

International Women's Year

be, and will be continued beyond 1975 until equality exists in fact as well as in law and Canadian women are recognized and accepted as equal partners with Canadian men in the building of our nation.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to associate myself and my colleagues with the marking of the commencement of International Women's Year proclaimed by the United Nations. I hope that we will see, during 1975, not only happy members of parliament, as referred to by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), but very marked progress in the achievement of equality for women in this country and in other countries as well.

Opportunities for careers for women in our country are unquestionably expanding. We must, however, recognize that we are still behind some countries, some societies with regard to the position of women in our society, opportunities for women, and their equality. While it may be that there are now very few careers really closed to women, I think any man would have to admit that in Canada there are many careers in which a woman has to be considerably abler, smarter and more industrious than a man in order to succeed.

If we look around us here today, without casting any aspersions upon the qualities or intelligence of those of the same sex as myself I would have to admit that the Commons as it presently exists is not truly representative of this country, in the sense that women are not adequately represented.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: I probably have to admit, too, that the women who are here had to be a good deal more able, better politicians than me in order to get here. I am surprised that that comment did not receive a great deal of applause, at least from across the way. In any case, let us hope that 1975 will be a productive year in terms of improvement in the status of women, particularly in our own country, because it is in our own country, for which we have responsibility, that we need definite programs. I rather suspect that women in Canada are not now particularly interested in conferences and commissions; they want to see definite, tangible changes and improvements.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: It is now three or four years since the report on the status of women was tabled in this House. Many of its recommendations still have not been carried out. We must recognize that it is more difficult for a woman in Canada, generally speaking, to achieve an equal place in the world of work than it is for a man. While I would not expect even this government to overcome this difficulty completely in one year, let us hope we see some significant progress in very tangible ways, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): On behalf of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) in recognizing the importance of International Women's Year. I cannot forgo the oppor-

[Mr. Trudeau.]

tunity of saying at the outset, however, that we were not given a copy of the Prime Minister's statement until about seven minutes before 2 p.m.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Already I see that hon. members opposite are back to their pre-Christmas form. I cannot help but conclude that if the statement had been made on international trade policy or on labour negotiations within the country, or on a wheat problem, it is probable that we would have had the statement somewhat earlier even from the Prime Minister. However, these hon. members no doubt think they have done their bit for the cause of women's liberation by wearing their buttons in the House. Perhaps I could have some order, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: They no doubt think that therefore they have done their job.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Simmer down.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It is customary for one representative of each party to have the opportunity to reply to a statement on motions.

Mr. Broadbent: The catcalls are even more incoherent than usual, Mr. Speaker. The point is a serious one. If we are making statements on important social questions, members of the opposition, the Leader of the Opposition and myself should receive substantially more notification than we did today. That is all I am going to say on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, on this important human and social question the time has passed for conferences, commissions and slick advertising campaigns. The women of Canada, like women all over the western industrial world, now see themselves, appropriately, as being in a moral, social and economic sense subject to the will of others. It is, speaking quite frankly, a male reaction—and I am part of that reaction—to steps taken by the women of this country and others that is finally, and reluctantly, leading to legislative, social and economic change that will provide real equality for women.

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Let us not be under any illusion—and I direct these comments to the women of Canada—that if they want real change and real progress, they will have to keep the heat on this House of Commons and on other legislative bodies. No social group in our history, or in the history of any other country, has had their liberation made for them by others. They get it when they create pressure and force on society to get those with authority and influence to make the necessary changes. I want, in a very specific way, to make ten very brief points.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): The manifesto; here it comes.