

Esther Peterson

Marquise Healey  
Mary Keyserling  
Mrs. <sup>U. G. P.</sup> Fynes (m.)  
Mary Roebing

ADDRESS BY

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

CONFERENCE OF GOVERNORS COMMISSIONS

ON STATUS OF WOMEN

JULY 29, 1965

Wirtz said  
Hear from Joan Macey  
@ Hannah Humphrey  
(Hrater)

It is my honor to address leaders in Governors' programs for strengthening opportunities for American women.

You represent an outstanding cross-section of civic leadership in every aspect of American life.

The very increase in the number of Governors' Commissions -- now ~~44~~ <sup>44</sup> -- shows the vital interest in your mission.

44  
states

W. L. Wirtz  
WIRTZ

In state after state you have held up a public mirror to the legal framework which can foster or hinder womens<sup>r</sup> rights. And where the mirror has revealed flaws -- archaic, discriminatory statutes, or gaps in protective law -- Commissions have served as catalysts for improvement.

At the same time you have broadened the "bridges" of education, training and counselling, so that more and more women can realize their highest potential.

Most important, you have helped bring about a new climate of public opinion.

Step by step, you have helped translate into reality more and more of the goals envisioned in the historic Report submitted to President Kennedy by the Commission on the Status of Women in 1963.

We owe a great deal to the chairman of that Commission, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who did not live to see the report completed.

Today, more Americans than ever before, in public and private life, are committed to helping women achieve their birthright as citizens.

The talent of the American woman is an important resource in this nation.

But I must be frank.

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, has taken the lead in opening more opportunities  
to women. Its work has continued under President  
Johnson through the Interdepartmental Committee  
and the Citizens' Advisory Council on the Status of  
Women. Your 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 <sup>MORE THAN 115</sup> ~~almost~~

100 women to high-level government positions. In

addition, government agencies have appointed or promoted

more than <sup>2800</sup> ~~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."

Record

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, *medicine,* 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.

Now it rules out all discrimination in employment on the basis of sex and applies in interstate commerce.

But the greatest barriers are the psychological barriers.

↳ The U.S. Civil Service Commission has done research on widely held views and attitudes. It has defined a whole series of myths -- some held by men, others held by women, some by both.

I refer to myths such as "women do not make good bosses," or "it is inefficient to train women because of high turnover." The facts prove otherwise.

If we would clear the road ahead for both men and women, we must clear all of our minds of these mental cobwebs.

↳ An open mind, like an open heart, is the prerequisite for an open door.

And here we might recall the words of America's first woman Cabinet member, Mrs. Frances Perkins. She used to say that her grandmother had taught her:

↳ "If anyone opens a door, one should always go through."

The doors of opportunity are opening today.

Working together we can reach our goal: full and equal opportunity for all the women of America in all parts of American life.

President Johnson is committed to that goal. I join him in that commitment. With your continued help we will succeed.

REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY AT  
THE CONFERENCE OF GOVERNORS COMMISSIONS ON THE  
STATUS OF WOMEN, WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 29, 1965

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