

Outlook on Lifestyle

Day care needs not being met

By CHRISTINA JONAS

KITCHENER — A bright, young woman is one of the best commodities in today's marketplace, according to Doris Anderson.

The former editor of *Chatelaine* and past president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, told those attending a Confederation Club meeting here at the Valhalla yesterday that women fulfil many other needs of men besides companionship and sex.

Most wives contribute an income, plan the social activities and do the laundry, cooking and cleaning, Ms. Anderson said.

An intelligent woman is a great investment, even better than stocks and bonds, she added.

Only 14 per cent of working couples actually share household duties, Ms. Anderson told over 100 people present at the meeting, where she spoke on the future of the family.

"Home is still considered women's work," Ms. Anderson said. "A working wife with a family has less than 25 hours of leisure a week. A woman staying at home has 26 hours. A man has 50 hours a week. I think women deserve a better deal."

Although women have come a long way, there are still strides to be made. She said a recent statement made by Health Minister Jake Epp that children should be raised at home shows that a lack of understanding still exists.

"Fifty per cent of families today are two-income families," she said. "And 11 per cent are single-parent families. There is clearly a big need for day care which is not being met."

Ms. Anderson said only four per cent of children in Canada are in day care and yet six of every seven mothers work. This means that many children are entrusted to relatives or babysitters instead of qualified care.

Although most families need two incomes to survive, she said the common belief in North America is the family should do everything on its own, including taking care of the children.

"Why is it such a terrible thing to put children in day care," she said adding, "I consider it an enrichment. There is a crying need for good licensed day care. Not to have it hurts one of our most precious resources — our children."

Another concept that is outdated is the ideal marriage. Ms. Anderson said many people look at the Victorian era and consider it an "ideal"

time because the husband went to work, the wife stayed home and everyone was happy.

But were they happy, she asks, answering, "Who knows, no one asked them."

—Courtesy Cambridge Reporter

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