportionate effect on women in Canada. Women are expected to bear the brunt of the micro-electronic revolution because their employment is concentrated in the service sector.

Almost 80 per cent of working women are concentrated in only five of 22 major occupational classifications: clerical, service, sales, medicine and health and teaching. What is more, the participation of women in the labour force is expected to continue to increase as it did through the 1970s.

A study prepared for the Department of Finance in 1980 suggested a 40 per cent increase in the female labour force by 1990, an additional 1.8 million women will be looking for work and have the right to work. Meanwhile the service sector in which traditionally women have been finding jobs is contracting.

We know many women are being replaced and forced into part-time jobs as a result both of the recession and the technological revolution. Part-time workers are not unionized, receive low rates of pay and have no benefits. I have argued repeatedly in this House that government action must be undertaken immediately to provide pro-rated benefits, better unemployment insurance coverage for part-time workers, and the rights of these workers, 70 per cent of whom are women, to organize.

● (1120)

The Conservative Leader sees technology as a boon to women and says that the microchip opens up a brand-new opportunity for millions of women. He has said: "Thanks to the chip, women as a group will have the opportunity to break out of low-paying work ghettos". It is time he got his head out of the boardroom and learned about real life where women are the main victims of technological change.

Another concern of women is the trend toward high-tech cottage industries where once again they will be isolated in the home with no union protection or rights. An executive said recently that this would solve daycare problems. Some solution! How would you like to work in the home Mr. Speaker, watching the kids, cooking supper, cleaning house and running a home computer for a firm which cares little whether you are sick or well or whether you need an adequate pay cheque to feed your family? Canadian women must not tolerate this kind of exploitation once again. I am glad women's groups across the country are having workshops and conferences and demanding that this not happen. This is why unionization is so important in Canada.

There are concerns that Canada will follow the California model to prevent unionization of workers in high-tech industries. The Dynatek venture in British Columbia which receives federal fundings should be developed as a model for both industrial productivity and fairness to workers. This means there must be co-operative planning involving labour, management and government and the basic right to collective bargaining must be respected.

In the NDP report entitled "Program for a Fair Recovery: The Challenge of Technological Change", we point out that the economic recovery has not meant a recovery of jobs for many laid-off workers who are displaced permanently by new technologies. Many high-skilled workers are redundant and lucky if they can find a low-paying service sector or part-time job. If we do not retain workers and redistribute the gains of automation, rising destitution and poverty will become a permanent result of economic recovery and so-called "increased productivity"—productivity for the few. The workers laid off