

Routine Proceedings

the business, despite the fact that the business was successful, and despite the fact that I had been mayor of that community for three years.

I am happy to report that this attitude has changed. Perhaps it is because women are now in management positions. The last two managers of my local Royal Bank have been female.

However some attitudes have not changed. One of the most chauvinistic individuals I have ever encountered I met last month. This gentleman was of the opinion that no woman who is married should be permitted to work. He thought that married women who work are responsible for unemployment among men. Not surprisingly, he did not get a very sympathetic ear from me.

● (1255)

What I did find extremely sad about this attitude was the fact that the male who held these opinions was only 29 years old. He is a product of affirmative action mentality. He believes that as government has legislated more opportunities for women, it has been at his expense. He views himself as a victim of discrimination.

We cannot legislate attitudes. For women to show their male colleagues that they belong, they have to prove they can compete with them on a level playing field.

I am proud of the fact that to gain my seat in this House of Commons I proved I could compete on a level playing field. Unlike some of the female members from the government side, I was not appointed as a candidate. To secure the Reform Party nomination in my constituency, I ran against five male competitors. At a nomination meeting attended by over 600 voting delegates, I won a first ballot victory. In the subsequent election, all other candidates from the major parties were males. Obviously, I won that election.

There was no special consideration because I was a woman. I competed on a level playing field. That is the way it was supposed to be and that is the way it has got to be. If we want a society where men and women are viewed as equal partners, we cannot accomplish this by punishing young men of today for the sins of their grandfathers.

I am pleased to see the statistics that women graduating from university today will earn the same salary as their male counterparts. It is a reality that these women will lose ground when they absence themselves from the workforce to have children. The logical way to address this problem is for these women and their spouses to draw equally upon their registered personal savings plan to make up the difference.

The alternative would be for medical science to develop a way for men to share the joy of childbirth. However, even if science could develop the technology, it would not be of much use. I

think all mothers would agree that men do not have the pain threshold to survive childbirth.

In this celebration of International Women's Day, I share with the secretary of state the goal of true equality of the sexes. I just do not accept that legislation is the way to accomplish it. It gives the impression that women are incapable of obtaining equality solely based on their performance.

Yes, women today will experience chauvinism and discrimination in their lives. But as one of my staffers says, a woman has to work twice as hard as a man to get half the credit. Fortunately, this is not particularly difficult. I believe it is a good sign on the road to equality to know that this quote comes from a male staffer.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS**

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 65th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the associate membership of standing committees.

I move that the 65th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to.)

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PETITIONS**LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS**

Mrs. Jean Payne (St. John's West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition signed by over 200 residents of my riding of St. John's West. The petition is in relation to a decision to destaff lighthouses in Newfoundland.

The undersigned residents of Canada draw to the attention of the House that Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the most treacherous coastlines in Canada. Even with the latest technology many lives have still been lost while navigating these coastal waters. Many lighthouse keepers have assisted mariners with lifesaving measures above and beyond the capabilities of technology. Therefore the petitioners call upon Parliament to recognize the valuable service provided by light keepers and to reconsider the destaffing of lighthouses.

● (1300)

Earlier this week I made a statement regarding this important issue. I fully support this request and ask Parliament to reconsider the decision.