

People in politics too quick to judge position as simply a 'women's issue': Dombrowsky

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"Once again, all of the women who helped inspire me helped me become a better MPP," said Dombrowsky, who after a full term served believes she is even better poised to serve her constituents to the full extent of her abilities.

"I have a perspective that has some value. I think about issues very carefully. I'm trying to balance all of the investments and examples I have had. Becoming an effective advocate is probably the biggest skill I've learned."

Even after climbing many mountains, Dombrowsky said she is still confronted from time to time with good old-fashioned male chauvinism and with the disappointment that it "is certainly there (at Queen's Park) to a degree. Sometimes there needs to be a reminder that the women's perspective isn't being listened to."

A large issue, for example, that political pundits charge is still being ignored at all levels of government is child care and day care and lack of government will to subsidize the service to help families raise the standard of living by allow-

ing both spouses to work.

Discussing such issues is delicate, she said, because in politics people are quick to judge or criticize a position as being simply a women's issue.

But, Dombrowsky said tackling equality for women in the Legislature and across the province on key subjects is important because there are times when the female perspective can be lost in a political system still largely managed by men.

"Only 16 per cent of representatives (MPPs) of Ontario are female, yet 55 per cent of the population of Ontario is

female. On every debate or on every issue, only 16 per cent of the debate is being contributed to by females. Will that change radically? Probably not. But, when we increase female perspectives on every public debate, I do think that will have an impact on how issues are raised and what gets on the public agenda," she said.

"For example, child care is not just a money issue. It's a business issue and people tend to forget that," she said.

"I heard a saying once: 'The hand that rocks the cradle, rocks the world.'"

Dombrowsky, Leona

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