

In our country we have made strides. The majority of children are adequately housed, plenty of space, warmth, enjoy standards which are luxurious, no ravishing disease and progress toward live births. Infant mortality rate in 1934 was 71.7 deaths per thousand live births compared to 15 per 1000 in 1974.

Today children never had it so good, virtually all have free education, levels of literacy are higher now, along with the right to feel confidence and pride. Our children with their 10 speed bikes, recreation facilities, excellent libraries, compared to developing countries where thousands of preschool children have nothing to do, no facilities, empty huts, no resources, no stimulation. Schools which hardly have a book or paper, a high proportion with no chance to attend school yet despite this depressing situation there is a tremendously strong family support system, with a deep rich family life. They experience wealth of another kind of resource.

The IYC charges us to think about progress. Life goes on changing, the pace of change should not be surprising. We hear from people in all walks of life, the farmer, the business man, the pro-nuclear faction, everybody but the children. We as adults do have a responsibility.

Let us look at marriage for a moment. The positive side is that marriage and families will still remain strong. However, the negative side of marriage is that there were 50,000 divorces in 1974 five times the rate of 1964. Presently a quarter of the first marriages end in divorce and is heading for one in three.

Subsequently more than 631,000 children are in one parent situations. Children often are treated like property not much more than unclaimed luggage. It appears the legacy we are handing on to children is that their first marriage will fail.

Custody and rights are questions of concern in the terminated marriage and we have not moved very far in our study of the long run effects of custody and access arrangements on the children involved.

Dr. Barham pointed out, 50% of one parent families live in poverty, and even worse, 60% of single parent are led by women. The question must be asked what is the level of physical care, standard of nutrition, and mental health? Do these children have a reasonable chance to value themselves so they may have a positive attitude or are they hurt and resentful?

He continued to say the number of spaces in day care centres have fallen as well as the number of centres. When we consider those 630,000 children in single parent situations, 143,000 were pre-schoolers, yet only 16% of the three to five year olds whose mothers work were enrolled in day care and over 5% of the under three's.

Day care arrangements vary from splendid down the scale to where children are left unattended for hours. What are we offering the children? What standards of care, emotional and social stability, and intellectual stimulation? What "accounting" can we make for the responsibility we show for the thousands of utterly deprived pre-schoolers?

There has never been a time in western civilization when individuals, couples and families have been more anonymous or more dependent to help, provide guidance and support of their wider families or neighbors.

Grandparents don't live around the corner, as in the olden days, or if they do, chances are they are working.

Are they as readily available to give advice?

Young families are often very much alone, totally unprepared for the business of raising children, lacking in knowledge of parenting, and nutritional needs. There seems to be no one to lend a hand, and through the combination of weariness, callousness and ignorance they fail.

Physical and mental abuse has become so common that the law demands that such incidences be reported. Do we say as a community it is someone else's fault? The evidence before us show 10% of suicides were committed by the under 19's.

Dr. Barham didn't want to project doom and gloom, but challenged the delegates to evaluate the needs of the child, recognizing material needs are not enough.



Delegates stop to chat with Miss Molly McGhee Director of Home Economics Branch. l-r Mrs. Rosita Herrfort, North Mornington, Perth North District, Miss McGhee and Mrs. Venetia Moorhouse, Dunrobin, Carleton West District.

SPECIAL SPEAKER

David Roberts, research co-ordinator, in the Heritage Administration Branch, Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation suggested in his talk to the delegates at the Conference that a joint committee be established between the Heritage Branch and representatives of the Tweedsmuir History Curators.

The purpose of such a venture would be to strengthen guidelines and assist curators in keeping standards of research high.

Mr. Roberts lauded those faithful curators over the past three decades for gathering and recording the history in the local communities around Ontario.

It all began when Lady Tweedsmuir suggested that as a 50th anniversary project, FWIO urge branches to record historical events.

As a result of her encouragement, Ontario WI's have recorded history worthy of the name "Tweedsmuir". Many histories have been microfilmed by the provincial archives, in fact presently there are several hundred histories filmed on 68 reels. Microfilming is carried out on completed books only, arrangements still are to be made by Mrs. Fred Howe, FWIO's Provincial Curator. Curators should notify Mrs. Howe when books are ready for microfilming.

As the field expands, the WI becomes increasingly recognized and in many instances histories are published in book form. The increasing dilemma for WI's is the