

ANNE FRANCIS
(FLORENCE BIRD),
Chairman,
Royal Commission on the
Status of Women.

LET'S STOP WASTING WOMEN'S POTENTIAL*

ABSTRACT: Our society has failed to realize the implications of the modern life cycle of the majority of women — most girls will have a job for at least 25 years of their lives. They will require appropriate education to broaden their perspectives and to lessen cultural bias; they will need good occupational counselling and confidence in their ability to work successfully. And our society must take action to allow women their opportunities and their rights to adequate and equal pay for their work.

I'm delighted to be here today because guidance counsellors are important people. There are a number of influences which shape our lives and you are high up on the list. It is a great pity that there are not enough of you at any educational level in any province of Canada. What this country needs is a population explosion of counsellors.

When the chairman of this convention asked me to speak to you he told me that counselling and the Canadian woman would be one of the major themes at the conference. That is as it should be. I hope that you will interpret your terms of reference to include the pre-school and elementary-school child, the secondary-school girl, the university undergraduate, and the adult woman — and also parents and teachers. Most important of all I hope you will take a long, critical look at yourselves. It will, of course, help you to see the value of your many real successes with students, your courageous attacks on many entrenched attitudes, your own patient wisdom in spite of being overworked and carrying far too heavy case loads. But when it comes to Canadian women, that critical look should also make you aware of a sense of failure, a sense of failure which all of us must share.

*Address at the 5th Biennial Convention of the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association, Winnipeg, June, 1973.

Here in Canada we have been stupidly, blindly wasteful of our physical resources — of energy, of forests, of rivers — so that today there is “water, water, everywhere nor any drop to drink” — or even swim in. This insane wastage of resources is, of course, a worldwide phenomenon, a worldwide threat to survival. That became apparent at the Stockholm Conference on Conservation last summer.

We Canadians have not only wasted the physical resources of our country, we have also wasted and continue to waste the intelligence, the talent, and the skill of half our population — the potential of the women of our country. In the last 30 years Canada has moved very rapidly from a physical to a cerebral society — a society where work requiring brute force, human physical strength, can now be done by machinery which requires skill rather than muscles to operate. Today the training needed to speak the computer language is cerebral and it requires the sort of aptitude which many women have. And yet the dull, badly paid, routine jobs are still being done by women as they have been since time immemorial.

We have also failed to realize the implications of the modern life cycle of the majority of women and certainly failed to make girls understand it, with serious results to the self-esteem, to the sense of worth, in fact, to the psyche of many Canadian women particularly when they reach their forties and their children have left home.

The *Report* of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada has provided data, statistics, and documentation which prove, without possibility of doubt, what many of us already knew from observation and empirically from experience. It also supplied us with a fresh perspective on the extent to which history, tradition, prejudice, and myths have confined women to the supportive roles and have prevented so many of them from realizing their potential or even being aware of their own worth, thereby depriving our society of so much skill and brain power.

The terms of reference of the Commission were wide. We were asked to inquire, report, and make recommendations about what steps should be taken by the Federal Government to give women equal opportunities with men in every aspect of Canadian society. It soon became apparent to us that many steps must also be taken by provincial and municipal governments, by school boards, universities, and the private sector of business before women could have equal opportunities.

The years of the Commission were an enlightening, often shocking, always educational experience for the seven commissioners. We learned a great deal in a number of ways. We asked 40 authorities to make studies in depth in the fields of law, taxation, economics, labour laws and practices, political science, sociology, and education. (Incidentally, we published 11 of those studies.) Our research staff prepared background papers and supplied us with a wealth of research material published in a number of countries. We received 468 briefs and many letters from organizations and individuals. We held public hearings in 17 cities and towns in order to talk face-to-face with people in every province and territory. We conducted seminars with women

outstanding in their own fields. We asked the advice of consultants, foremost authorities in the various disciplines needed to complete our information.

As a result of our study and after much thought and long discussions we made 167 recommendations. The sum total of them, if implemented, could have a profound effect not only on the status of women but on our whole society.

Not surprisingly we found that education is the key which will do most to open the door to wider horizons for women. We were convinced that "changes in education could bring dramatic improvement in the social and economic position of women in an astonishingly short time."

By education the Commissioners meant much more than formal book learning. We meant the development of the individual so that she would be able to realize her potential by choosing a life pattern which will give her lasting, personal satisfaction, and also make it possible for her to make a worthwhile contribution to her family and to society.

We were convinced that a new approach toward education could provide the motivation many girls lack and so help them to have goals, as most men do, rather than to confine their hopes and aspirations to playing traditional women's roles.

The research and the public hearings made us understand the need for new attitudes on the part of parents, teachers, and counsellors. And the need is great. We found that in general Canadian women have many of the characteristics of an economic, psychological, and social minority even though they are not a numerical minority. (Numerically, women and men are about equal, one of the few places where women seem to have achieved equality.) The Commission also found that compared with men, women have either little money or are poor. We found they are very often discriminated against when they go out of the home to work for pay. We found that by and large they are outside of the political and financial power structure of our society. We found that they are dependent, passive, lacking in self-confidence, and often frustrated.

Let me illustrate what I have just said. The Commission's Report was tabled in the House of Commons in 1970. Most of our statistics were based on surveys made in 1967 and 1968. I have, therefore, whenever new information was available, updated my facts and figures with the help of Statistics Canada and the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labour in Ottawa.

WOMEN HAVE LITTLE MONEY COMPARED WITH MEN

In 1967, an analysis of the individual tax returns published by the Department of National Revenue reported that women received approximately 20 percent of earned income.

The low incomes of women are largely accounted for by the fact that when they work for a living they are employed in the so-called traditional women's jobs. They are waitresses, clerical workers, steno-

graphers, salespeople. They take those comparatively badly paid jobs even though the majority of them have more formal education than men. In 1971, 64 percent of the women in the labour force compared with 49 percent of the men had some or full secondary education.

The depressing fact is that schooling alone does not necessarily bring the same rewards for them as it does for men. For all age groups in Canada the average earnings for men with some secondary schooling were *114 percent* higher than those of similar women.

And it is the same sad story for university graduates. The earnings of men with university degrees were 84 percent higher than those of similar women for all age groups.

WOMEN ARE POOR

In a personal-interview survey carried out across Canada in 1970, it was estimated that nearly two-thirds of all welfare recipients were women. Two-thirds of them were widowed, separated, or divorced. More than half of them had children under 21 years of age. There are now more than one million women in Canada receiving welfare assistance. These do not include the more than 600,000 women aged 65 or older who are recipients of the old-age guaranteed-income supplement.

WOMEN ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHEN THEY WORK

Eight of the 10 provinces and the Federal Government have passed equal pay laws, but still a great many Canadian women are paid less than men even when they do work of equivalent value and responsibility. A recent survey made by the Department of Labour in four cities showed that in each of 10 occupations women's average weekly salary rates were less than those of men for similarly described work. For example, in Halifax average weekly salary rates for women material-record clerks were \$71, compared with \$106 for men. In Toronto they were \$86 for women, compared with \$120 for men.

This inequality of pay rates goes right on up to the top, to the elite of the work world. One would expect universities to give leadership by adopting equal pay for men and women professors. But that is not the case. The Commission found that women professors received an average of \$2,262 a year less than men with the same or lower academic degrees. In 1971, the earnings of male professors with a master's degree were 10 percent more than those of women with the same degree, and men with doctorates earned 13 percent more than women with doctorates.

Not only are women being paid less than men even when they have as much or more formal education, but they are not promoted to the policy-making jobs. They just go on doing the supportive Joe-jobs year after year. Between 1961 and 1971 the number of women at work increased by one million. The percentage of women in the labour force increased from 27 percent to 33 percent — an increase of 6 percent. However, in the same 10-year period the per-

centage of women in management increased from 3.7 to 3.9 percent — a miserable increase of two-tenths of one percent.

The Bell Telephone Company is an example of what is happening. Seventy-five percent of its employees are women. In 1971 only 5 percent of them were in management and only one has a senior executive position. I believe an effort is being made to correct this discrimination. Canada's banks are typical. In 1968 there were 6,000 bank managers — 29 of them were women.

The pattern is much the same in the teaching profession. According to a survey made in 1971, in 8 provinces 69 percent of the elementary- and secondary-school teachers are women, but only 25 percent of them are principals.

Until recently the Federal Government was just as culpable as business, school boards, and universities. And the Federal Government is important because it is the largest employer of women in the country. Twenty-seven percent of the people in the public service are women, most of them in clerical or secretarial positions.

In 1968 the chance of a man earning \$10,000 a year in the public service was 12 times greater than for a woman. The chance of a man earning more than \$14,000 was 18 times greater. However, in the last two years a great change has taken place. As a result of the *Report* of the Royal Commission, the Federal Government has been making a great effort to train and recruit women for middle and top management. But the going is slow because there are so few women in junior management that it is difficult to find many women with the training and experience to qualify for middle and top management. However, progress is being made. During an 11-month period in 1972, the number of women between the ages of 30 and 40 earning salaries between \$14,000 and \$20,000 a year increased from 120 to 245. However, there are still 1,400 men in that category, so the imbalance is still great.

The public service is now recruiting women for traditional male jobs and has engaged a guidance counsellor to help them find more interesting and rewarding work of different kinds.

The Commission found it surprising and distressing that the higher education of women has been moving on tortoise feet, very, very slowly. Every year during the last three decades, an increasing number of women have gone to university and taken post-graduate degrees but an increasing number of men have also been seeking higher education so that the ratio of women to men has not moved ahead with impressive strides except perhaps at the undergraduate level.

In 1930, 25 percent of the BA's went to women; in 1971, 39 percent. However, in 1971 the percentage of women earning masters' degrees was only 22 percent, just about what it was in 1921, half a century earlier. And the percentage of women earning doctorates is only 10 percent, which is 5 percent fewer than in 1930. It is not a record to which any of us can point with pride and it certainly shows how the potential of women is being wasted.

The participation of women in the professions is equally depressing,

especially when compared with other countries. For example in Canada only 9 percent of the physicians are women while 24 percent of the doctors in Britain, Finland, and Israel are women. In Canada only 3 percent of the dentists are women, compared with 28 percent in France. I found it hard to believe that Israeli, French, or Finnish women have more intelligence and ability than Canadian women — though I concede that maybe they have better motivation. Maybe they have better counselling at school and university.

WOMEN ARE OUTSIDE OF THE POWER STRUCTURE

Since so few women are in top management jobs they do not, of course, belong to the policy-making, decision-making elite in business or the public service. There are now three women in the public service with the status of deputy minister, but that does not mean that the influence of women is in any way comparable with that of men.

In politics women are doing just as badly. In the last Federal election five women were sent to the 264-member House of Commons. That is better than only one as there was before, but still a ratio of one woman to 52 men is not exactly impressive. When I was in Sweden last year several of the women MP's I talked to there were apologetic because there was only a ratio of one woman to seven men in the unicameral Parliament and they were shocked, and I was embarrassed when they asked about the political participation of women in Canada and I had to admit that we were not doing very well.

WOMEN ARE LACKING IN SELF-CONFIDENCE

Some years ago, the Women's Bureau in the Ontario Department of Labour set up a counselling service for older women who wanted to re-enter the labour force. The counsellors were shocked to find the extent to which the majority of the women lacked self-confidence and belief in their ability to take on a responsible job. During the question period of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, Sister Catherine Wallace, the President of Mount St. Vincent University, told us about girls who had graduated full of self-confidence, drive, and ambition, and who had then married. Later, in their thirties, they wanted to come back to university to take higher degrees. When the counsellors interviewed them they found the majority of them had lost their self-confidence, had become dependent and passive, and were quite different people from what they had been a decade earlier.

WOMEN ARE OFTEN FRUSTRATED

This frustration has led to the rise of the Women's Liberation Movement on this continent and Europe. In every province of Canada there are now women's action committees which, in various ways, are trying to persuade governments to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission. They are also trying to give women a new understanding of their own worth by means of "rap" sessions

and other personality development procedures. For years many older women have demanded a change and now the younger women have become aware of what is happening to them. The tragedy is that parents, our educational system, and society have failed to prepare them for life as it is today while they were children.

Of course many influences shape our lives. Parents and the home are the greatest influences.

Later, the day-care centre, and then the school, of which guidance counsellors are an essential, integral part, assume immense importance.

The mass media, particularly television, have now also become a continuing and powerful influence from the early years right on through a woman's life.

When girls reach secondary school the peer group takes over and is probably the strongest influence of all. By that time, of course, young people have already to a large extent absorbed the attitudes, accepted the myths, and fallen into the stereotypes which our society has imposed on them. In other words, they have already been brain-washed, and that goes for most of us including some guidance counsellors.

When you look at these influences you realize why women are passive and dependent, why they lack self-confidence, why they accept badly paid jobs or fail to demand equal pay or promotions, and lack the motivation to take higher degrees which will fit them for jobs which will be of greater benefit to them and the society.

The home is the place where a girl receives her most lasting conditioning, since the first five years have the greatest influence on the mind and emotions of a child. She gets her ideas about her future role as mother and housewife from watching her mother at work. She is given a toy stove, pots and pans, a doll, doll clothes, a tea-set, while often her brother is given building blocks, mechanical toys, a motor-car or aeroplane to assemble, a chemcraft set — in fact play materials which require him to use his hands, his mind, and his imagination.

Most mothers emphasize the traditional role of women instead of encouraging their daughters to develop their individual skills and interests. They are also more permissive with the boys than with the girls. If a boy is noisy, disobedient, climbs on the roof and breaks an arm, or puts a ball through the neighbours' window, he is excused because "boys will be boys." On the other hand, little girls are taught to be passive and obedient, and the aggressive behaviour permitted in a boy is frowned upon as being unfeminine. All too often the normal, healthy tomboy is discouraged from doing the active, interesting things her brothers do. The father will take the boys fishing or hiking while the little girl stays at home and bakes cookies with mother.

Even at an early age a girl accepts the traditional roles. An amusing example of this was brought to my attention by a member of the secretariat of the Commission. She had been staying with her sister who had a four-year-old daughter. One day at breakfast she said:

"I'll have to hurry or the boss will be mad. She doesn't like it if I turn up late."

The little girl said:

"A boss is a he not a she."

And no amount of argument would convince her that her aunt's boss could possibly be a she: I doubt if that young lady will be looking for a managerial job when she steps out into the work world: not unless she gets good counselling in elementary and secondary school.

As she grows older a girl is as a rule made to feel by her parents that she is a failure if she does not marry. For her, marriage becomes the ultimate goal of her life. The Commission's research revealed that today most girls dream about marriage as unrealistically as their mothers and grandmothers did. Inevitably when she reaches high school and often even when she goes on to college, her main interest is to find herself a husband, after which she believes that everything will be hearts and roses forever more. The Commission heard many sad stories about brilliant girls capable of being honour students who deliberately concealed their intelligence and ability. They were afraid they would not get dates and would end up as old maids because the boys would be scared of them if they seemed to be too bright. It is a sad comment on the attitude of boys, isn't it?

This emphasis on marriage as the ultimate goal by parents and later by the peer group means that many girls lack motivation for higher education and planning for a career. Parents often discourage a girl's early ambitions by saying that they do not need to prepare themselves for a career because "they are only going to get married." They regard a daughter, and she often regards herself, as an "until" worker: she will take a job until she marries, or until she has a baby, or until the mortgage is paid up on the house, or until her husband finishes his higher education.

This attitude by the parents means that if there is only a limited amount of money available in the family it is taken for granted that the son will go to university even if he is a dull clod while the daughter will be encouraged to take a commercial course even if she is exceptionally bright and talented. Invariably the education and career expectations of the boy are upgraded and those of the girl downgraded by parents.

The attitude of parents toward the education of their daughters is often determined by their own education, and particularly by the education of the mother. A study made in 1966 showed that 50 percent of the daughters of university-educated mothers attended university compared with only 37 percent of the daughters of university-educated fathers. If only the father had gone to university, the majority of the sons did so, while the majority of daughters obtained only a secondary education.

The mass media, particularly in advertising, conspire to put the accent on marriage or at least on getting a man rather than a career. From the word go a little girl is conditioned by advertising to the traditional passive, dependent, often mindless role. I saw an advertise-

ment for children's Christmas presents which was a perfect illustration of what I mean. Side by side there were pictures of what were obviously a girl's room and a boy's room. The girl's room was pink and white, of course, with frilly curtains. There was a picture of a girl in an old-fashioned costume on the wall, a doll and a teddy-bear on the bed, a china cat and an ornate hand-mirror on the dresser. The little boy's room had deep blue walls and red curtains. There were pictures of a sail-boat and a horse, and on the bed there was a clock, a radio, a badminton racket, an atlas, a snorkel mask, and a telescope.

TV advertising portrays young women as creatures entirely obsessed with their hair, their brassieres, their bubble baths, and the smell of their breath — part of that life's ambition to get a man. The young matron seems to be obsessed with waxing floors and acting as a salesperson for detergents with different names made by the same industry. Older women are usually freaks or sad-sacks forever making instant coffee to please a fussy, elderly husband.

Now, as I said earlier, the school is the second most important influence in a child's life and it is almost as bad as the home as far as girls are concerned. The Commission found that in the school the same brainwashing process goes on. In the text books and readers the mother is the stay-at-home, the person who disciplines the children, who says no-no, and makes you eat your spinach. The father is the versatile, interesting person who takes the children, usually the boys, on expeditions or to hockey games. Most of the storybooks portray the versatile, interesting characters as being men. The books all of us read as children show men as the important people and women as the dependent stay-at-homes. The books I read as a child certainly did that. Take Robert Louis Stevenson for example: in *Kidnapped*, *Treasure Island*, and *David Balfour* I cannot remember a single female character. When I read Dickens I thought the women were all nincompoops except Aunt Betsey Trotwood and she was obviously slightly wacky. When I read Sir Walter Scott I felt sorry for the women except for Meg Merrilees who was a tough gutsy character, but then she was a gypsy and gypsies are different. Think of the school textbooks and the other books you read when you were young and you realize why it is hard to break away from tradition. Of course the school textbooks and the storybooks only reflect the attitudes of the society which have prevented women from developing their potential.

NOW WHAT, IN GENERAL, CAN BE DONE
TO PREVENT THIS WASTE OF POTENTIAL,
AND WHAT, IN PARTICULAR,
CAN GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS DO?

Well, to begin with, departments of education should change school textbooks to give women a better image of themselves. However, it is essential for parents, teachers, and above all counsellors to

understand the modern life cycle of women and prepare girls to make the most of it.

Today the vast majority of women take jobs until they marry in their early twenties. They usually go on working until their first baby is born. They have an average of 2.3 children in a short period of time so that they are, as a rule, in their mid-thirties or early forties when their youngest child is at school.

Since the life expectancy of Canadian women is 76 years, a woman in her mid-thirties has 40 years of life ahead of her and during at least 25 of those years she can be active, interested, and useful if she has been prepared to make the most of them.

Because of this life cycle, today many married women are returning to the labour force. In 1971, 36 percent of all married women were working for pay outside of the home and 57 percent of the women in the labour force were married.

Incidentally, an increasing number of women hold down a job even when they have young children because they want and need more money than their husbands are earning: two pay-checks are becoming increasingly necessary in a period of inflation and rising expectations for a higher standard of living. Others work because they have a career which they find interesting and rewarding; others because they feel constricted and lonely when confined to the home all day and because they need to be with people. Many work part-time if they find full-time work too much of a strain on their physical and mental health when they are also working in the home. Many widows, divorcees, or deserted wives work to support themselves and their children. In 1967, 8 percent of all families with dependent children were headed by a woman. Changes in the divorce laws are increasing the number of sole support mothers due to a greater number of desertions by husbands. Older women are, alas, often widows because women live longer than men.

What girls must somehow be made to understand is this. Nine out of 10 of them will work for pay outside of the home for 25 years of their lives. And some of them will work longer than that because no one is going to support them if, after marriage, they find themselves widowed or divorced. Few parents can now leave sufficient wealth after death to make a daughter financially independent. The maintenance granted by courts after a divorce is seldom sufficient to provide the decencies of life for a woman and her children. Public assistance only provides for marginal living. Girls must somehow be made to realize that they may wake up one morning to find themselves poor unless they have the skills and education to get a job commensurate with their ability. Above all they must somehow be made to understand that they are going to have a dull, boring, frustrating life if they don't make the most of the qualities of mind and ability they were born with. The way to make them understand these hard facts is your job. I know it is a difficult one. I remember some years ago I was discussing this problem with an American sociologist. He said a research project showed that when counsellors told teen-age girls that 9 out of 10 of them would work 25 years of

their lives, each girl accepted the statistics but said that she would be the tenth one and that she would stay at home and be supported by a husband. Today all the publicity given to the Women's Liberation Movement and the spate of books about the subjugation of women should make it easier to convince a teen-ager of the importance of planning for a long life ahead.

It is also, I think, essential for counsellors to make a girl understand the options that are now open to her. She can marry, have a family, and stay at home until her children are independent and then continue her education, do volunteer work, engage in various cultural activities, or carry on with a career already started, or embark on a new one. She can combine marriage and children with a full-time, long-term career as men do. She can remain single and have a fascinating and interesting life as a career woman. She can work part-time while her children are young if she lacks the energy to carry a full-time job as well as run a house and help her husband to bring up their children.

It is equally essential to make an intelligent, able girl understand the variety of interesting careers now open to her if she has the necessary education.

Currently the Federal Public Service Commission is preparing a brochure on careers for women soon to be released for distribution in schools. It should help counsellors and girls to choose from a wealth of interesting jobs — jobs that in the past have been regarded as men's occupations. The Career Information Centre in the Ontario Ministry of Education should also help girls in that Province as a similar centre in New York is now doing. The Women's Bureau in the Ontario Department of Labour has prepared a variety of stimulating pamphlets on career opportunities. I'm sure you know about all sorts of information of this kind which is available in other provinces.

However, telling a girl about possible careers is not enough. She must be helped to develop the confidence to go after the job and have faith in her ability to forge ahead, in fact be determined to do what she is fitted to do. At this time in history aggressiveness should be regarded as a virtue in a girl rather than passivity and dependency.

Teachers as well as counsellors should do what they can to make parents understand the evolving life cycle of women and the wide choice of careers and life styles open to them. Teachers are important in this work because they see the pupils and the parents more often than the counsellors do and can do much to assist the total development of a girl.

Unfortunately some counsellors and teachers are failing to give girls the development counselling they need. In briefs and at the public hearings the Commission heard bitter criticism from young women about the advice they had received in school and university. One young girl told us that she wanted to be a veterinarian and yet every time she told her counsellor about that ambition he wrote down "nurse" on the information sheet. Another told us that she had always wanted to be a lawyer but had been discouraged so often by university counsellors that she settled for teaching. Many others told

us that they had been advised to take one of the traditional women's jobs rather than to branch out into other fields of activity. Many told us that to be a good wife and mother was held out to them as the best and most important job for a woman and the one which would enable them to make the greatest contribution to society. I wonder how many counsellors tell boys that to be a good husband and a good father is the best and only job for them?

Now, please, don't misunderstand me. I do not underrate the importance of marriage and the raising of children. All I am saying is that it is not a 24-hour-a-day life-time occupation for a girl any more than it is for a man. High school and university counsellors should be responsible for helping girls to see that their social and vocational responsibility is fast equalling that of men and that their plans for the future should be considered accordingly. At the same time boys should be made to understand that their family responsibilities are fast equalling those of women and their plans for a life-style should be made accordingly. Both boys and girls should be made to see marriage as a partnership of a team of equals sharing the same responsibilities toward the family and the community.

That is the reason why the Commission recommended that boys and girls together should attend classes in family life education from kindergarten on through high school. We were convinced that it is just as necessary for a future husband and father to take courses in home economics and child psychology as it is for a future wife and mother. Incidentally we believed that girls should attend shop classes if they wanted to. Personally I have always thought girls should be taught carpentry because my mother was such a good carpenter. She used to have a lot of fun and save a lot of money by constructing book-cases, benches, and cabinets embellished by carvings of her own design. And she was also a devoted mother and a very feminine, or rather, a very womanly woman as well as a good carpenter. One of the best Christmas presents I ever received was a set of carpentry tools which father gave me. Self-taught, I turned out to be an enthusiastic but unskilled carpenter; I should have gone to a shop class.

I am told that now in some Ontario schools boys are taking home economics and commercial courses and girls are taking shop courses. I hope this will eventually be an accepted general practice in every school in Canada. There is, of course, no reason why a man should not be an efficient secretary any more than there is any reason why a girl should not be a good carpenter and cabinet-maker.

I have a few other suggestions about other things that can be done to prevent the waste of women's potential. No doubt in many places they are already being done. And no doubt during the next few days other constructive suggestions will be forthcoming at this conference.

Credit courses in career planning are now being given in some Ontario schools. Such courses would not only help young people with their own careers but perhaps find them a career as a counsellor.

Discussion with teachers in commercial, health, and sociology departments could help to clarify their own ideas about sex roles and

so help them and the counsellors to give their pupils enlightened guidance. Such discussions would involve for example:

1. Consumer education and the role of advertising in shaping sex roles.
2. Health: the physical and emotional development of girls and boys. This would include sex education, family planning, and the responsibilities of parents.
3. Law as it relates to women.
4. English: the attitude toward the sex roles of women in literature and school textbooks.
5. Home Economics: family planning, housekeeping, budgeting, role extension, marriage as a partnership.
6. Mathematics and Science: career opportunities for girls in engineering, medicine, dentistry, and research.
7. Discussion of teacher attitudes in sex roles and how this influences girls.

These discussions among teachers could be made more stimulating if authorities in the field lead some of the seminars.

When I was in Sweden last year I was made aware of the need to train teachers in this field. For years, in that country where women have such a high status, courses in family living have been included in the curricula of all schools. I studied the plans for the family living courses designed for different age groups. They covered every aspect of life and were carefully prepared and documented: I was tremendously impressed by them. However Swedish educationalists are not happy because they have found that the teachers had not been sufficiently trained to give the courses adequately. Teachers turned out to be the Achilles heel of the whole project: many of them lacked not only the necessary background knowledge but also the self-confidence and the experience required to teach family living classes. Swedish teachers are now being given special training in this important field of education.

What else can I suggest that might be of help to women? Well, girls can be helped by "Career Nights" at which their parents are present since, as I mentioned earlier, so many parents are stumbling blocks in the way of students and counsellors because they have old-fashioned ideas about the place of women in our society.

At Career Nights different types of programmes could be planned. For example: a panel of successful career women; a panel of women with different backgrounds — single, widowed, divorced, who would explain how they coped with their lives; a panel of married women who would discuss the way husbands and wives share child care and home care; mixed panels of men and women talking about the reality of the work world; a variety of speakers in different rooms discussing individual careers.

Counsellor workshops could also be of help. I suggest a year given over to the study of a certain Royal Commission Report — a study not only confined to the chapter on education but to those dealing with sociology, employment, and the family.

University students at the undergraduate level could be encouraged

by counsellors to take one of the courses in the history of women now being given in a number of universities as was recommended by the Commission. Counsellors might benefit from attending the courses themselves.

There are, as you know, counsellor training institutes in a number of places. I wonder if they provide any special study of the needs of girls and women. I wonder to what extent some of them may be saturated with the same old prejudices and the same old attitudes about the relative roles of men and women which have held them both in straightjackets for so long.

I say that because the other day a school counsellor told me that when she enrolled for a counsellor training course in one of the universities the director said to her: "My wife is at home with the kids so you can see my bias."

Well that sort of bias leads to the perpetuation of the outdated attitudes which have caused so much waste and so much unhappiness. It fails utterly to take into account the needs, the ability, the aspirations, and the potential of the individual.

Good counselling must always be tailored to fit the individual. It must aim to develop and integrate the personality of young women and young men to enable them to have a satisfying and useful life.

That is, of course, why your vocation is so difficult, and yet surely so fascinating, why your responsibility is so great and why your failures must be so devastating and your successes so rewarding. As I said at the beginning of this talk, counsellors are important people and I feel honoured to have been asked to speak to you today.

I hope with all my heart that you will not only keep up your good work but extend it. Girls and women greatly need your help.

RESUME: Notre société n'a pas encore pris conscience des implications du cycle de vie de la majorité des femmes d'aujourd'hui — la plupart des filles occupent un emploi pour une durée d'au moins 25 années de leur vie. Elles auront besoin d'une éducation appropriée pour élargir leurs perspectives et diminuer le biais culturel; elles auront besoin de bons services d'orientation et d'un sentiment de confiance dans leur habilité à travailler de façon productive. Notre société doit prendre les mesures nécessaires pour procurer aux femmes des opportunités et assurer leurs droits à un salaire adéquat et égal pour leur travail.

REFERENCE

Canada. Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. *Report*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970.