



Liberation's Views on Status of Women Report

A Good Start, But Falls Short

The tendency for Lib. groups in Canada has been either to say that the Commission's findings are 'too late' or 'don't go far enough'. Both these points are correct, but really should have been expected. The points about the Commission, we feel, is that as far as the beginnings of remedial legislation to free women is concerned, it is a good start.

The Commission emphasized 'need' and was operating on the basis of woman with in society. We emphasize 'rights', and freedoms, and are concerned directly with women.

Probably the best thing about the commission was that Women's Lib has generally been considered as a small neurotic group of middle class bisexuals (!) and yet the commission came to most of the conclusions we have.

And when the commission findings are read, the logic of our demands can be seen - the logic which the media really doesn't give us a chance to express very often. Like, day care centres aren't the result of lazy-spoiled-mothers-wanting-to-get out in the world and express-themselves which is the usual interpretation of this demand: welfare mothers have to have them, in order to get out of the welfare trap; other women simply demand the right to operate as adults.

A woman can 'fulfill' herself biologically if she wants to stay in the home; but women are coming to realize that to operate as an adult human, one has to interact with other adults in the world. And this, of course, doesn't necessarily mean that women want to groove about having interesting drunken lunches and meeting interesting people as do their husbands (another mis-interpretation) but that, as great or as dull as it might be, we demand that we have the right to operate as adult people, not domestic animals. So W.L. does feel that there were faults in the commission, but it was generally a great thing.

The Commission demonstrated that the problems of women, and those problems current in modern society, overlap vitally: the demands of Women's Liberation are not those of a spoiled minority of women.

Day care centres appear to be the only answer to a growing welfare crisis. These centres, operating as part of the educational system, will answer the problem of inequities in school preparation. Many children today suffer environmental or nutritional deprivation which

can only be solved by an extension of the educational system. The complex of learning systems and theories available today can be used in day care centres.

The Commission showed that women are forced into low paying, poor advancement positions. They must be taught early to plan a career, and higher paying occupations must be opened to them. The myth that women are flighty, unambitious, poor-risk employment has been shown to be influenced by the poor quality of jobs which are open to them: no employee-male or female-forced into a dull or poorly remunerated position exhibits ambition.

Lack of proper maternity leave legislation and day care facilities force many women back into the home.

One commissioner disagreed with the members on the need for free abortion on demand. To legislate against abortion, or to refuse to extend the present law to those women who have been unable to use it, as many opponents of Lib. wish to do, is to legislate morality. Abortion has always been available to wealthy women: the commissioners believe this right should be extended to those less fortunate.

To ensure that fewer women need resort to this painful solution, Women's Liberation would have been pleased to see the Commission recommend solutions to help the mother of this child. In Sweden, for example, financial and day care centre assistance are available to the unwed mother. The married woman often is forced to chose abortion because she cannot bear the economic burden of another child.

A comprehensive investigation into extant birth control information starting at the high school level is necessary. Manufacturers of foams and jellies, and other high-risk forms of contraception should be forced to explain the risk-factor of their products in their advertisements, and on the packages of their products.

The statement by the dissenting commissioner that birth control adequately ensures against the need for abortion is incorrect, as present birth control is inadequate. (For those interested, the current MacGill Birth Control Handbook, which is available at the medical centre on campus, can elaborate on this: the handbook was to be presented to incoming students at registration, but was withdrawn at the last moment - nobody knows why!)

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