

*(Delivered
by SENATOR Mondale)*

REMARKS BY
VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY
NATIONAL SECRETARIES ASSOCIATION
JUNE 14, 1965

Women are playing an important role in
building a Great Society.

Not that this is a new role for you. You have
helped from the very beginning, to build our nation.

When the first settlers came to America, women
used their special skills to keep those early communities
going. They cooked, spun yarn, and afashioned clothes.
They taught children and cared for the sick. ~~And when
their homes were threatened, they learned to use firearms.~~

Side by side with men, throughout our history,
women have helped push back frontiers and make our
country the land of abundance and promise that it is
today.

There have been changes in our way of life since pioneer days -- changes in the pattern of the American woman's life. At the turn of the century, a baby girl's life expectancy was only 48 years -- women spent most of their adult life as homemakers. Today, many women are pursuing second careers at age 48 and the life expectancy of the baby girl born today is about 75 years.

We still think of the home as the institution most basic to our society. But, by and large, we've stopped thinking of it as the outer limit of the American woman's contribution to our society. The facts are forcing us to change our thinking.

Today 45 per cent of all women between the ages of 18 and 64 are working at full-time or part-time jobs -- a third of our total work force.

There are greater economic demands on the family -- the higher cost of educating children . . . the higher cost of health care . . . and the cost of the great variety of goods and services considered essential to meet the American standard of living. These demands increasingly require a "two pay-check" household.

Almost three out of five women workers are married.

If present trends continue, we can expect that eight or nine out of every ten girls in school today will work outside the home at sometime in their lives.

For some it may be just the years between school and marriage. Others may combine homemaking and jobholding; still others, probably the majority, will turn to paid employment once their children are well along in school.

By 1970, thirty million American women are expected to be working, compared to 26 million today.

So there is little profit in arguing whether or not women should work.

The fact is that they do work.

The question has become: How well do we use their talents and capabilities?

The talent of the American woman is an important resource in this nation. But all too often it is a wasted resource.

Only 14.1 per cent of working women are in the professions or in technical work. And only 4.5 per cent are managers, officials and proprietors.

The worst of it is that there has been an almost continuous decline in the percentage of women working in these jobs.

One of the reasons, of course, why women's employment opportunities are limited is that their education is too often limited.

Women comprised 51 per cent of the 1964 American high school graduating class.

But when it comes to college the girls, their parents and even their teachers and counselors have some second thoughts. And so, looking again at the 1964 record, we find that while 51 per cent of the June high school graduates were girls, in the fall, only 45 per cent of the students entering college were girls.

Nor has the American woman's record in college been as high as we would like.

There has been an actual decline, since 1930, in the percentage of higher degrees earned by women.

But education isn't the only factor limiting woman's opportunities.

There are restrictive hiring practices and a disinclination to promote women or to give them the same on-the-job training men receive.

The President's Commission on the Status of Women, founded by President Kennedy has taken the lead in opening more opportunities to women. It's work continued under President Johnson through the Interdepartmental Committee and the Citizens' Advisory Council on the Status of Women. In forty states, Governors' Commissions are working to improve the status of women at the state level.

These commissions and committees are concerned with a good deal more than job opportunities for women.

They are interested in the education of girls and in continuing education for women. They are stressing the need to strengthen the home by providing more community services. They are particularly concerned that working mothers have adequate facilities for child care while they work. They are investigating the possibility of more work opportunities for women who must also maintain their homes.

In 1962 the Attorney General reviewed an 1870 law which government hiring officers used as the basis for specifying "man" or "woman" in filling vacancies. The Attorney General held that the old law did not give appointing officers that prerogative and that the President had authority to regulate the right of appointing officers in this matter. Immediately the President directed heads of agencies to make future appointments solely on the basis of merit.

But it was President Johnson's talent search for qualified women which really opened the doors for women in government.

Shortly after the President took office he announced that government would no longer be for men only.

Since January 1, 1964, he has appointed almost 100 women to high-level government positions. In addition, government agencies have appointed or promoted more than 2,000 other women to jobs paying 10 thousand dollars or more a year.

In the President's words: "We can waste no talent, we can frustrate no creative power, we can neglect no skill in our search for an open and just and challenging society."

Private industry is following the President's example.

One factor helping this trend is a shortage of skilled workers in such fields as engineering, science, mathematics and business administration.

Qualified women can fill these jobs. Those not today qualified can become qualified through study and work.

Private employment practices also are being affected by steps being taken by the U. S. Employment Service. The Employment Service is urging acceptance and use throughout the country of hiring specifications based exclusively on job performance factors.

There is other progress:

Last year the Equal Pay Act established the principle of equal pay as national policy.

Next month Title VII of the Civil Rights Act goes into effect. It rules out all discrimination in employment on the basis of sex and applies in interstate commerce.

But all these efforts will be effective only if women, themselves, assume their responsibilities.

Our national goals will not be reached without the full participation of women -- not just as homemakers, not just as job-holders, but as volunteers in community action and as concerned citizens.

Today there are millions of opportunities for the American woman to be a volunteer and a concerned citizen.

The Job Corps and the Neighborhood Youth Corps need your help in your community.

There is Operation Headstart --to help little children from homes of poverty to enter school this fall. There is the Youth Opportunity Campaign to help youngsters from

16 to 21 find summer jobs.

There are the established volunteer agencies, settlement houses, Red Cross, church organizations and social groups which work to make their communities better.

These are places where the American woman can volunteer and work to the benefit of all Americans.

And then there is the responsibility of women in our nation -- as citizens of our nation -- to participate intelligently in public life. There is business before this nation and this Congress. We work toward creating an American society which can help all people in our nation contribute to and share in our abundance and freedom. Make it your business to know about these efforts, to participate in them, to make your voice heard and your vote count.

With your voice and your vote, poverty can be defeated . . . discrimination can be overcome . . . our cities can be better places in which to live and work . . . our country's natural beauty and resources can be protected . . . education can be improved. . . and, finally, the peace can be preserved.

Today the American woman no longer faces the barriers she once did to full participation in American life. Make the most of this opportunity. The challenges are great; the rewards can be even greater.



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