

The Address—Mr. Lalonde

these services which are designed to ensure that federal sharing is available to low and below average income families who need day care services. These guidelines provide for the establishment of income tested programs in line with the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

Most of what I have referred to so far involves the intervention of the legislator. However, I am very much aware that in order to bring true equality of opportunity for women we need a wide-spread re-thinking of the roles of men and women in our society. I do not think that many people would still want to deny women the opportunity to work as well as men, in whatever field they wish. We all know of women who have made outstanding contributions as businesswomen, doctors, lawyers, Members of Parliament and many others. This afternoon, a woman presides over our debates.

We have also read of those who are working as loggers, truckdrivers and in other areas traditionally assumed to be only for men. Recently we have seen a certain number of women join the ranks of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for the first time. We congratulate these women, especially since we are aware of the difficulties they have probably had to undergo.

I would like to say here how happy I am to be a member of a party which has succeeded in electing eight female members of parliament in the recent elections. The government party by itself now has three women more than the whole House had in the last Parliament. Knowing the contribution which women have made to previous Parliaments. I have no doubt that the influence on our deliberations of the female members of this House will greatly exceed the influence which their numbers alone would command. And this is a good thing.

I know that other parties also presented female candidates. But it is not enough simply to present female candidates: it is also essential to get them elected. I can say that our party has made a conscious effort not only to recruit female candidates, but also to encourage them to run in constituencies where they have a reasonable chance of winning.

The ever increasing part women are playing in all our political parties is a most encouraging development, and our society should welcome healthy competition among all parties to see who will be the first to give Canadian women their full place. I, for one, am glad to see the Liberal party with a good head start over its rivals, and I know that the members of our party are resolved not only to maintain this lead but to increase it in the coming years. For both at the legislative level, and at the level of social behaviour in general, our society still has a long way to go in recognizing the equality of the sexes in fact as in law.

● (1500)

If there are any who still have any doubts in this regard, I suggest that they take a look at certain earnings statistics published by Statistics Canada. Is it part of the concept of human nature or an inevitable consequence of biology that the average earnings of Canadian women participating full-time in the work force should be about

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half that of male workers? We can surely imagine a better organized society in which this gap would not be so great.

Our society in general, continues to assign certain roles to men and certain others to women. For example, from watching T.V., one could get the impression all women were pretty, young housewives who cared only about their waxed floors and sweet-smelling laundry. As long as we continue to assume that the rearing of children and the caring for the home is the only interest of women and their responsibility above and that men do not have to be concerned, we will be denying them complete freedom of choice. It has been said that the reason men are able to succeed in their chosen field is that they have a wife to support and care for them so that they can have time to devote themselves to their work.

But, Madam Speaker, women don't have wives. If they want to succeed in areas outside the home, they usually must take on a double burden.

This stereotyping of sex roles has also deprived men of freedom of choice. The expectation placed on them to succeed in the workplace at any cost, including long hours, has made it difficult for them to participate fully in family life. Our objective must be flexibility and accommodation so that all individuals, both men and women, can assume the role or roles best suited to their personality, regardless of sex. In achieving greater equality for women, we will also be freeing men to share the joys and responsibilities of parenthood.

It is with this in mind that we are planning for International Women's Year in 1975. We recognize that our objectives will not be achieved overnight. The process of changing attitudes is a gradual one and our efforts will continue as long as they are needed. However, we welcome International Women's Year as a time to give special emphasis to the problem.

The government's program has already been outlined in general. It includes an information and educational campaign to bring the issues before the public. There will be both general and specialized regional and national seminars, training sessions and conferences involving people from all walks of life, especially those who have not yet had the opportunity to consider the implications of change.

There will also be special exhibitions and cultural activities, publications and films. An increased amount of funds will be available for non-government organizations to undertake a wide variety of activities to mark the year. Legislation will be reviewed with a view to removing any remaining discriminatory provisions. Special efforts will be made to increase the number of women appointed to senior positions and to international meetings and conferences.

We have recently hosted a most successful U.N. Seminar on Machinery to Promote the Integration of Women in Development as part of our contribution on the international level.

The Government has earmarked additional funds in the amount of \$5 million for International Women's Year. This amount is over and above funds allocated from within ongoing programs of many departments and agencies.