

● (1752)

We must give some consideration to those women who have been homemakers. There should also be equality in the home. We now have a number of househusbands, as they call them, who stay at home and look after the children. They must have equality with their wives who are out working. They are entitled to equal respect and equal opportunity.

This debate reminds me of what might have happened even before there were women in this House. This whole matter dates back to even before the 1920's. I have been in the work force now for about 35 years. I remember when men tried to prevent me from being in the outside work world. They told me, and are still trying to tell me, that my place is in the home. They suggest I have no right to be in the work force because, God forbid, I may be taking a job away from some man. There is nothing in our society that says men are superior, more competent and more able than that other 50 per cent of the population. It may very well be that our society, our governments, our institutions, our working force and, perhaps, the entire world would be better off if we recognized the fact that there is another 50 per cent of the population, the women—those members of society who not only make good mothers and homemakers, but also good lawyers, good accountants, good engineers—

An hon. Member: Good members of parliament.

Mrs. Holt: I thank the hon. member for Toronto-Lakeshore (Mr. Robinson) who says "good members of parliament". I would like to see 50 per cent equity in this House. We are always talking about giving proportional representation by race. Perhaps it is time we also said we should have proportional representation by sex—in the House of Commons and in the work force.

I know there are many women who will not accept this motion by the hon. member for Bellechasse and I do not blame them. Many of the young women today are studying law, medicine, etc., even while they are raising their children. This is much more difficult for them because there are still some men who do not think they have to ease the workload for women, even those at school or working. If there is work to be done in the home it should be paid for by whoever is earning the living, be it the man or the woman.

There must never again be another Murdock case in Canada. In that case a woman who had worked her whole life to help in the building of an estate lost it all because she happened to be a member of the female sex. In courtrooms women are strangers in a foreign land and are taken to the cleaners.

If a woman wants to stay at home she should have that right and be paid for the work she does there by the one who uses her services—if this partnership requires pay. I think the greatest occupation ever for a woman or a man is the raising of a family successfully. There are none I respect more than those who have done so. There are none in this world we can respect more than those who have brought children into the world and

Housewives' Allowance

fashioned them into good human beings. The children of today will be the leaders of tomorrow. There is nothing that says the woman alone must raise the family.

The greatest failures among children are the results of the very thing the hon. member is suggesting in his motion, that the men can abdicate their responsibilities and let the government take over in the raising of their children while the women stay at home alone. As the hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) says, this would legitimize the servant status for women.

I had a cartoon slipped to me early this afternoon and it is amazing how appropriate it is to this debate. It comes from *Grainews*, published by the farm information services of the United Grain Growers Limited, P.O. Box 6600, Winnipeg. Hon. members can send for this cartoon if it pleases them to adopt a chauvinist line. It is a picture of two farmers beside an old cow. Beside them is an elderly woman walking away with a milk pail. Underneath it states: "I don't care how good she used to be! Look at those teats! She's a broken down old bag and I'd get rid of her!". That attitude is what it is all about. I say we must all strive here to get women equal rights and equal respect.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, what happened to the homemakers of the generation just before mine? They finished their job of raising the children but were not prepared to go out and earn a living outside the home. Some ended up in mental hospitals; some managed to rebuild their lives; and some managed to learn to use their leisure properly. Many turned to alcohol. Those were the tragedies of once good wives and homemakers—rejected and lonely.

In my generation a few women have broken out and are free. Many of my friends have gone back to school in their middle years and are trying to find a way to catch up. During the 20 years they were destined to be in the home alone, without much help, they were left behind in the work world by men. In many cases the man and woman would enter law, for example, at the same time, but the woman would have to stop because it was her duty to stay at home with the children and keep house. While the woman stayed home, locked into this thing called "woman's duty," the man moved on to become a judge, the head of a bank, the head of a business, a head plumber, or a head horticulturalist. As a result, when the women were free to enter the work force they could only go into jobs such as waitresses and secretaries.

Let me stop here to say that the most important and strongest group of women in our society is that group made up of our secretaries. I have discovered—and perhaps this is why women have been kept out of the board rooms for so long—that the male executives do not want women to find out the truth of how they do their jobs. The jobs really are done by the secretaries. In the law profession for example, it is very interesting to note that the secretary does most of the work—the factumes, the reports and the statements of claim. She does all that work and may make \$8,000 a year.

I thank the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) when he argues—