

*Status of Women*

women are largely limited to those labelled "women's" jobs and have improved little since 1962, and only 4 per cent of women are managers as opposed to nearly 13 per cent of men.

Pension plans, group life insurance, disability and medical plans may contain sex-based differences in coverage and employee contributions. Most Canadian firms still have one or more such differences in their benefit package. Reimbursements apply to a "wife" rather than to a "spouse," so that a female employee cannot recover her husband's expenses. A sizeable minority of organizations still have these or similar provisions in their arrangements.

Though equal pay for men and women in identical positions is apparently not much of a problem in Canadian private business, facts on equal pay for work of equal value are unclear because of a sort of "chicken and egg" dilemma. It is just impossible to know if women's jobs have been improperly downgraded because women are in them or, alternatively, if women have been relegated to them because they are less valuable jobs. Much discrimination hides behind this curtain of confusion.

An inaccurate stereotype of women seems to influence every step in the employment and advancement processes, perpetuating occupational segregation and unequal distribution of corporate wealth. Most Canadian firms use sex-stereotyped recruitment materials and processes. Women are typically excluded from serious consideration for most jobs labelled "men", and vice-versa. Women who make it to the interviewing process are often discouraged from "men's" jobs by male decision-makers. Job evaluation and salary programs may not rate "men's" jobs and "women's" properly, relative to each other.

The *Financial Post* study also calls particular attention to the dilemma of secretaries in business. Secretaries—99 per cent of whom are women—frequently feel that they and their work are not valued and that they are mistreated by male bosses, particularly with regard to personal services expected of them such as getting coffee and doing personal errands for the boss. Another major source of irritation and resentment among secretaries is that a secretary's salary is determined by the organizational level of her boss rather than an evaluation of her specific job duties. Secretaries in almost every large Canadian organization are rug-ranked in this way. This practice causes considerable resentment among women due to dependency on men and the inequities among secretaries it creates.

We are all aware just how large an issue this is among secretaries in the federal public service. I understand that it is no different in the private sphere. Secretaries find it especially difficult to pursue other opportunities within their companies because in many companies advancement is restricted to the secretarial career path for women. In addition, there is a natural tendency for bosses to hang on to good secretaries.

Based on labour force statistics, two general conclusions can be drawn about the job status of women in the typical Canadian company. First, the "ghettoization" of women into low-skill, low paying jobs has increased in the past ten years. That is a sad thing to have to say and I would be pleased indeed if someone would disprove it in this House.

[Mr. Stanfield.]

Second, there is a universal gap between the representation of women in companies and their share of influence. While the participation of women in managerial jobs is improving, at current rates it will be literally a century before they reach a proportion consistent with their level of participation in the labour force.

● (1610)

[Translation]

But this is far from sufficient. Those who are concerned by the issue, particularly the governments, the unions and other responsible persons, should stop mouthing platitudes and do everything within their power to speed up the process. As far as the government is concerned, much remains to be done, both within departments and Crown corporations.

[English]

Here are the findings of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation task force, the work being done in the year 1974:

The task force interviewed some 850 CBC women across the country. It found, somewhat to the surprise of both the task force and management, that the large majority of women were dissatisfied with their status in the corporation. Time and again, women expressed their frustration with such bitter observations as: "We're watched over like three-year olds"; "The CBC is a man's world"; "All they want to know is if you can type"; "Women are ground down in this location".

The task force concluded that at the root of the dissatisfaction was a feeling of powerlessness among women. The working environment and careers of CBC women were controlled by a male majority of three to one who held an even greater proportion of decision-making power, 93 per cent of managerial jobs, and whose underlying beliefs about women's appropriate role at work differed drastically from the view held by the women as to their own roles. To oversimplify—I am still talking about the report of the CBC—the majority of men interviewed seemed to believe that "a woman's rightful place is in the home rather than out working," while the majority of women felt that "women should be equal partners with men in the world of work." Furthermore, this task force found that accompanying the women's feeling of powerlessness was deep frustration at seeing little real change.

The task force reasoned that this polarization of attitudes was due, at least in part, to fundamental differences in the ages and marital status of the people involved. Some 60 per cent of the women were under 35 and their attitudes were formed in the rapidly changing environment of the 1960s. In contrast, the same proportion of CBC men were over 35, the largest number being in the 45-49 bracket, with basic viewpoints shaped in the more tradition-oriented 1940s and 1950s. I was fortunate enough to have my views formulated in the very radical 1930s.

Moreover, nearly two-thirds of the women were single, while nearly three-quarters of the men were married—with their views on the appropriateness of careers for women naturally being influenced by the activities of their wives, most of whom did not work. Women were found by the task force to believe that men were basically oblivious to their dissatisfactions and concerns and had no real inclination toward equality of opportunity.