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Q: Does that make any difference?

MCDUGALL: I don't know whether...it doesn't to me. Whether it does to other people at the table, you'd have to ask them. I was in the investment business for 20 years before I was in politics so I'm used to being a female in a male environment. Because when I began in the investment business in the 60's, there weren't any women and so that's been a part of my life.

And certainly in those days it was far more uncomfortable for the men in the room than it was for me. Whether that's true today or not, I don't know.

Q: Let me ask you a question about, Mr. Mulroney took a stand at the recent meeting of the Commonwealth of Nations in Harare, in favour of linking foreign aid with civil rights.

MCDUGALL: Yes he did it again this week at Le Francophonie.

Q: And I'm wondering why Canada's pushing this point at this time and how that fits in with overall Canadian foreign policy.

MCDUGALL: Well what we want to see as part of our international or foreign policy objectives are the development of democracy, good governments, governants and promoting human rights. And we're looking at the tools that we hav at our disposal to do that. We