

report. However, some women did. There was nothing wrong with this recommendation. But practically, what does it provide people? And first, what is its origin? In my opinion, it originates not so much from a real problem of discrimination between the sexes but from a psychological problem by which one fails to recognize a role which is essential in the structure of our society and that of today's family.

This recommendation therefore comes from the uneasiness that housemistresses have expressed and that I shall summarize, if I may, by quoting from an article by the very famous Galbraith, which article was published in the March 1974 issue of *Maclean's* and in which the author deals with the virtue of social convenience. He says, and I quote:

The virtue of social convenience is extremely useful in bringing people to do disagreeable tasks. Not so long ago it convinced the young men to joyfully and conscientiously accept military service despite much lower pay than the normal rate, which automatically reduced the fiscal burden of taxpayers which were already well-off. Any resistance was considered despicable and even antipatriotic and was condemned. The same virtue—

—social convenience—

—guaranteed the charitable and careful services provided by nurses or home and general hospital services. There again, the credit earned before the eyes of the community served as a substitute for fair payment. (It should however be noted that physicians never did accept this type of payment!) But the absolute success of the virtue of convenience comes with the conversion of women into servants.

In pre-industrial societies, women were appreciated of course for their procreative ability, but also for their performance in domestic duties and their value on the farms, as well as, in the higher classes, for their intellectual, decorative or sexual merit.

This is what Mr. Galbraith says. According to a very famous Canadian economist, the housemistresses whom my colleague from Waterloo-Cambridge calls housewives make a very significant contribution to the gross national product, but one which is totally hidden or even ignored in our method of social accounting.

He said: "The work . . ." and I take his figures instead of ours, because they are higher and more recent, and I think that he has a better reputation than the modest report of the royal commission. I go on quoting:

The work of the average woman . . .

According to me, it is a bad translation and it should read: "housewife from an average family"

. . . is approximately equivalent to the salaries paid in 1970—\$257 a week or \$13,364 a year.

Economists have tried, especially in the United States, also in Sweden and to some extent in England, but not so much in Canada, to give an economic value to the work of the housewife and to conciliate our social accounting accordingly.

These problems will probably make some members smile. But women very well know that they are housewives, cooks, laundresses and ironers all rolled up into one, even if we are blessed with modern and very useful appliances and what have you. They vigorously resent this lack of social acknowledgement of their identity, their role and their definitely economic contribution.

Those women are not the majority, housemistresses of families in the high or fairly high income brackets who could probably pay themselves the luxury of making

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optional contributions each year to the Canada or Quebec Pension Plans.

They would have to double the amount we pay because someone will have to pay the employer's share. I will not go into the technical details to say that about \$200 will have to be spent by those women so that they get a corresponding pension at the age of retirement.

There is no problem there. So much the better for them, but the women who would not draw a pension are those whose condition is extremely modest, not to say underprivileged, the poor women who must stay at home because they have no skill or because they lack the necessary training to get a remunerative job outside, or perhaps because they have no husband. Nobody spoke about this in this bill. The women whose husbands do not earn enough money, those who simply do not have \$200 for the contribution of both the employee and of the employer to the Canada Pension Plan or the Quebec Pension Plan have been forgotten.

It is certain that it is not the social symbolism but the practical result which interests those women. As far as I am concerned, in spite of the endeavours we made through the royal commission, in spite of the efforts of the Department of National Health and Welfare to find a solution to the possible participation of those women to the Canada Pension Plan, it is much more by a formula such as the guaranteed annual income that we will help the women who really need help.

Now, before closing my remarks, I would like to ask some questions which should prompt people to reflect on definite practical problems. I think this bill is cute. I apologize but I have no other word to describe it. Though it was conceived in good faith, I do not find it very practical and I do not think it will be of real help to women.

● (1730)

On the other hand, it is unfortunate that the press, the media, the feminist movements are bringing in this question in a wrong light. Even some hon. members, when they get interested in the women's condition—put in the spotlight this sole recommendation as being the very symbol of what is commonly called women's lib. This is a social lie we are now telling them. The mass of women—and I apologize for such a crude term—will one day be made up of widows and this for two quite simple reasons: first, the married man, still nowadays, according to Canadian and western statistics, usually marries a woman younger than himself and furthermore, women live longer than men.

Based on those innocuous and practical considerations, I therefore conclude that women have more chances, according to statistics, of becoming widows and as such they are covered; so there is nothing to worry about, it is in the legislation. The rare cases of widowers will soon be covered. The Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) has suggested the necessary amendments to that effect.

Secondly, in order to be practical, I would like to ask my colleague from Waterloo-Cambridge if he forgets the fact that times change. His bill seems to have come to a standstill. However, women are increasingly coming on the labour market and they are often working part-time. How