



**association of university and college employees**

May 1, 1981

Brian Smith  
Minister of Education  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, B.C.

Dear Sir:

At the end of March I attended a conference in Ottawa entitled Micro-Electronics and the Work Environment. The conference was sponsored by the Women's Bureau of the Federal Department of Labour.

There is no doubt that the introduction of technological change into our working lives will make grave changes, it is already happening. A major area of concern relates to fields of work women have traditionally gone into, one place where a most severe loss of jobs will occur. The educational system to date does not appear to be advancing programs that would direct young women into non-traditional work or non-traditional education. Women still appear to be directed into the Arts in higher education or into clerical, library or service type work.

It seems to me both as a union representative of 1,500 library and clerical workers at the University of British Columbia, 93% of whom are women and as a taxpayer and mother of a daughter in the Vancouver school system, the Ministry of Education should take the lead in programs that encourage women away from traditional areas. I also think it is absolutely essential to prepare all young people for the technological changes they will encounter in their working lives. There appears, from the conference, to be an unwillingness on the part of the federal government to deal with any of these problems until they occur. You will realize that education is an essential part of preparing people for changes, such changes that they will have little or no control over but that will affect their lives in very extreme ways. People's ideas of work and employment will need to be revised drastically and it would be good if young people could leave high school somewhat prepared, mentally at least, for this.

Studio D of the National Film Board, the women's section, is prepared to produce film material dealing with the above subject. I would urge you, in whatever way you are able, to support this project. Film is one of the most useful ways to educate people. These films could encompass what has occurred to date with respect to the introduction of micro-electronics, with how further changes will affect our work as we know it and it could encourage young people, mainly women, away from traditional work and traditional education.

--- continued ---

I learned yesterday that of all the provinces in Canada, British Columbia has the lowest percentage of women in professional occupations. I feel the Ministry of Education must become responsive to the concerns raised in this letter and take the lead with changes in the educational system. Micro-electronics and technological change are upon us. The time for the educational system to address itself to this new technology is now.

Yours truly,

Carole Cameron  
Union Organiser  
AUCE Local 1