

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I accept the correction, and thank my hon. friend for it.

I have said that I am impressed by the tremendous number of changes that we shall have to make; but that, I submit, is no reason for our not getting on with the job. Let me name some of the pieces of federal legislation, and allude to some provincial laws as well, which I think we shall have to act on soon. In the first place, I want to speak about a few federal statutes that have general application, in the sense that they apply to the entire population. The second group I shall speak about will be statutes that refer to employment in the public service.

It really is amazing that in statutes like the Canada Pension Plan and its partner in Quebec, the Quebec Pension Plan, the Unemployment Insurance Act, the Fair Employment Practices Act, the Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act and in the workmen's compensation legislation in the provinces and in similar, federal legislation covering the Northwest Territories, and so on, there runs this thread of differentiation between men and women. It turns up in two ways. On the one hand, there are frequent occasions where a benefit is provided to a widow, or the wife, or the survivor of a male, but the corresponding benefit is not provided to the widower, or the husband, or the survivor of a female. You know, we cannot go on talking about equal rights if we keep things that way. In the Canada Pension Plan, for example, I think it should be provided that the survivors of a female contributor are to be treated the same as the survivors of a male contributor.

In addition to those kinds of changes that ought to be made, we should consider this: the more one looks at these various pension and insurance programs, the more it becomes evident that, in the main, a woman's right to security in time of illness, or disability, or unemployment or old age comes to her because she is the wife of a husband or the survivor of a male. In the main, these rights do not come to her because she is a person, in the sense that a man is a person. I think that we must get down to brass tacks and correct this situation. Maybe it was nice in the time of Queen Victoria to keep women in what she thought was their place. Actually, the changes that have taken place in society that have been dealt with in the philosophical portions of speeches made thus far have changed the picture. I do not think that relations between men and women can continue to be satisfactory if this situation continues as it is, namely, that a woman will get pension or insurance benefits only because she has been married to a certain person, or because her husband had a certain number of years of employment or because that husband was hurt or took ill or died. To my way of thinking, that is now wrong. Perhaps it was always wrong; but it certainly is wrong today.

I think that we must begin building into these various pension and insurance programs the kinds of provisions that will treat both sexes exactly the same way. Where this may become particularly difficult is in legislation like the Canada Pension Plan. That legislation, as we know, is a wage related plan. It is part of a two deck scheme,

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under which people can have their basic old age security pension and another pension on top of that which is related to the income they have earned while working. When it is suggested that a married woman who stays at home and raises the family ought to be able to contribute to the Canada Pension Plan, those who understand the workings of that plan say that that will upset its rationale, its philosophy and its whole basis as a wage related operation. I recognize that and I am inclined to agree. It may be that something other than just the right of women to contribute to the Canada Pension Plan, although they are staying at home and raising the family, must be found. I believe, when a woman has spent 20 or 30 years or more in the home and contributed in that way to the raising of the family, to family life and to the part that the family plays in society, that when it is time for her to get a pension, it should come to her as of right, on the basis of the contribution that she has made, not just through her attachment to a husband.

• (5:00 p.m.)

Perhaps the answer to this is a guaranteed annual income. Maybe the answer, as some people suggest, is wages for homemaking so that there will be something to relate to the Canada Pension Plan. Whatever the method or device that is found, I strongly submit that we have to revise our thinking about the Canada Pension Plan so that when a woman is of pensionable age, she not only receives the old age security pension at age 65—indeed that age should be a lot lower—but she receives a pension because she is a person who has contributed to society. The pension should not just be based on the fact that she was the wife of Mr. "X". I could go on with these various facts of general application such as unemployment insurance and workmen's compensation. These various acts have different kinds of provisions for men as compared with women. There is no doubt about the magnitude of the task, if I may use the word I wanted to use the first time, but failure to grapple with it just because it is too large a task is not good enough for Parliament or for the government of Canada.

Legislation was introduced today by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) to improve the Canada Labour (Standards) Code. This raises the question of matters such as minimum wages and hours of working. Reference has already been made to the fact that at least three provinces in this country provide for lower minimum wages for women than for men.

In the Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act and in the Fair Employment Practices Act there are differences between men and women. These pieces of legislation I have been talking about, most of them federal, but one or two provincial, have general application, but shot through and through them is the notion that there is a difference. It is a man's world. Women get into it if they can, but in the main a woman gets what is coming to her because she is related to a man. It is not good enough in a society that says we are all equal as people and entitled to our rights. It is not good enough just to indulge in these philosophical niceties about this whole problem.