

*file
women*

Remarks of J. Brian Atwood

Women's Foreign Policy Group

Washington, D.C.

September 8, 1995

I am very honored by your invitation to speak to this group. As I reviewed your membership list, I saw many friends and colleagues, and many individuals who might have been more interesting luncheon speakers than me!

That led me to ask myself a question to which I have long struggled to find a satisfactory answer. Do women bring a different perspective to foreign policy issues?

For a long time, I have resisted that proposition. I can remember arguing the point with my friend Gerry Ferraro. She feels that women bring a very different perspective to most public policy issues and she makes a persuasive case. I can remember arguing that those women who have led governments, like men, do not fit any distinct pattern -- some were very tough indeed, others less so. I also said that I didn't feel that it served the interest of professional women or women in politics to accentuate gender differences with men. Gerry, of course, agreed that no society or no profession can realize its full potential if half the population cannot fully participate. That was sufficient common ground for me.

Now, the Beijing conference is reopening these issues as it calls attention to the status of women. We are being reminded on a daily basis that women are most often the victims of social, economic and legal discrimination and of foreign policy failures. Two-thirds of the refugees from civil conflict, for example, are women and their children. Yet, only six percent of the policy level positions in governments around the world are occupied by women.

Is there a connection between these two facts? Probably. If 50 percent of the population is represented in only six percent of the policy positions, then how can our decision-making be whole; how can we fully exploit the human ingenuity that will produce the creative solutions we need?

And maybe Gerry Ferraro is right. Maybe there is a gender-related perspective that is different. Goodness knows, we need a new perspective. As we struggle to find the new George Kennon -- the person or persons who will help us define Post-Cold War foreign policy -- we cannot afford to waste anyone's good mind, anyone's special perspective.

Let me offer mine. My perspective has changed over time -- to some extent because of where I sit and because of what I have done over the past decade. Most importantly, I have come to see diplomacy as only one element of foreign policy. I have come to see that it is possible to penetrate within a foreign society far beyond the governmental level to advance interests that are common to the peoples of both sides in any bilateral relationship. I have also been directly exposed to the extraordinary costs -- in human and monetary terms -- of the international community's failures. More on that later.

The first point I would make is an obvious one: that traditional power-block diplomacy is less relevant today. Now, for those disciples of Henry Kissinger, I want to emphasize: that is not the same as saying that power is irrelevant. We are the remaining superpower because we can project military might, influence foreign markets and force the world to address its inequities -- whether the world likes it or not.

Witness Hillary Clinton in China. She was one of many who were speaking truths in Beijing. She was doing it forcefully, eloquently, and she was also the First Lady of the United States. When she speaks, people listen.

Like many things we do today, Hillary Clinton was not practicing traditional diplomacy in Beijing. She was inspiring millions of people to contemplate their position in society and to take action to improve it. She was forging a new and stronger international consensus on the status of women. She was creating new alliances, non-governmental alliances. But she was not conducting traditional diplomacy. And perhaps because of that, her effect was all the more dramatic.

Let me make a point that is less arguable today than it might have been last week: Mrs. Clinton did more for the cause of human rights in China by going to Beijing than she would have by staying home. That is also, by the way, an argument for engagement. When in doubt, engage!

Back in the 70's, what de Tocqueville saw as our uniquely pluralistic society -- a society he said was probably incapable of conducting a viable foreign policy -- produced yet another innovative approach to international relations. Some called it a new brand of interventionism. Driven by political and moral forces, our government began to express concern about individuals who were being tortured and abused in foreign prisons. Human rights became a part of global diplomatic discourse. And we not only saved human beings, we strengthened the international legal regime and indirectly spawned a new expansion of democracy. Mrs. Clinton's public diplomacy on behalf of women has raised that particular brand of interventionism to a new art.

So it is possible to introduce new initiatives, new approaches -- and to gain public support for them. Yet we seem stuck today as we contemplate our challenges and assess our needs. We are coming to understand the threats to our interests, yet we cannot generate the political support necessary to raise the resources we need. And we seem afraid to venture too far from the comfortable mind-set and institutional structures of the Cold War. Thus, we speak of preventive diplomacy while we drown in crises.

And we are paying through the nose for these crises, yet we can't find the money to pay for prevention. We spend endless hours negotiating for peace with intractable opponents, but little time negotiating the new structures to prevent conflict.

This is where perspective comes into play. We need a new one. We need to break out of our old think; we need to broaden our definition of national security. We need to be shamelessly creative.

How should we respond? Maybe we should argue it differently. Let's talk about how much it costs to not act against threats, to fail to seize opportunities, or to act too late, after the fact. Is this cheaper?

The costs of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia are staggering. From 1991 through 1995, the total USG assistance package was nearly \$1 billion. The UN sanctions are estimated to have cost the region well over \$20 billion. The human costs are unparalleled in the past 40 years in Europe.

But the costs of failure in the developing world far exceed this.

The so-called complex crisis in Mozambique ran for more than a decade and cost \$5.9 billion in relief aid. Mozambique's own economic losses were an estimated \$15 billion.

The complex crisis in Sudan has cost half a million lives. Sudan has squandered a billion dollars on arms. Relief for a quarter of a million refugees costs the industrial states hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

In Peru, the Shining Path guerrillas inflicted \$22 billion in direct damage on the economy. In Rwanda, in the past 18 months, the world community spent nearly \$2 billion to help the refugees; the tab for the U.S. over \$500,000,000. Peacekeeping costs alone in 1994 exceeded everything that the UN had spent on peacekeeping for the preceding 35 years!

And the costs don't end when the conflict ends. Long after the refugees return to their homes, there are reconstruction costs. Mogadishu, Somalia, no longer has an electrical grid; the copper wire was stripped and sold. Resettlement costs. The cost of reintegrating combatants. In El Salvador, that will exceed \$300,000,000. The cost of removing land mines, which in a place like Cambodia, for instance, may ultimately require \$7 billion.

Now tell me that we can afford -- afford, as in pay for -- to let nations fail. Tell me that doing nothing saves money. Tell me that we cannot afford a program that provides education or health care or creates housing or turns farmers into exporters, but that we can afford to lay out billions each year to accommodate the latest wave of refugees.

Although there is no question that we must allocate resources to prevention, we cannot think of the cost only in dollar terms, nor within the old Cold War budget framework. Prevention will save us money, but we must have the political will to fund it and to spend time engaging in it even when we know that conflict garners more media attention.

For two years, I have been saying that foreign assistance is a strategic response to a strategic threat, no less relevant in its time than ICBMs or bombers. The armaments of the Cold War are useless against many of the threats we face now. Though our traditional defense remains the core of our credibility and our own national security, no military can fight poverty or hunger or environmental damage on a global scale.

We are slowly coming to realize that these conditions contribute to civil strife. You will be pleased to know that the military has become the institution most sensitive to this. They know they can contain one civil conflict, maybe two, but not dozens. And they do not want to become the President's first option.

Our national security community is fast gearing up to adjust our responses to meet the new realities. For example, a recent CIA study correlates societal stability with the extent of human development, the level and relative fragility of democratic systems and a nation's openness to trade. The CIA Task Force on Failed States has identified the very problems that foreign aid addresses as key determinants of stability.

The Defense Intelligence Agency recently identified the ecological deterioration of Lake Victoria as one of the greatest underlying non-traditional causes of instability in East Africa, a region where ethnic conflict, structural food insecurity and rapid population growth have already brought widespread chaos. Thirty million people are

at risk of having their livelihoods and their well-being compromised by a fast growing water hyacinth plant inadvertently imported from Latin America. That is of concern to the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1995, because in the next few years our military forces may be called upon to deal with the consequences.

This concern has also been manifested in strong public statements supporting foreign aid from the likes of Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They recently wrote a USA Today article which concluded with the following line: "Foreign aid, like defense spending, helps preserve our national security."

It is somewhat ironic. Generals Shalikashvili and Scowcroft and Defense Secretary Perry are advocating foreign aid as an important part of our national security apparatus. The intelligence community is pointing to development as a key element of crisis prevention. Yet, Congress is slashing foreign aid while spending precious tax dollars on B-2 bombers and STARWARS -- programs the military hasn't asked for.

These intelligence community assessments and more like them reflect a growing understanding throughout our U.S. government that U.S. leadership in the development field is a crucial part of our arsenal in the post-Cold War world. We know that in 20 years, when there are two billion additional people, the challenges will be far less manageable. No one wants our military to be the first and only option in an endless stream of engagements. We need a preventive strategy that we can afford and one that works.

We also need new structures and mechanisms to carry out preventive diplomacy effectively. We need more effective early warning systems that incorporate an assessment of the pressures created by deteriorating conditions. We need to act in concert with the international community to mitigate those conditions. And we need to find ways to intervene more effectively to resolve internal disputes within sovereign borders.

There is a growing appreciation that foreign assistance that produces results, like the defense we maintained during the Cold War, is a strategic deterrent. Democracies reinforce each other; free markets reward each other. Just as crisis can feed upon crisis, so can success spur success. Progress discourages adventurism. Opportunity cuts the ground out from those extremists who would disrupt and create conflict.

I do not believe that humanity is doomed to self-destruct. While we cannot

prevent every Rwanda, we can work for a world in which people have a way to avoid hopelessness, a world where people do not see violence as their last resort.

Fortunately, despite the realities of today's Washington, we still have an opportunity to realize the peace dividend afforded us by the end of the Cold War. We have accumulated valuable experience and we have new tools for crisis prevention that did not exist even a decade ago. Today's opportunities, combined with all those flaws of pluralism that de Tocqueville saw, are the strengths with which we can face the challenges of the 21st century. We cannot afford to squander them.

So we need a new perspective. We need to accept the proposition that being tough-minded can also lead us to conclude that military weapons alone are not sufficient. We need to welcome newcomers into a debate that has been closed and stultified. After all, one of them may be the next George Kennon. Thank you.

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freddie faber
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Women*

Possible item that FLOTUS could cite in addressing representatives of women's groups (provided by National Women's Council of Ireland):

In a very short time, the roles and images of women in Ireland have changed -- as they have elsewhere. The change has been weaved by strands of influence from many sources, but we should remember that its pace and direction have been driven by the work of individual women. As in the United States, the insight and energy of hundreds of women has been critical to the formation of a more caring and open society. In Ireland the names of many individual women have become synonymous with certain issues and they have been vital forces for change.

In so many of our societies, respected and respectable facades have hidden levels of violence and abuse against women and children. In the very places which society puts the most trust -- in marriage and family, in agencies caring for children, in the church -- the trust was being broken but the victims had nowhere to turn, nowhere to voice their fears and experiences.

Today in Ireland, after decades of silence, violence against women is in the public arena. Much of the credit for this change lies with Roisin (pronounced "ROE-SHEEN") McDermott, the long standing Chairwoman of Women's Aid and the hundreds of women who have worked with her over the years. The superb research report published in November by Women's Aid provides even more and compelling evidence of the depth of the problem of violence experiences by women, and offers a blueprint for comprehensive action.

Roisin's achievements have been against all odds. A decade ago, she would not have believed that society would have been capable of opening up this quickly on such a sensitive subject. And yet this same Roisin has spent her last several Sundays in church delivering the sermon on the issue of violence against women, HAVING BEEN ASKED TO DO SO BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH -- one of the first times a woman has been invited to play this role. It is fitting, then, to know that Roisin has been honored with a People of the Year Award.

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There are many Irish women like Roisin McDermott whose determination to provide individual women with practical support has been carefully allied with a strategic approach to changing attitudes and policy. Their work is ensuring that new generations of Irish women can expect equality of rights and opportunity which could not have been dreamed of by our mothers or grandmothers.

THE IRISH TIMES, Monday, November 6, 1995

NI women to seek equal political status, conference told

By Mary Cummins,
Women's Affairs
Correspondent

This message will undoubtedly be clear to the male politicians and other men who, it would appear, dominate the political, social and economic life of Northern Ireland.

The ceasefire will hold, and women will now be challenging them for their fair share in decision-making, politics and other

structures.

These were some of the purposeful themes emerging from a women's conference in Belfast at the weekend. Entitled "Women Shaping the Future", it was the first local women's conference in Northern Ireland dealing with

coalface issues, drawing together political parties, women's groups and women achievers. It was co-ordinated by Ms Iris Colvin and supported by Baroness Jean Denton, the Northern Ireland Minister for the Economy.

There was a sense of barely

suppressed anger among speakers and delegates. This was most obvious among those representing the Ulster Unionist Party, the SDLP and the Alliance Party. Sinn Féin and the DUP were not among the list of speakers. Ms Colvin said that they and other

unionist parties had been invited to attend but did not turn up.

Over 300 attended, including about 40 women from the Republic — some 30 of these represented women's groups from Cork — and members of the 300 Group at Westminster.

The conference was also addressed by the Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs, Ms Joan Burton, Ms Maureen Gaffney, psychologist and chairwoman of the National Economic and Social Forum, gave a summary of the contributions.

Ms May Blood, of the Shankill Partnership, said: "The peace is going to hold, the peace is going to remain. The women of Northern Ireland will make sure of that."

Sessions were chaired by Ms Kate Kelly (Women's Information Group), Ms Sheila Davidson (Davidson Cockcroft Partnership, and Ms Jane Wilde (public health consultant).

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Malet Street
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5 December 1995

Ms Melanne Verveer
Deputy Chief of Staff to Mrs Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington DC 20500
USA

Dear Melanne,

It was really nice to see you again last week. I only wish we had had more time to chat.

I thought the meeting went very well inspite of the nasty piece Polly Toynbee wrote in the Independent. The lesson to learn perhaps is that you can never trust journalists and it is best not to invite them to events of this sort. That seems to go for the so-called responsible broadsheets as well as the tabloid papers! Anyway, I thought you might like to see the letter Liz Symons and I sent, which was printed in the Independent the next day. A number of people have said that they were shocked by Polly Toynbee's article and were glad that we wrote to try to put the record straight.

The President's trip seems to have been a great success, especially in Ireland, north and south. I enjoyed his speech to both Houses of Parliament, although I would have preferred an exchange programme for inner city kids rather than the naming of a missile cruiser 'Winston Churchill'. But there's no accounting for tastes!

With best wishes,

Yours,

Terr

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(5)

30 November 1995

The Editor
The Independent
40 City Road
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Sir

We wonder whether Polly Toynbee - "Polly Toynbee meets Hillary Clinton" - was at the same meeting we attended at the American Embassy on Wednesday.

Her report was a serious misrepresentation of an interesting and stimulating discussion. What Ms Toynbee describes as "buzz words" are real issues to many women as those on zero-hours contracts and pitiful pay for part-timers know all too well. A wide variety of views was expressed, put with both determination and humour. It was a conversation in which Mrs Clinton freely participated, demonstrating a reflective intelligence and considerable knowledge of the issues.

Had Polly Toynbee listened to the conversation, instead of trying to dictate it through her own agenda of questions to Mrs Clinton, she might have had a clearer understanding of what was going on.

Journalists who attend meetings of this kind, and then do a hatchet job on their host are the cause of the 'anodyne views' and 'carefully manicured' words that Polly Toynbee deplores.

Yours faithfully

TESSA BLACKSTONE
Master Birbeck College

ELIZABETH SYMONS
General Secretary FDA

December 13, 1996

TO: HRC

FROM: Theresa Loar 

SUBJECT: More on the Interagency Council

I'd like to propose a new, strengthened structure for the Council based on conversations Melanne and I have had over the past few days.

- o Bring on Madeleine Albright to serve as co-chair with Donna Shalala, and continue your role as honorary chair. Madeleine offers an international presence, Donna brings authority on domestic policy, and you would signal substantive White House involvement.
- o Madeleine's involvement would generate enormous excitement among the women in the NGO community who support and follow the work of the Council. Most of them have an international focus and a Beijing frame of reference. They would see the leadership of Madeleine, our new Secretary of State and former chair of the US delegation to Beijing, as an elevation of the Council and a strong signal that the Administration is continuing its commitment to the Beijing agenda.
- o Your leadership and active involvement is highly valued and indispensable. Outside and inside the beltway, you give us high visibility, star power and a serious White House presence.
- o One option, budget permitting, would be to continue to house the Council office at the White House and take advantage of the prestige a White House office offers. A second option is to move it over to the State Department, further signaling Madeleine's involvement. It would be staffed by detailees from Council agencies and funded by State. An interagency council cannot be owned by the White House and can be funded by only one government agency. Since IHS funded the first year, State would be the logical choice to fund the second year.

o The mandate for the Council would be to build on what we have done in the first year to institutionalize the advancement of women across the federal government. Over the course of the past year, each agency put together a task force to develop new initiatives for women, using the Platform for Action as a guide. While it is likely that many Council members will move on to other jobs, the mechanisms, which took so long to get going in some agencies, are already in place.

o This policy development would be done in partnership with the NGO community, so outreach would continue to be an essential part of the Council's work.

o The Council's agenda should continue to be both domestic and international. If we limit it to domestic policy, we lose the powerful Beijing connection that was the springboard for all the good work we have done and all the good will we have generated.

I think we have an opportunity to keep a high level focus on policy development for women across the USG. The powerful team of you, Madeleine and Donna would be a huge hit with American women and, importantly, highly effective.

The Interagency Council on Women

- o In a January 17, 1996 memo (attached), State Department office of the Legal Advisor determined that ensuring implementation of the Platform for Action, the document that came out of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, is a valid foreign policy goal.
- o Moreover, L determined that there is a precedent for the Department to provide significant staff resources for implementation of the arrangements agreed at such international conferences. (details on precedent attached)
- o In preparing for US participation in the FWCW, the State Department was necessarily involved with US domestic policy, coordinating with government agencies and consulting with American citizens as individuals and in groups. State took the lead in obtaining commitments from government agencies for actions they would take as the first steps to implement the conference document. These commitments were required by all countries who participated in the FWCW.
- o More than coordination with other government agencies is involved in following through on the commitments the US announced at the Conference. It takes strong leadership and push to get agencies focused on implementation. It takes expertise in the issues and an understanding of what the Conference document means and how it can be translated into action.
- o The State Department's leadership role in preparation for and follow-up to Beijing is an example of the America Desk in action. There is great interest in how the US follows through on its commitment to the Beijing agenda, most of it coming from American NGOs with an international focus.
- o The Platform for Action adopted in Beijing is a non-legally binding international document. However, the US joined consensus and expressed its intention to implement the document and follow-up on the Conference.
- o As the United Nations continues to review and assess the progress made since the Beijing conference, the State Department has the responsibility to report to the United Nations, through the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

Precedent for State Department Follow Up to International Conferences

- o In 1975, the State Department housed the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year and an Interagency Task force to prepare for and implement plans for IWY.
- o The 35 member National Commission, with Jill Ruckelhaus as presiding officer, worked to prepare recommendations aimed at eliminating barriers facing American women. In doing so, the Commission was in contact with government agencies, advisory committees and NGOs. The Commission had a secretariat staff of 34.
- o The Commission focused primarily on American women and their concerns. Its budget came out of the State Department appropriations.
- o The Interagency Task Force included two representatives of each government agency. Robert Ingersoll, Deputy Secretary of State, was the presiding officer.
- o In June 1976, the Commission, in a State Department publication, released a 328 page report: "To Form a More Perfect Union - Justice for American Women." This 328 page document included more than 200 recommendations for federal, state and local governments to carry out.
- o In 1975, Congress passed a law directing the IWY Commission to organize and convene a National Women's Conference and authorized \$5 million for that purpose.
- o In 1976 and 1977, the Commission, still housed at the State Department, organized conferences in 50 states and territories where issues affecting the lives of women were discussed and delegates to the National Women's Conference were elected.
- o The Conference was held in Houston in 1977 and a National Plan of Action was adopted with 26 substantive planks each involving domestic issues and policies with the exception of one on international affairs.
- o The IWY Commission continued to operate out of the State Department until its legislative mandate expired on March 31, 1978.

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 17, 1996

MEMORANDUM

TO: M/WHL - Ms. Cousin
FROM: L/LM - Mary Beth West *MBW*
SUBJECT: Interagency Women's Council

This responds to your request for our views on whether five State Department persons may be provided to work with the Interagency Women's Council. I regret that transmittal of this memorandum (originally drafted in November 1995) has been delayed by the combined lapse in appropriations and blizzard.

Facts

We understand that the Interagency Women's Council will coordinate implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at Beijing, including the U.S. commitments announced at the Conference. The Council will also develop related initiatives to further women's progress and engage in outreach and public education to support the successful implementation of the Conference agreements. The Council will be located in offices in the New Executive Office Building (NEOB). It will be Chaired by Donna Shalala, whose agency, Health and Human Services (HHS), will provide funding, professional staff support and administrative support. The First Lady will serve as Honorary Chair.

In addition to Secretary Shalala's involvement, HHS will make available several high-level professionals to support the work of the Council. As the Council over time increasingly turns its focus to domestic implementation, we understand that HHS will add people to the team, including a contract employee who will coordinate speaking and other public events. Other agencies, such as Justice and Labor, are also designating personnel to work with the council as "agency representatives."

The Department has been asked to make available five Department of State persons to work with the Council as "agency representatives," performing State Department work at the Council headquarters in the NEOB. Two of these persons (Kathleen Hendrix and Theresa Loar) will work on follow-up basically full-time for fiscal year 1996; two (Marjorie Margolies Mezvinsky and Lycia Sibilla) were asked to work only from October 1, 1995 to December 31, 1995; and one (Jeffrey Meer) was requested to work full-time from October 1, 1995 to

December 31, 1995 and part-time thereafter. In addition, a sixth person, Gracia Hillman, is scheduled to work on implementation of international issues here in the Department, and to attend meetings of the Council, as appropriate.

We understand that the Women's Council will coordinate activities implementing the Beijing Conference in five major categories:

- (1) Working women -- the Department of Labor will be the lead agency on job security, work and family responsibilities, and valuing of women's work;
- (2) Domestic violence -- Justice will be the lead agency with regard to programs to increase awareness and address the problem of domestic violence;
- (3) Women and microenterprise -- the Treasury Department will announce an initiative and USAID will continue an existing program;
- (4) Health -- the Department of Health and Human Services will take action on a range of problems of concern to women through the life cycle;
- (5) International development -- AID is planning for two mutually-reinforcing initiatives concerning women's political participation and legal rights.

The work of the Interagency Council will include a program of public speaking designed for these purposes. In addition to implementation of programs in each of these categories, the United States has committed, as part of the Beijing Platform documents, to inform and educate the American public concerning the Conference. The Department has also been deluged with requests for persons to speak about the Conference.

Legal Issues

Two legal issues are raised by this request. The first is whether State Department employees may perform the requested functions for the Council under applicable principles of federal appropriations law. The second is whether participation of State personnel in the Interagency Council's proposed program of public outreach is consistent with restrictions on "publicity and propaganda" and the Department's political activities restrictions.

Federal Appropriations Law Issues. The Department has been asked to have the six Departmental employees perform State Department work for the Council as "agency representatives."

Under principles of federal appropriations law, agencies may spend appropriated funds only for the purposes for which those funds have been appropriated, 31 U.S.C. § 1301(a). Federal appropriations law also prevents augmentation of agency appropriations unless authorized by law, II Principles of Federal Appropriations Law 6-103. While the GAO has held that, absent statutory authority, nonreimbursable interagency details generally are improper as a violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act for the sending agency and an augmentation of appropriations for the receiving agency, see Letter to Mr. Rensbarger, Inspector General, Library of Congress, B-247348 (June 22, 1992), it has held that employees of one agency may work at another consistent with federal appropriations principles in limited circumstances. One of these is where the work performed by the employees involves matters similar or related to matters ordinarily handled by the loaning agency and where the work will aid the loaning agency in accomplishing a purpose for which its appropriations are provided, see 64 Comp. Gen. 370, 380.

→ To ensure that the proposed arrangement is consistent with applicable appropriations law, the work handled by the State employees on the Interagency Women's Council must be work that would ordinarily be done by the Department, i.e., work that will aid the Department in accomplishing a purpose for which its appropriations are provided. As the above description indicates, the Council is designed to coordinate the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at Beijing. Some of the specific items on this agenda are international in scope; others are essentially domestic and will be handled by other agencies charged with domestic programs (e.g., Labor, HHS). However, ensuring implementation of the Platform for Action is a valid foreign policy goal. Although the Platform is not a legally binding document, the United States Government joined consensus and expressed its intention to implement the document and follow-up on the Conference. As the United Nations, through the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly, continue to review and assess the progress made since the Beijing Conference, the Department of State will have the responsibility of reporting to the UN on progress in the United States.

→ Moreover, there is precedent for the Department to provide significant staff resources for implementation of the arrangements agreed at such international conferences. After the 1975 World Conference on Women, President Ford appointed a National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year and set up an Interagency Task force, with two representatives of each agency, to prepare for and implement the plans. The Department designated the presiding officer of the Task Force and the Commission functioned under its

grass roots lobbying efforts, where an attempt is made to induce members of the public to communicate with their representatives in Congress to persuade them either to support or oppose pending legislation. While we doubt that lobbying issues will arise, State personnel should be aware of these restrictions and should consult with L if questions arise.

Finally, State Department personnel are also subject to Department guidance and to the Hatch Act's restrictions on political activity, see, e.g., Department Notice, October 31, 1994. Under those restrictions, for example, employees may not engage in political activity while on duty. These restrictions also include knowing solicitation, acceptance or receipt of political contributions, including by allowing the employee's name to be listed on a fundraising invitation as a point of contact for the fundraiser or as part of a host committee for a fundraiser. When authorized, however, employees may debate or defend current Administration foreign policy in appropriate fora. Employees also may provide foreign policy briefings to candidates and political groups on a non-partisan basis. To ensure that questions are not raised under the political activity guidelines, public outreach activities should not be undertaken at political events, except as specifically authorized by PA and L.

Drafted: L/LM:MBWest
 SELM 5223 11/95
Cleared: L:ETHICS:CKrass
 WHCounsel:SNeuwirth
 L:JThessin

by MBW



The President's Interagency Council on Women

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

S/S

May 12, 1997

UNCLASSIFIED

TO: The Secretary

FROM: S/PICW - Theresa Loaf *TR*

SUBJECT: Your Meeting with the President's Interagency Council on Women
Wednesday, May 14 1:30 - 3:00
The Jefferson Room

I. OBJECTIVES

1. Signal that the Council is up and running under your leadership.
2. Encourage new and returning agency representatives to the Council to move ahead on implementation of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women.
3. Acknowledge the important role honorary chair, the First Lady, and immediate past chair, Secretary Shalala, have played in the Council's work to date.

II. APPROACH

Some thirteen new representatives have joined twenty five returning representatives to the President's Council. Two agencies have representation for the first time, bringing membership up to forty. The Council reflects a range of seniority across the federal government from Undersecretaries to Deputy Assistant Secretaries. Two Deputy Secretaries will join after they are confirmed in their new positions. A number of the representatives served with you on the U.S. delegation to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Beijing connection is important to emphasize since the Council's mandate is to implement the Women's Conference document.

The First Lady will mention the President's support for the Council, American NGO interest in the Council's work and observations from her travels around the world on the mobilizing effect of the Beijing conference.

02/16/15 MON 21:06 FAX

Council representatives have worked for the last several months to submit reports to the Council coordinating team on their agencies' programs and policies vis-à-vis the Beijing document. This government report, "America's Commitment: Federal Programs Benefiting Women and New Initiatives to Follow up on the UN Fourth World Conference on Women," will be distributed in "final draft" to agency representatives. Secretary Shalala will present the report.

We have arranged for a diverse group of Council representatives to be prepared to speak about their work. In some cases, they have agreed to head up Council working groups to encourage other agencies to replicate their programs. In addition to continuing successful efforts within agencies, working across agency lines is the next direction for the Council. The Council's real work is what representatives do when they return to their agencies and join with other representatives on common projects. The Council coordinating team will encourage this work by making house calls on working groups and agency reps.

III. PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

Clara Bingham of Harper's Bizarre will sit in for part of the meeting. She will be interviewing you later in the day.

IV. PARTICIPANTS

Council representatives and alternates. See attached list of Council representatives. List of alternates is still being finalized.

Attachments:

- Checklist of key issues
- Supplemental Talking Points (to be refined by Bill Woodward)
- List of Council representatives
- Scenario for the event

Unclassified

1. Mandate of the Council
2. First Lady's Role
3. Secretary Shalala's Role
4. Council Next Steps

Checklist of Key Issues

Meeting with

President's Interagency Council on Women

1. **Mandate of the Council**

- o Emphasize that the President established the Council to implement the Beijing document.

2. **First Lady's Role**

- o Acknowledge that the First Lady's commitment has been key for the continued success of the Council.

3. **Secretary Shalala's Role**

- o Invite Secretary Shalala to discuss Council activities to date, including the government report on implementation.

4. **Council Next Steps**

- o Networking (call on Judith Heuman from Education for example)
- o Gender desegregated data collection (call on Jill Long Thompson from Agriculture for example)
- o Gender impact analysis (call on Sally Shelton from AID for example)
- o NGO outreach (call on Judith Winston from Education for example)
- o Mentoring programs coordination
- o Council coordinating team will be in touch on working groups

Unclassified

DRAFT Supplemental Talking Points
Secretary's Meeting with the President's Interagency Council on Women.

Welcome

Secretary Albright

o Review the mandate of the Council - established by the President just prior to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women to make sure that "all the effort and good ideas actually get implemented when we get back home." The Council is charged with coordinating the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at the UN Women's Conference. The Council also develops related initiatives to further women's progress and engages in outreach to and public education to support the successful implementation of the UN Conference agreements.

o In March of this year, the President asked me to chair the Council, following the strong start under Secretary Shalala's leadership.

o It's a good fit to have the State Department serve as chair because the Council's mandate is Beijing implementation, a continuation of the coordinating role State has played since preparations for Beijing began.

o Our goal on the Council is to institutionalize change and leave footprints. The Council has served as a network of high level women and men across the US working on a common agenda. There is great value in this - i.e. the State Department has referred numerous international visitors working to combat violence against women in their countries to Bonnie Campbell from the Department of Justice.

o The First Lady and her staff have played an important role in supporting this Council, making sure that the Administration's commitment to American women and their families implied in the First Lady's extraordinary speech in Beijing was met and carried through.

Remarks on the Council

The First Lady

o Welcome to the new members of the Council (13) and kudos to the returning representatives who did so much work in their agencies to turn the President's words into action.

o On March 8 when the President met with the Council in the Oval Office he praised its work of the Council and affirmed his continued support for its mission - to work to improve the lives of women and their families - in the US and around the world.

Unclassified

DRAFT Supplemental talking points

-2-

- o acknowledgment of strong NGO interest in and support for the Council. NGOs see the Council as the Administration's way of keeping faith with them on the promises we made in Beijing.
- o working in partnership with NGOs is a successful model. The one year after Beijing national conference the Council did last September was a good example of this. We were able to connect to tens of thousands of Americans all across the US who were trying to bring Beijing home to their communities. This was anything but a top/down effort. We continue to hear from people who went to their local conferences. They want to keep this partnership going with their government, with the Council.
- o comments on Secretary Shalala's leadership that got the Council going
- o how she herself uses the Council network. After her meeting with the First Lady of El Salvador, she convinced her to stay an extra day to go see Bonnie Campbell at Justice for some ideas on how to replicate Bonnie's programs in El Salvador.

First Lady departs.

Highlight of Council Activities

Secretary Shalala

- o highlights of USG report which will be distributed to the Council
- o the report shows that the Council works because of strong agency reps and their dedication and energy
- o mention of working groups within agencies and how effective that has been

Future Plans for the Council

Secretary Albright

- o I mentioned earlier that this Council is an effective network of people working on the same agenda. There is no better example of this network in action than what Judith Heumann from the Department of Education has done to put together an international leadership conference for disabled women. (Judith will talk about getting funding for the conference from 22 agencies, with the help of Council reps. The conference came out of the contacts made among disabled women in Beijing. Secretary Albright spoke to a gathering of disabled women in Beijing. She will speak at the upcoming conference here in the US.)

Unclassified

DRAFT Supplemental Talking Points

-3-

o We should be looking ahead to government-wide projects such as gender desegregated data collection agency-by-agency. This means whatever info you collect, do it by gender. We all already do this, but not uniformly or consistently. This sounds simple and makes good common sense, but we can't just issue a fiat. There are fiscal implications, drawbacks, and complications. But its worth exploring to see what recommendations we can develop on this. USDA has started doing this. Let's hear what a difference this has made in policy development. (USDA rep, Undersecretary Jill Long Thompson, former member of Congress, will brief on this and talk about her plans for a government-wide working group on rural women.)

o We all know that we are long past women's issues and women's programs as the solution. Just as the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing turned out to not a conference on women's issues but a women's conference on global issues, so it is no longer enough to have a women's program or a women's council. Even this one.

o This Council exists to make sure that women, and their concerns, are integrated into the entire operation of the government. And one way to do that is to assess all policies and programs for their potential gender impact. Will they affect men and women differently? Are they leaving someone out?

o Sally Shelton came back from Beijing and developed a Gender Plan of Action for AID. This is an area we should all be looking at for long term impact. Sally, tell us how that has worked.

o Sally, it would make good sense for you to chair a Council working group to see how we can replicate your model in other agencies. (Sally is happy to do this.)

o As the First Lady said, the Council has a good record of NGO outreach and we need to keep that going. The Department of Education has good ongoing outreach efforts. Judith Winston can share those with us. (Judith, Undersecretary and new Council member, will talk about roundtables with NGOs, town meetings via satellite, etc.) Some of you may want to get together with Judith and Sandy Battle at Education to see how they got this outreach program started.

o We should let Americans know the Council is their entry point into the USG on Beijing follow up and policies that affect women and their families.

Unclassified
DRAFT Supplemental Talking Points

-4-

o Among the clearest voices at the Women's Conference in Beijing were those of young women. One of the encouraging things about so many of the "Beyond Beijing" events that continue to take place around the country is the number of young women they draw. These young women are living in a world much more complicated and overwhelming than the one we grew up in.

o Young women have been telling us loud and clear that they are looking for guidance, for mentoring. Some of your agencies have mentoring programs in place and I think we can put together a working group to see what we as a Council can do to expand and coordinate these programs.

o The Council coordinating group here at the State Department, Theresa Loar, Kathy Hendrix, and Lycia (Leesha) Sibilla, will be in touch with you regarding these various working groups, government-wide projects, and outreach activities.

o The President and the NGO community have high expectations for the Council. We will build on the strong base built by the First Lady, Secretary Shalala and the Council representatives.

o We invite you to stop in to the new suite of Council offices downstairs on your way out of the building.



The President's Interagency Council on Women

May 14, 1997

The First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Honorary Chair

Secretary of State, Madeleine K. Albright, Chair

*Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala,
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UNCLASSIFIED

Scenario for the Meeting of the President's Interagency Council on Women

- 1:15 Agency representatives and alternates arrive at C Street for check-in.
- 1:15-1:30 In the Jefferson Room, Agency representatives gather. Coffee/tea service and soft drinks are available.
- Table is set up in shape of a horseshoe. Agency representatives sit on the inside and outside of the table; alternates sit on chairs away from the table. Information packets are at all places.
- 1:40 Agency representatives and alternates take their place in the Jefferson Room.
- Secretary Albright, the First Lady, and Secretary Shalala enter the Jefferson Room from the hold room and take their seats at the head of the table.
- The meeting begins.
- 1:45 Secretary Albright welcomes the Council, makes introductory remarks, and invites the First Lady to speak
- 2:00 The First Lady makes remarks
- 2:15 Secretary Albright escorts the First Lady from the Jefferson Room
- 2:20 Secretary Albright resumes the meeting and invites Secretary Shalala to speak
- 2:25 Secretary Shalala makes remarks
- 2:35 Secretary Albright discusses next steps for the Council, calling upon agency representatives
- 2:50 Secretary Albright wraps up meeting, invited agency representatives to drop by Council offices as they leave the building
- 3:00 Meeting ends. Secretary Albright, Secretary Shalala and agency representatives depart.

WOMEN
AND WORK
A survey after page 64

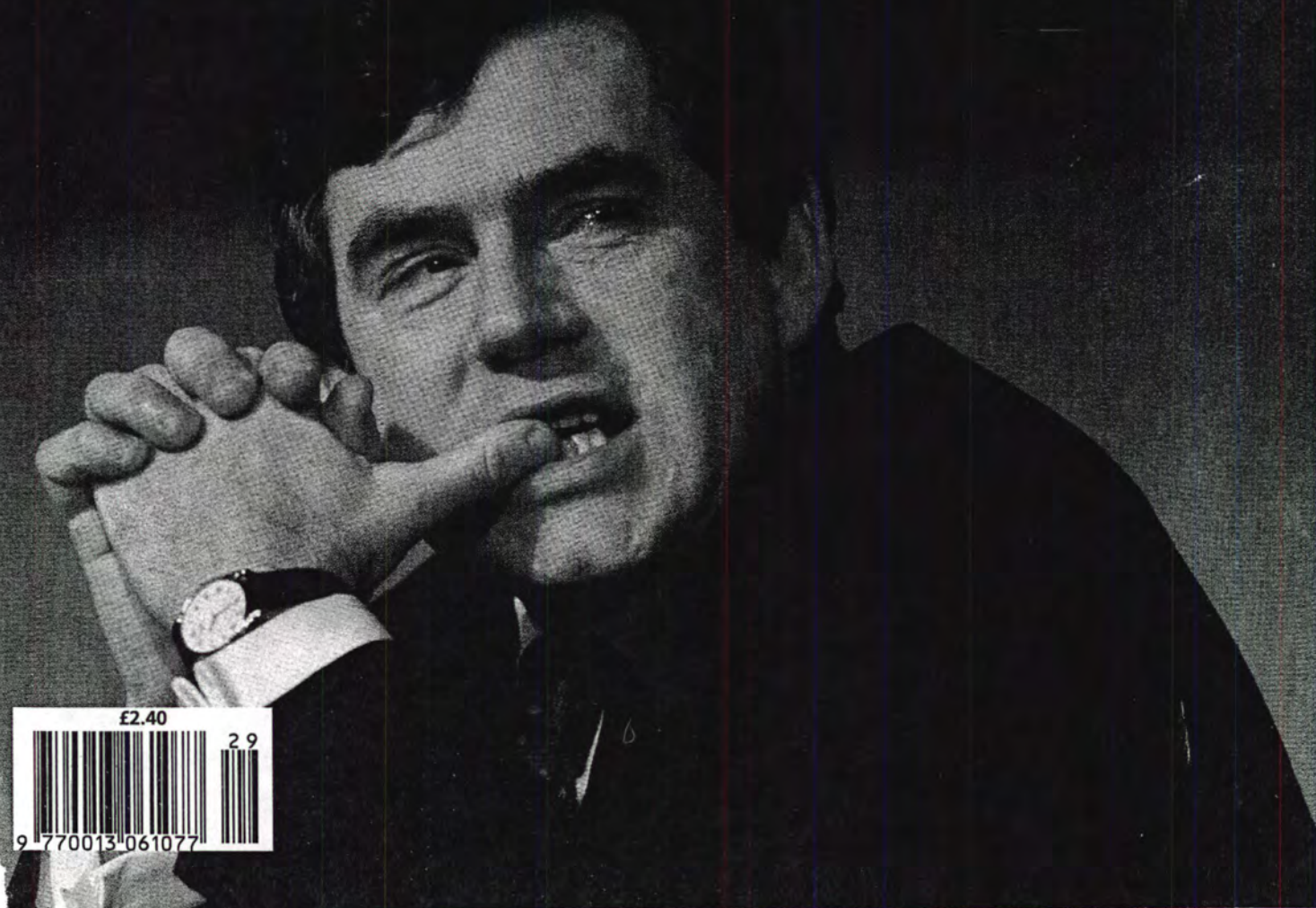
The Economist

JULY 18TH - 24TH 1998

ULSTER'S
FADING ORANGE
page 25

JAPAN AND
WORLD MARKETS
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The iron Santa Claus



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WOMEN AND WORK



For better, for worse

“**H**OW much more respectable is the woman who earns her own bread by fulfilling any duty than the most accomplished beauty?” When an early British feminist, Mary Wollstonecraft, published her treatise “A Vindication of the Rights of Woman” in 1792, her views on working women, as on everything else, were somewhat ahead of their time. They might still have raised eyebrows after the second world war. But the past few decades have brought a dramatic change. Women started first to trickle, then to flood into the labour market, pushing up their share of the workforce so that in some countries they now make up nearly half the total (see chart 1, next page). In the rich world, paid jobs for women have become the new norm. The developing countries are moving in the same direction, but they are further behind, so this survey will concentrate on the OECD countries.

You might ask why it is that women decided to go after jobs in ever greater numbers. You might equally ask why not. The idea of the nuclear family, with the breadwinner father out at work and the housekeeper and childminder mother at home, is neither as old nor as obvious as it seems. In predominantly agricultural societies, both father and mother worked on the land. Children saw plenty of both of them, and were expected to start helping out at a tender age. With the industrial revolution, formal work largely moved away from home, but both parents commonly had jobs to make ends meet; the children managed as best they could, and again soon had to start earning their keep. It takes a fairly sophisticated society with a comfortable middle

class, and a belief in an extended period of education for the young, to devise the “traditional” family model that enjoyed such a vogue in developed countries in the late 1940s to early 1960s.

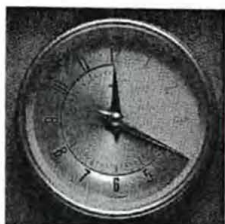
That traditional model ran out of steam for a number of reasons. Single women, either up until marriage or up until the birth of the first child, have always worked; the novelty is that in the past few decades growing numbers of married women have been taking paid jobs too. One thing that has helped to make this possible is readily available contraception. Children arrive ever later in their mother's life, and in ever smaller numbers. Except for America and some of the Nordic countries, the rich world produces far too few children (see chart 2, next page) to keep up its present population; in some countries the one-child family is becoming the norm, and many women remain childless.

A mother's place is at work

Yet even women who do have families are working in far greater numbers than before. In America, at least three out of four mothers of school-age children have jobs. Working mothers used to be criticised for neglecting their children; now it is mothers staying at home who have to explain themselves. Combining work and family, however, makes for hectic lives, despite the array of gadgets that litter modern households. Fathers have become slightly more helpful around the house than they used to be, but nowhere near enough. Working women's biggest single complaint is lack of time.

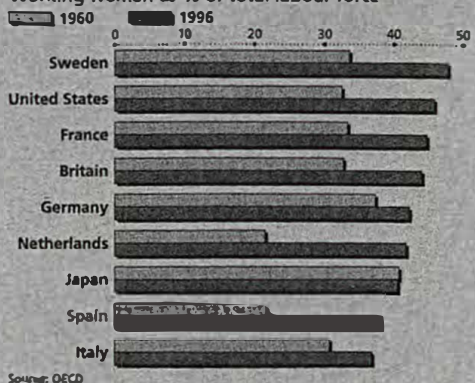
But what they lose in time, they gain in spend-

Women are now wedded to the workplace, but much remains to be done before they can live happily ever after, says Barbara Beck



Essential ingredients

Working women as % of total labour force



ing power. Their earnings are not just pin money. For the growing number of single mothers they are essential, and in dual-earner families they often make the difference between just getting by and living comfortably. They also offer an insurance policy in the increasingly likely event of a divorce. In America, one marriage in two eventually breaks up. Elsewhere the proportion is lower, but rising.

Money aside, many women enjoy their work; and (at least in theory) they now have access to a much wider range of jobs thanks to better education. Girls in rich countries now do as well at school as boys, sometimes better, and go on to higher education in roughly equal numbers, though they often choose different subjects. For example, few women take engineering courses, but they predominate in teacher training. In management education they account for only about one student in three, but in law and medicine they now make up about half the intake in most countries. Better-educated women are more likely to get better jobs. The better the jobs they can get, the more likely they are to go out to work. Among those with higher education, there is almost no difference between men and women in the numbers who work.

Just the job?

All these changes in women's attitudes and motivations have coincided (and interacted) with profound changes in the rich countries' labour markets. Jobs in manufacturing that have traditionally been done by men—say steelmaking or shipbuilding—have been disappearing, while jobs in services—say sales, clerical work or care-giving—have been expanding enormously. These generally do not appeal to men. Many are what labour-market economists call "atypical employment", the kind that is often better suited to service industries: part-time, temporary, involving irregular or unusual hours, or done on a contract basis. Some of them are insecure, and many of them are poorly paid. Women, anxious to find a way of combining a job with a family, have proved far more flexible and adaptable to this new way of working than men.

If lots of women now want to work, and employers are keen to have them, surely all is for the best? Not everyone agrees. The Nobel prize-winning economist Gary Becker has pointed out that countries with high levels of well-paid female employment also have high levels of family break-

down. But do marriages break down because women have jobs, or do women take jobs because they are not sure their marriages will last?

Francis Fukuyama, an American academic and former policy adviser to the State Department, argues that women's new economic independence, together with control over their fertility, has fundamentally changed the nature of the bargain between men and women. Women, he says, no longer need men to provide for their offspring, so men feel less responsible for their families and more inclined to abandon them. This has highly undesirable consequences for the children, particularly boys, who grow up without male role models. Yet marriage or stable cohabitation appears to remain popular with a large majority of people; and even if such traditions were being eroded by women's ability to earn their own living, that could hardly be an argument for sending the women back to the stove.

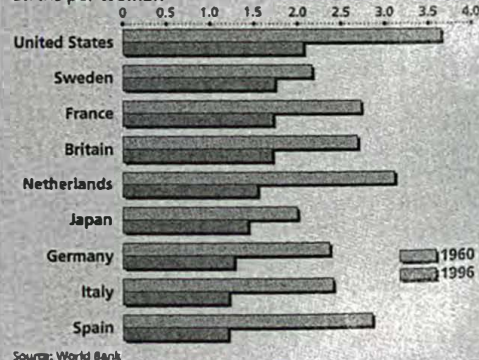
From a macroeconomic point of view, bringing more women into the labour force is a good thing. If more people are paying taxes, the burden is spread more widely. Being able to draw on a larger pool of available workers improves the quality of labour, reduces the risk of shortages and raises demand, not least for goods and services that will make a working woman's life easier: labour-saving devices, convenience foods, meals out, child care. In America, with its booming economy and tight labour market, women are proving a godsend to many employers. They usually cost less to employ than men, are more prepared to be flexible and less inclined to kick up a fuss if working conditions are poor. Far fewer of them are members of trade unions. The only surprise is that American women's unemployment rates are no lower than men's.

In Europe, with many more jobless than America, women workers are not so keenly appreciated, and their unemployment rates generally exceed men's, except in Britain and Sweden (see chart 3, page 6). A particularly striking example is Germany, where the collapse of east German employment after unification prompted men to go for jobs that had previously been considered women's work (see box, next page).

Moreover, all over Europe there are probably large numbers of frustrated housewives who have given up looking for a job, and therefore do not show up in the unemployment figures. But demography is on their side. The European Commission calculates that from about 2010 the EU's population

Who needs babies?

Births per woman



of working age will start to decline. Barring large-scale immigration (which raises big political problems) and later retirement (which would-be pensioners are likely to resist), the only source of extra labour from then on will be women. The commission wants to see as many as possible of them at work, not least to help pay for the pensions of the rapidly growing number of retired people.

If jobs for the girls are generally good for an economy, are they good for the girls themselves? There must be something in it for them, or they would not be forthcoming in such numbers. But do not believe all the media hype about "a woman's world" and "girl power". Women are doing better than they were, and more of them are reaching middle management, but they are not about to storm the world's boardrooms or parliaments. At and near the top, their numbers are still vanishingly

small. Count the silk scarves at any conference for top managers. Search for the handbags at summit meetings. Hunt the lady professors in the senior common room, or comb the lists of law-firm partners for missing evidence of feminisation.

Further down the ranks, take a good look at the pay cheque. Women all over the world, on average, are paid less than men—typically about 20-30% less—for similar kinds of work. And lower pay usually means lower or no benefits and a smaller pension on retirement. Thanks to equal-pay and equal-opportunities legislation, both in individual countries and at supranational level, the pay gap has got smaller and the discrimination less blatant, but neither has disappeared. And legislation alone has little effect unless governments are willing to enforce it. Japan's 1985 Equal Employment Opportunity Law, for example, carries no penalties. It's



Where east meets west

WHEN Germany was unified in 1990, two radically different sets of ideas about the role of women collided head-on. In former West Germany the traditional family model of the male breadwinner with a home-oriented wife was still dominant. In former East Germany, by contrast, nine out of ten women of working age had a full-time job. To make it possible for women to combine work and family, the state provided comprehensive child care, and a year off for each baby. In an economy which used its labour so inefficiently that it could never get enough of it, the women had a duty to do their bit. Besides, they needed the money, and divorce rates were high. But work for women was also a right. Women enjoyed being economically independent and defined themselves by the jobs they did, not as housewives and mothers.

In former West Germany, increasing numbers of women were also working outside the home, but many of them part-time, and 40% not at all. It still felt right that the husband should go out to work and the wife should run the house and look after the children. If she had time to do a job too, well and good; but according to a law not repealed until 1977 (and still anchored in people's minds), only "insofar as compatible with her duties within the marriage and the family". The tax system allowed (and continues to allow) married couples to split their income for tax purposes, which acts as a strong disincentive to wives going out to work.

The treaty of German unity noted that "given the different legal and institutional starting points in mothers' and fathers' labour-market participation, legislation will have to be shaped in

such a way as to make family and career compatible." But for many east German women it has not worked out that way, for two reasons. First, a lot of the formerly ubiquitous child-care provision was rationalised away. Second, and more important, after unification employment in sectors where large numbers of women worked—eg, the public sector, textiles and agriculture—simply collapsed. Within a short time, about a third of all women's jobs had gone.

A lot of new opportunities opened up in service industries such as catering, retailing and the lower end of banking. They looked just the job for women, but there was a hitch. Many east German men, too, had lost their jobs (although not as many as women), and they were now pitching for the new service jobs. Given a choice between a male and female candidate, employers almost always plumped for the man. He was, after all, the main family breadwinner. The woman could always go back to being a housewife.

Over the past few years the unemployment rate for east German women has consistently hovered around the 20% mark, about five percentage points above the rate for men, and twice the rate for both men and women in western Germany. East German women, deprived of their earnings capacity (as well as their child-care support system), immediately started economising on babies. The eastern birth rate halved from an already low 1.56 children per woman in 1989 to around half that level, and remains below one child per woman. But east German women are not giving up on jobs. They draw the dole, and just keep applying.

In west Germany husbands are still

more apt to boast that their wives "do not need to work", but increasingly there too the wives want to. That is fine as long as they are childless, but becomes more tricky once they have a family. For children below the age of three, child-care provision is hard to find, as well as widely frowned on.

Hausfrau track

To get round the problem, the government in 1992 extended an already generous provision for parental leave to a munificent three years, during which the parent's former job has to be kept open. For most of that time a modest allowance is paid. It sounds too good to be true, and in a sense it is. Parental leave is open to either father or mother, but in 99% of all cases it is taken by the mother. Once out of the labour market for three years (or longer, if there are several children), many of these women find it hard to get back, and settle for a life of domestic bliss instead.

If they do go back to work, however, their problems continue. Although a recent law "guarantees" a kindergarten place for every child from age three, provision is still patchy, and where places are available the hours are often too short to be any use to a working mother. Nor does "proper" school solve the problem. Most schools start at 8am and finish at 1pm, after which the children go home for lunch. And it is not just school hours: shop opening hours too, even after a recent liberalisation, are still not flexible enough.

So what are German women to do? If they want to pursue a career, the obvious answer is to stop at one child, or better still, have none at all. Already 15% of them remain childless. The respected German Institute for Economic Research in Berlin forecasts that by 2010 that could rise to a quarter.



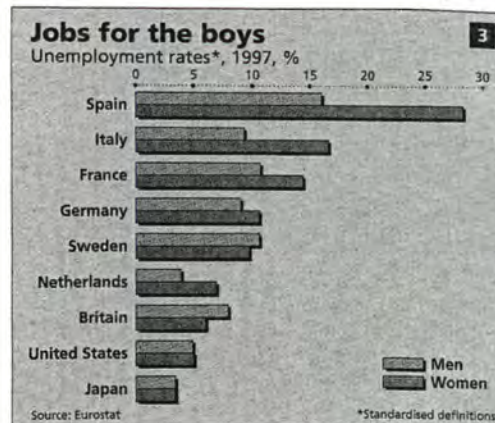
take it or leave it, and most employers leave it.

Equal pay for equal work sounds straightforward enough, but male and female labour markets everywhere are highly segregated, so few jobs are directly comparable. That leads into the much more tricky territory of work of equal value. Whose skills should be better rewarded, the car mechanic's or the hairdresser's, the nurse's or the lorry driver's? Despite endless job evaluations, these questions are still regularly being tested in the courts.

Oh baby

Then there is the matter of having babies. Some employers seem to regard this as a bad habit, fortunately not shared by men. Many women are content not only to have the babies but also to take on the bulk of the child care; yet there is no necessary reason why they should. The job can equally well be taken on by others, including men. The Nordic countries have shown that expectations about such roles can be changed. Meanwhile, though, employers tend to offer women a "mommy track" of less demanding, less rewarding, often part-time work, in the belief that they will be less committed and less able to put in the hours than men. Highly qualified and determined individuals can negotiate their way round this, but for the vast majority of women it is a barrier to their ambitions.

Are working mothers good for children? That depends on many things, not least where they live. In southern Europe and Ireland, many women still give up work for good when they start having babies, so the question does not arise. In Britain, Germany, the Netherlands and Japan, it is common for women to stop working while the children are young and go back when they are older. In the Nordic countries and France, new mothers generally take a fairly brief break before resuming work, thanks to comprehensive and good-quality public child care. In America, mothers are often back at work within a few weeks of the birth. They depend on a patchwork quilt of child care—relatives, friends, paid-for help—which is as good as they can afford, and sometimes not good enough. An agonised debate is now in progress on whether very



young children's brain development is being harmed by this practice.

What does the rise of the working woman mean for men? On the minus side, they may no longer get their shirts ironed, and may have to spend more time on domestic chores and child care. They may also encounter more competition from capable women at work, or even have to answer to a female boss. On the plus side, they may get more sympathy from their wife after a bad day at the office: she may have had the same experience. More seriously, they must surely find it a relief not to be the family's sole provider any more. In America, about one in five women earns more than her husband, and younger dual-career couples increasingly view both careers as equally important. That opens up a whole new range of choices for men. They might even take turns with their wives as the main breadwinner, and get to know their children better.

This survey will argue that women, having once tasted the freedom of the workplace, are most unlikely to turn back. The potential economic benefits are persuasive, but have not yet been fully realised, and the sheer speed of the change has created huge stresses and strains. Organisations, institutions and attitudes have yet to catch up. The next section will show just how momentous the change has been—but also how incomplete it remains.

A gentle invasion

Of low-cost, flexible friends

PICTURE a wave of immigrants sweeping through most rich countries on earth, looking for jobs. The numbers are vast. In America alone some 40m have arrived in the workforce over the past 50 years; in Europe another 30m (though Japan got missed out). They accept lower pay, and most of them seem to be getting work, but cause little resentment. Who are these strange invaders? Look around: you probably have some in your own office. You might even be one of them yourself. These days, working women are everywhere.

Two big things have happened in the rich world's labour markets since the second world war. The first is the shift from manufacturing to service industries; the second, closely connected, is the sweeping move of women from home to workplace. In 1950, only about a third of all American

women of working age had a paid job; last year the proportion was nearly three-quarters. At some point in their lives, say the statisticians, 99% of all American women will now work for pay. In some European countries, particularly in the south, the figures started lower and remain lower; in the Nordic countries, they have risen above America's (see chart 4, next page). Yet with few exceptions, the overall trend is strongly upwards.

No one has quite been able to decide whether it happened because the women were pushing or the employers were pulling; probably a bit of both. During both world wars, women in large numbers were drafted into the labour force to take the place of the men on the front; on both occasions, they were sent home again when the war was over. However, in the 1960s many of them started drifting

back of their own accord, impelled not only by increasing male unemployment and squeezed family incomes but also by social changes such as rising divorce rates, easy birth control and wider acceptance of a role for women outside the home.

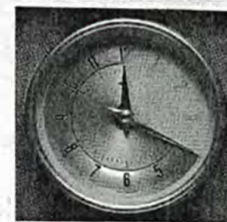
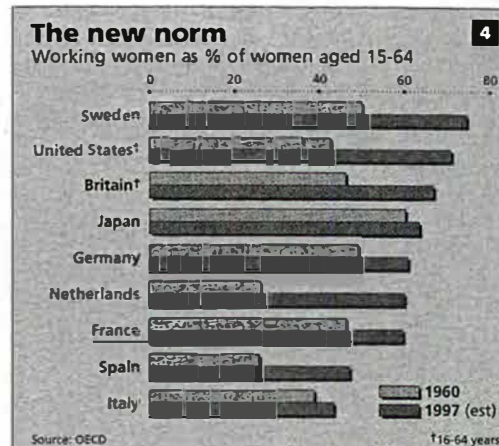
This time, conveniently, they found the work was waiting for them. As the developed economies were restructuring, lots of new service-sector jobs were being created that were quite unlike the traditional secure, full-time, year-round manufacturing jobs mainly filled by men. Many of these new jobs were part-time or involved odd hours, offering and requiring a degree of flexibility that often suited women. Many of the jobs, too, were in low-status, low-pay sectors such as sales, catering and cleaning, which held little appeal for male breadwinners.

His and hers

Several decades later, despite the huge number of women now at work, male and female labour markets everywhere remain surprisingly segregated. About half the world's workers are in sex-stereotyped occupations, according to the International Labour Office. Men still dominate the heavy manual, technical and managerial tasks, while women are concentrated mainly in caring and nurturing occupations and support roles. In America last year, for example, the precision production, craft and repair sector employed 12.4m men but only 1.1m women. Women also work in a far narrower range of occupations than men. A recent OECD study of seven member countries found that sales, clerical work, nursing and teaching together accounted for around half the women employed in all those countries. There was little sign that this concentration had diminished over the past ten or 15 years, nor did it seem to make any difference whether the proportion of women in the labour force was high or low. Men's occupations were far more widely spread.

Figures from the EU show a similar picture: the ten occupations where women are most concentrated—sales, clerical, personal services and so on—account for 53% of all women's jobs in EU member countries (see chart 5) but only 15% of men's. Men are generally not interested in jobs where women predominate, except in a crisis such as the post-unification collapse of employment in east Germany.

As more women acquire ever-higher qualifica-

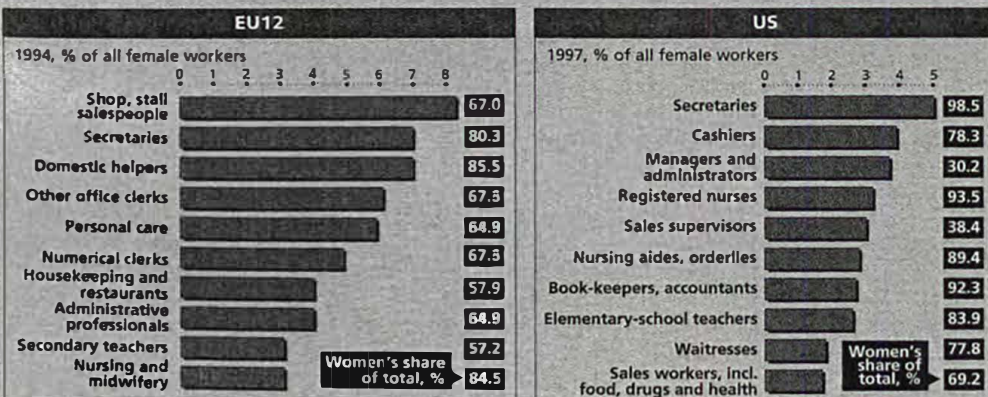


tions, they are beginning to get some of the better jobs, but it remains a struggle. Take the high-tech sector, where you might think that jobs would be handed out purely on merit. Odd, then, that in the EU barely a third of computer professionals, statisticians and related workers are women. But it could be history repeating itself. When typewriters were first introduced, employers believed that they could be worked only by sophisticated and highly trained operators. Early typists, therefore, were almost invariably men. Once the machines were in widespread use, and it had become obvious that any Tom, Dick or Harriet could be taught to operate them, typing soon became women's work. Perhaps the same will happen with computers.

In occupations where lots of women but few men work, pay levels tend to be low. This is particularly true in sales, cleaning and catering, slightly less so in jobs such as nursing and teaching, where the main employer is the public sector. With so many women concentrated in low-paying jobs, it is not surprising that, despite plenty of equal-pay legislation, a large gap remains in all countries between male and female earnings. To be fair, it is getting smaller: in America, for example, in the past 20 years women's hourly pay has crept up from 64% of men's to over 80%, and nowadays young, childless professional workers of either sex working full-time often get paid much the same.

But once women start having children, their relative pay drops, and the more children they have,

Women's work





the more their pay falls behind. Heather Joshi of London's City University has compared the likely lifetime earnings of a woman who works full-time without a break with those of a woman who takes eight years off to have two children, and then goes part-time while her children are at school. She found that the woman with the interrupted career could expect to earn less than half as much during her lifetime as the non-stop worker; not only because she had no income while she stayed at home, but also because she failed to move up the promotion ladder, and might have to accept a less skilled job after her return. If you are a woman, children can severely damage your wealth.

Counting the hours

That is true in another sense as well: because of family responsibilities, women on average put in far fewer hours at their paid jobs than men, so their weekly or annual pay lags even further behind men's than their hourly pay. In the EU as a whole, about a third of all working women put in less than the standard week of 35-40 hours (though that average conceals vast differences, see chart 6, next page); among men, the proportion of part-timers is only about 5%, and most of those are either students or older workers heading for retirement. In America, a smaller proportion of women work part-time than in Europe, but a larger proportion of men. The Japanese figures look similar to the European ones, but many women "part-timers" there work almost full-time hours; they just get paid less than official full-timers.

"Part-time" everywhere still often translates as "second-class". That is not to say that there are no



A woman's touch

good, interesting, secure and well-paid part-time jobs around, but just that they are rare. Part-timers are generally regarded as less committed and less valuable than full-timers, and are treated accordingly. One American woman, previously in a high-powered full-time job, returned to work part-time

Your money or your time

THE woman had been wandering round the car showroom for nearly an hour before the young salesman at last offered to help. When he produced the brochure she wanted, she demurred: it was full of incomprehensible technical specifications. "Don't you worry your pretty head about it; your husband will explain it to you," he reassured her. What he did not know was that she was the personnel director of a large Swedish company, directly responsible for buying 40 cars, who was taking part in an experiment to discover why car showrooms do not appeal to women. Here was the answer.

Gunnilla Masreliez Steen, who recounts the incident, runs Kontura, a Stockholm-based consultancy that advises companies on working with women. She heard about that showroom scene ten years ago, in the course of a consultancy project for a car company. These days, she reckons, the salesman might be more diplomatic. Car companies are beginning to wake up to the fact that more than half of all car

purchases are decided by women. When GM discovered that women found it difficult to get into its latest sports-utility vehicle, it modified the design. Women in car advertisements used to be draped across the bonnet in various states of undress. Now they are more likely to be shown impeccably attired, driving the car to work. But female customers still say they hate buying cars more than anything else.

The corporate world has been surprisingly slow to adjust to women's new economic firepower, but the word is getting around. One recent convert to the cause is a management guru, Tom Peters, who points out that women buy more than men of almost everything: health care, financial services, homes, furnishings, computers, telecoms, holidays, you name it. Women have traditionally done most of the household shopping, but now that so many more of them are working, they have more money—and less time to spend it in.

That means they are also buying different things, particularly goods and

services that make life easier. A British insurance company once calculated the value of all the services rendered by a typical housewife, as cook, nanny, transport manager, administrator, hostess and so on, and concluded that her services were worth the same as those of a middle manager. Now that most women are too busy with their jobs to provide many of these services themselves, they are buying them in, which in turn creates paid employment—for example, in child care, cleaning and catering—for lots of other women.

One such woman has already spotted a big business opportunity. Melissa Moss is the founder of the Women's Consumer Network, a new Washington-based organisation that promises to save its members time by doing comparative shopping on their behalf. Ms Moss plans to offer discounts on everyday items like tights, cosmetics and contraceptive pills, and provide best-buy advice on things like buying cars, investing in mutual funds, tracking down good child care—or indeed finding a collection agency for alimony. She reckons she is on to a winner: working women, she says, are "right out of time".

after childbirth and found that "everybody behaved as though I had suddenly gone dumb."

Even so, part-time jobs are on the increase. Many women like them because they make it possible to combine work and family. Employers like them because they allow more flexibility and command lower pay, and because part-timers can be pushed harder while they are at work. New variations on the theme are popping up all the time. The latest is the "contingent" worker: in essence, anyone whose job is not expected to last. Such people work in a wide range of industries, doing temporary or contract work or being on call. In America, recent estimates by the Department of Labour put their number at perhaps 5.2m, over half of whom are women and nearly half part-timers. They are paid less than their non-contingent counterparts, and usually get no health insurance or other fringe benefits from their employers.

The German version is called "minor employment", and many economists reckon it is growing by leaps and bounds. It relies on a legal concession that exempts people earning less than DM620 (\$340) a month from contributing to the comprehensive (and highly expensive) German social-security system, but also excludes them from pension rights and unemployment benefit. One estimate puts the total number of people employed only in such "minor" jobs at over 4m, about half of whom are women.

Most people now accept that the traditional model of a job for life is on its way out, and that in future workers should expect to change employers more frequently and be prepared for bouts of un-



employment. That may be a good thing for women, who are already used to working flexibly, and who also seem better than men at putting up with intervals of unemployment. But only a minority of working women are home-centred "grateful slaves"—the label invented by Catherine Hakim of the London School of Economics for the uncommitted group of women workers who pick up part-time work when it suits them, then drop out again. Next in Ms Hakim's typology of working women comes a much larger group, the "adaptives", who want to work but do not give their career absolute priority. Beyond that, a smallish group of committed, "work-centred" women are determined to fight their way to the top. That band of Amazons is the subject of the next section.

Jill-in-a-box

IT'S always lonely at the top, but if you are a woman it can be utterly desolate. Whether in politics, business, the professions or academia, the top layer everywhere is almost exclusively male. This may not come as a surprise in countries where few women work, but it is also largely true, and more baffling, in America and Europe's Nordic region, where nearly half the labour force is female.

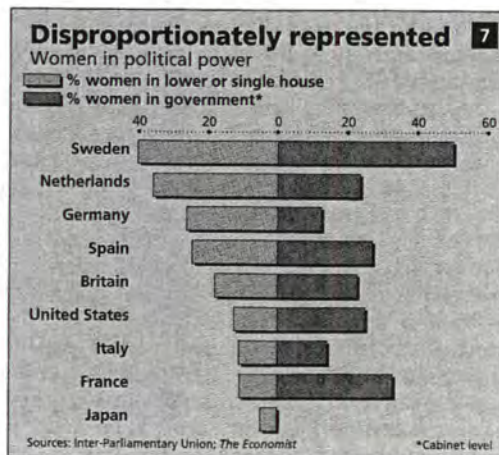
There does not seem to be much of a correlation between a reasonable number of women in, say, politics and a reasonable number of women in, say, high-level management posts. In Germany, for example, over a quarter of all MPs are women, but a recent survey of the 70,000 largest companies showed that women's share of top executive and board positions was only 1-3%. In America, which is generally thought to be a decade or more ahead of Europe on such matters, women hold about 10% of the board seats of Fortune 500 companies—still low, but better than it was; whereas in the House of Representatives women have a share of only 12.6% and in the Senate just 9%, way below the figures in many European countries.

Women in politics have come a surprisingly long way in a short time. At the beginning of this century few countries had universal suffrage for men, let alone women. By the early 1920s America, Germany and the Nordic countries, among others,

had introduced votes for all adult women, and Britain followed in 1928. But France and Italy waited until 1944 and 1945 respectively, Greece until 1952 and Portugal, amazingly, until 1976.

Only the Nordic countries have got anywhere near parity in the number of women MPs (see chart 7). They also have the highest proportion of women in government, with women ministers making up between a third and half the total. But even in the progressive north, more often than not the women

With a glass top





get the "soft" jobs such as health, education, labour, social affairs and culture. The heavyweight portfolios such as foreign affairs, finance and justice almost invariably go to men. Finland is the only country where at some point every single portfolio has been held by a woman. Women prime ministers such as Britain's Margaret Thatcher remain as rare as hen's teeth.

Cherchez la femme

The hope must be that the example of women in top political posts will eventually rub off on the business world, but for the moment there is little sign of it. In Britain, for instance, only one FTSE 100 company is headed by a woman: Marjorie Scardino, the (American) chief executive of Pearson (which owns half of *The Economist*). And even in the Nordic countries, where women are well represented in politics and the public sector, they are conspicuously absent from higher management.

One notable exception is Antonia Ax:son Johnson, chief executive of Sweden's Axel Johnson Group, a retailing, wholesaling and food multinational that employs 18,000 people. Ms Ax:son Johnson concedes that attitudes and expectations in senior business circles remain deeply traditional. Within her own organisation she has tried hard to give women a chance, doubling their share in middle management from 20% to 40%, but says it is not always easy. Ms Ax:son Johnson herself is clearly a highly effective manager who seems to have had no trouble combining four children with a demanding career. But she had the enormous advantage of working for the family firm, which she took over from her father.

Across the Atlantic, an annual survey of Fortune 500 companies conducted by Catalyst, a New York-based research organisation that works with an impressive list of member companies to promote women in business, has noted that more of them are getting into senior positions. Even so, last year they still accounted for only 3% of jobs at the very top of those companies (defined as chief executive, president, chairman and their immediate deputies). Immediately below that level the picture looks brighter: 419 of the Fortune 500 now have at least one woman on the board (see chart 8), and a third of them two or more. The biggest companies are far better at promoting women than those at the bottom end of the Fortune 500. And as you might expect, women directors are much more likely to pop up in industries such as cosmetics, food services, airlines and computer software than in, say, engineering or construction.

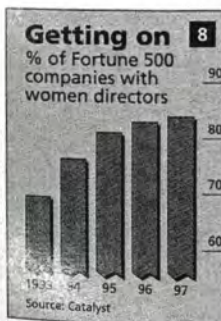
What is stopping women from getting right to the top? According to Sheila Wellington, Catalyst's president, that depends on whom you ask. Male managers will say that women are so new to the upper reaches of corporate life that there are simply not enough of them in the pipeline. Even more important, where women have made it to senior positions, it has usually been in support functions such as human resources, public affairs and certain kinds of finance jobs. Few of them have had experience of line positions where they have had profit-and-loss responsibilities, say as a plant manager or head of sales and marketing. Yet it is precisely in these line positions that managers gather the ex-

perience they need to propel them to the top.

Ask the women themselves, and they will agree that they are handicapped by lack of general management experience. But they will also point to a raft of other obstacles, especially male myths and preconceptions. Men suspect women of being less committed to their careers, unwilling to work long hours, lacking the right training and skills, and not assertive enough—or, conversely, too aggressive. Women also feel excluded from informal networks, and often find the corporate culture hostile. Unlike men, they rarely have mentors within the organisation to give them advice. Sooner or later they hit the "glass ceiling", that infamous invisible barrier created by individual and organisational prejudices.

How many of them really want to break through? Plenty of men mischievously suggest that few women are prepared to put in decades of 70-hour weeks and endless travel to get to the top. Quite a few women would agree that there is no way they could put in those hours and still do their second shift at home. But, they say, there should be no need to: if work were organised more rationally, those long hours should not be necessary. Whatever the reasons, many women do not even try for the top jobs. For men, one of the classic entry routes to the executive suite is via business school and an MBA. But at the top business schools in America, women MBA students on average make up less than 30% of the total.

Patricia O'Brien, dean of the Simmons Graduate School of Management in Boston, says that women need special training to learn how to make it in a male-dominated corporate world. Her college is the only business school in the world designed exclusively for women. It has compiled its own dossier of 150 case studies in which top female executives figure prominently, providing Ms O'Brien



Looking for promotion

en's students with "a mental Rolodex of role models" (one of the things ambitious women say they particularly lack). Over the past 20 years her college has released some 3,000 female graduates into the corporate world, many of whom now have high-powered jobs in Fortune 500 companies. But, she points out wistfully, the proportion of women in top management in America has stayed at around 2% for the past 40 years.

Pipeline dreams

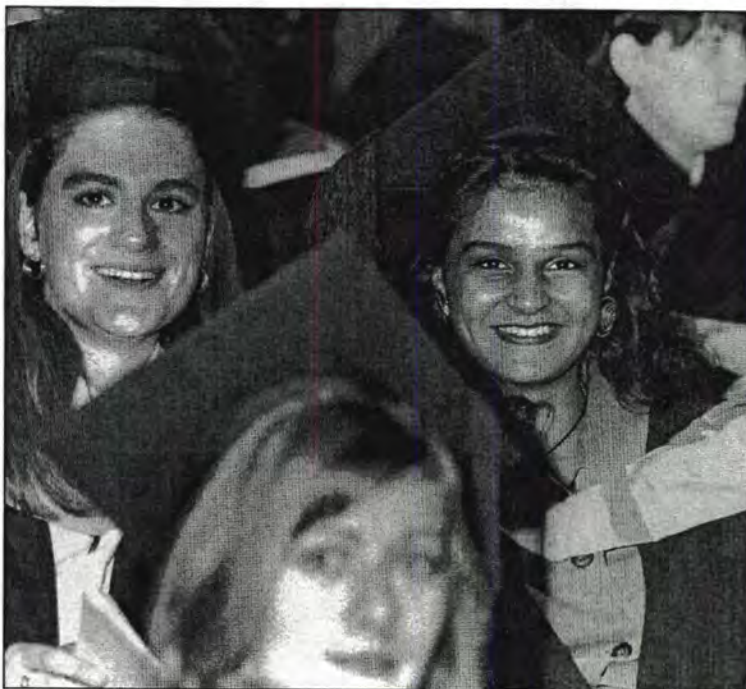
What has changed dramatically, she says, is the proportion of women in middle management, which over the same period has risen from perhaps 4% to 40% of the total: surely a sign that the much-quoted pipeline is at last beginning to fill up. America's Glass Ceiling Commission, a government-appointed body set up in 1991 to investigate where women got stuck, came to similar conclusions. Europe is moving the same way, but remains further behind. A recent survey of the EU's banking industry, by Sigrid Quack of the Social Science Centre in Berlin, found that women on average made up about half the total staff of the banks studied, but only a little over a quarter even of lower management. And their average share of the top jobs was only 8%. Even at Marks and Spencer, a large British retailer noted for its enlightened policies, the female ranks thin markedly towards the top. Women's share of the company's total staff is 85%; of its managers, 60%; of its senior managers, 30%; and of its executive directors, just one.

Prescriptions for women trying to crash through the glass ceiling are much the same everywhere: get experience in line management; develop your skills and self-confidence; find yourself a mentor within the organisation who will smooth your path; get supervisors and senior management on your side; and above all, make sure you work for a company that really believes in giving women a chance.

The only way to get companies truly interested in promoting women is to convince them that it is good for their business. In essence, the argument runs something like this. First, women make up about half of mankind; there is no evidence that the raw material of intelligence, energy and other qualities that make people perform well in jobs is unevenly distributed between the sexes; moreover, women in rich countries are now generally as well-educated as men, so are able to offer similar qualifications. If you are recruiting only men, you are therefore narrowing your choice to only half the brightest and best people.

Second, if you are already employing women and have invested in adapting their skills to your particular needs, it makes economic sense to accommodate them by offering, say, maternity leave or flexible hours, rather than risk losing them and having to start all over again with someone else. Sainsbury, a large British retailer, reckons that replacing a fully trained first-line supervisor costs about £10,000 (\$16,500) a time. The more highly trained the employee, the more expensive she becomes to replace. Keeping staff turnover down can save a lot of money.

Third, women can benefit the business by bringing a different approach to an issue. This is not the same as saying that women have a distinc-



Great expectations

tive management style, about which there has been much fuzzy talk. They may or may not be more intuitive, more people-oriented and better suited to today's flatter hierarchies than men. In truth, though, how they manage will depend far more on the organisation and the task in hand than on their gender. The only consistent difference in style researchers have been able to pinpoint is that women managers are more likely to listen to other people.

Dare to be different

But women undoubtedly have a different experience of life from men, may ask different questions, and are seen as different by outsiders. All these qualities contribute to diversity in the workforce, a newly fashionable concept that refers not just to women but also to every conceivable kind of minority. One of its many advocates is the Conference Board, a research organisation with a worldwide membership of 2,800 companies, including many household names. It takes diversity so seriously that it organises an annual conference to promote the cause. At this year's bash in New York in May, you could have listened to Jack Smith, head of General Motors, explaining why he believes diversity is critical to the success of organisations, and a host of diversity directors from companies such as IBM, Procter & Gamble and Quaker Oats wondering whether there was enough of it about.

Terence McGuire, seconded from newly merged accountants PricewaterhouseCoopers to the Conference Board's Workforce Diversity Group, insists that diversity makes sound business sense. For example, the teams his own firm fields for a client engagement are increasingly expected to match client companies' own diverse workforces, which means that sending in the standard consignment of white males may no longer be appropriate. American consumers and shareholders, too, are becoming more diverse, and expect that fact to be reflected in





the companies they deal with. As companies become more global, they need a more heterogeneous labour force that is sensitive to social, economic, political and cultural differences. The potential benefits of diversity, say its champions, include better employee morale, less absenteeism, improved client relations and new ideas for top management. The trouble is that many diversity programmes are so new that as yet there is little hard evidence of their beneficial effect on the bottom line.

Be your own woman

Until such evidence is forthcoming, many senior managers will remain sceptical, and many women will continue to bang their heads against the glass ceiling. But more and more of them are deciding that their heads would be better employed on something more constructive: becoming entrepreneurs. In America, women are setting up new businesses at twice the rate of men. From dress shop to design studio to software house, they are realising their dreams. According to America's National Foundation for Women Business Owners, the number of women-owned enterprises is about 8m, or nearly 40% of the total. Britain has also seen lively

growth in this area, although in continental Europe and Japan progress has been more halting. Both the OECD and the EU are trying to encourage women entrepreneurs through a variety of support and training programmes, not least because they see self-employment as a way of reducing joblessness.

Setting up a business is not necessarily the road to riches. An analysis of American household income figures by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a Washington think-tank, found that full-time self-employed women earn only half as much per hour, on average, as full-time female employees. Moreover, a large majority of women entrepreneurs work less than full-time, so for many women, the analysis concluded, "self-employment does not appear to be a feasible method of supporting a family by itself."

Still, for frustrated female managers, it is a chance of realising an exciting business idea, and sometimes it comes off. The other great attraction is that entrepreneurs, at least in theory, get to set their own hours. Compared with the rigidity of corporate life, the flexibility of self-employment seems to offer a solution to many working women's biggest problem: reconciling career and family.

At the double

Having it all means running twice as hard

IN A square in central Stockholm, Claes Tell is watching his 18-month-old daughter Hedvig in the playground. It is an idyllic scene: dappled sunlight pouring through the trees, children shrieking with delight as they clamber over brightly coloured play equipment, parents (mostly women, a few men) chatting animatedly. On this Thursday afternoon, nobody seems to have a care in the world.

So why does Mr Tell keep a mobile phone in his pocket? Just a precaution. As a vice-president and head of the direct-banking operation of Nordbanken, one of Sweden's biggest banks, he needs to stay in touch in case of an emergency. But today, as on a day-and-a-half every week, he is on parental leave. Earlier this year he had two whole months off to allow his wife, a physiotherapist, to settle back into her job. Now they take turns looking after their daughter until she is two, and starts attending a day-care centre.

Like the other Nordic countries, Sweden has gone to great lengths to make it easy for women to combine work and family, and to get men closely involved with their children too. Most women have paid jobs, not least because high taxes make it hard for most couples to manage on one income. The tax system favours dual-income families by treating each person as an individual, regardless of his or her family circumstances. But there are also strong social pressures on women, including those with young children, to go out to work.

New parents are entitled not only to generous paid maternity and paternity leave but also a year's paid parental leave for each child. This can be taken by either parent, but a month of it is non-transferable to make sure that both parents take at least some. And when parents resume work after the arrival of a baby, either one of them has the option of

working "long part-time" (six hours a day instead of eight) for the first eight years. While the parents are working, most children are looked after at good-quality, heavily subsidised public day-care centres.

The vast majority of Swedish fathers now take time off when their child is born, and also take some of the non-transferable parental leave, but few take it all, and even fewer would consider cutting their hours over a longer period. Mr Tell says his bank has been supportive about his parental leave, and thinks he has gained valuable insights from taking it—as well as giving younger colleagues an opportunity to gain experience. But he has no illusions that it will do him much good when it comes to promotion. "Top management, in general, is different; it still holds traditional values," he says. "You can't get to the top this way."

A child's guide to parental leave

Had little Hedvig been born in one of the other Nordic countries, her life to date would probably have turned out much the same. All of them offer a good chunk of parental leave, some of it non-transferable, and fathers are increasingly taking advantage of it. If she was living in Germany, France or Spain, her mother (assuming she had been working) might be at home for a full three years of parental leave, though only if the family could afford it: much of it would be unpaid (see table 9, next page). After that, she would probably head for a good-quality, state-funded kindergarten. Were she Japanese, her mother would stop working, and perhaps take a part-time job again ten years on.

Had Hedvig started life in America, the chances are that her mother would have gone back to work just a few months after her birth. Hedvig might be looked after by another member of the family or

put in a child-care centre. Before 1993, when the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) came into effect, Hedvig's time at home with her mother might have been even shorter. The FMLA, which entitles employees to 12 weeks' unpaid leave a year for pregnancy and childbirth, or to care for a seriously ill child, spouse or parent, was bitterly fought by employers worried that it would burden them with heavy extra costs. In the event, this does not seem to have happened. The periods of absence are so short that existing staff can usually cover them, and meanwhile the employer saves on the absent employee's pay. Melanne Vermeer, chief of staff to Hillary Clinton, acknowledges that by European standards the provisions of the FMLA are very modest, but reckons that in the American context they represent amazing progress.

But is it enough? Americans are becoming increasingly concerned that their tiny tots may be harmed by spending such long hours away from home. Last year President Clinton and his wife sponsored a conference on early childhood and brain development, and then another one on child care. According to a recent study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, some 80% of American babies are regularly cared for by someone other than their mother in their first 12 months of life; most of them start child care before they are four months old; and typically they are in care for about 30 hours a week.

Some of the experts at the conferences were scathing about the idea of leaving such young babies to carers of variable quality for such long hours. Dr Deborah Phillips, a child-development psychologist at the Institute of Medicine in Washington, DC, called this exposure "a very high dosage", and went on to say: "Most of these settings fall short of any standards that any of us... would consider optimal. Barely adequate has become the term of art to describe the typical child-care arrangement in this country... about 15-20% are in fact dismal and even dangerous." She accepted, as did some of the other experts, that children can thrive away from home if their child care is good enough, but wanted to extend family-leave policies to cover more employees and a longer period of time, and perhaps make it paid.

For Heidi Hartmann, director of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a Washington think-tank, that can be only a matter of time. "Childbirth is just another lifecycle event," she says, drawing the parallel with retirement and unemployment,

which the government is involved in funding. She points out that five American states already have paid family leave, paid for out of temporary-disability insurance contributions.

But for the moment the administration seems to be looking to the private sector for relief. After the White House child-care conference last October, the president asked Robert Rubin, the Treasury secretary, to bring together business and labour leaders to identify best child-care practices in the private sector and in public-private partnerships. The resulting report, based on a survey of 1,000 employers, concluded that companies believe family-friendly policies can save money. For instance, Johnson & Johnson said it was saving \$4 in increased productivity for every \$1 spent on its Life-Works programme, a package that helps employees plan for maternity leave and find child care. Other companies reported similar savings. And Eli Lilly's chairman and chief executive, Randall Tobias, explained that the time off for sick children and family illness his company offered were not perks, but tools that "will help us attract, motivate and retain people who are more likely to be dedicated, more focused, more innovative and more productive."

Reality check

Indeed; but there are still plenty of companies (particularly smaller ones) that do not offer family-friendly policies, and even if they do, employees do not always take them up. Men often feel that they will be marked down as less committed to the company than those who do not make use of such benefits, and therefore less promotable and more dispensable. Women often worry that if they accept the offer of shorter and more predictable hours that would ease their child-care problems, they will be sidelined into jobs with low pay and no opportunities. So everybody gets into a time bind.

"The Time Bind" is the title of a book by Arlie Russell Hochschild (Metropolitan Books, 1997, \$22.50), a sociology professor at the University of California, Berkeley. She spent three years interviewing hundreds of employees of a Fortune 500 company renowned for its family-friendly policies, from top managers to shop-floor workers, to see how they reconciled their work and their home life. Just reading the book is enough to make anyone feel exhausted.

Where both parents worked (which other than for the company's most senior executives was the norm), a typical day would start before dawn to get



How family-friendly?

Maternity and parental-leave entitlements

	Maternity leave	% of previous pay on maternity leave	Parental leave*	Mother/father
Britain	14-18 weeks	90% initially	—	—
France	16-26 weeks	100%	3 years	Entire leave transferable
Germany	14 weeks	100%	3 years	Entire leave transferable
Italy	22 weeks	80%	6 months	Entire leave transferable
Japan	14 weeks	60%	1 year	Entire leave transferable
Netherlands	16 weeks	100%	1 year	6 months non-transferable
Spain	14 weeks	100%	3 years	Entire leave transferable
Sweden	14 weeks	75%	1 year	Transferable except for 30 days
United States	12 weeks†	0	—	—

Sources: ILO; Demos; The Economist

*Previous job preserved; pay varies by country, mostly minimal †Available to either parent



Heigh-ho, it's off to day-care we go

the children ready and drop them at the company's (handsomely subsidised) day-care centre. The parents would then spend a long day at work before collecting the children from a ten-hour stint in day-care, doing some shopping on the way home, feeding everybody, putting the laundry in the washing machine, cleaning up the mess, reading the children a bedtime story and heading for bed themselves, utterly worn out. And these were the days when nothing went wrong.

Ms Hochschild found that these employees rarely took parental leave, worked flexible hours or availed themselves of any of the other family-friendly policies on offer. Instead, they spent ever longer hours at work, often putting in a lot of overtime on top of their standard hours. Sometimes they really needed the overtime earnings. But more often, confronted with a choice between stress at work and stress at home, both men and women chose work, where at least they enjoyed the contact with colleagues, were taken seriously and got paid for their pains, whereas at home they felt isolated, taken for granted and ground down with never-ending demands. Work had become home, and home had become hard work. It may sound perverse, but the book clearly struck a chord: it became an instant bestseller.

Time, please

Certainly a majority of American families with school-age children now lead the sort of lives described in the book. In 1950 two families out of three fitted the traditional pattern of bread-winning father, homebound mother and one or more children. Last year only one family in six lived that way. The new norm is the dual-career marriage.

What makes these people tick? In a recent study by Catalyst of around 1,000 dual-career earners, a large majority of the couples predictably said they liked having two incomes. Equally predictably, well over half named "lack of time" as their biggest problem. They wanted employers to offer flexible hours and working from home, as well as leave to attend to family matters (which increasingly include look-

ing after elderly relatives as well as children). Yet perhaps less predictably, more than two-thirds of the sample—both men and women—said that they could manage financially on just one income, but would go on working even if they did not need the money. For all its drawbacks, life in the fast lane clearly has its compensations.

Europeans seem a little more restrained in their enthusiasm for the dual-career track. A survey in Britain prepared for Opportunity 2000, an employer-led campaign to make better use of women in the workforce, found that an offer of promotion often caused a dilemma for dual-career couples. A large minority of women had turned down promotion because it would have made their lives unmanageable, though only a handful of men felt similarly constrained. But the stress rubs off on the men too. In a separate British study by wfd, an international consultancy that specialises in advising employers on "work/life" issues, nearly half the male employees questioned, and over half the female ones, said they found it hard to reconcile their personal and their work commitments. Top of their wish list was a cut in hours. Tellingly, though, they did not want to give up work altogether either.

In Europe as a whole, however, plenty of women still stay at home. Around a third of those of working age describe themselves as "housewives", according to the European Community Household Panel, though that probably includes some with part-time jobs. The more children they have, the more likely they are to be housebound. That is not necessarily a recipe for happiness: in almost every EU country, women who go out to work appear to be healthier and more satisfied with life than those who do not. But at least they are excused the "second shift": a day's work at home after a day's work for their employer.

To varying degrees, men everywhere still do less than their fair share of housework and child care, even if their wives work full-time. They behave worst in Japan, where a government survey found that husbands in dual-income families on average devote eight minutes a day to housework. Where the

wives stay at home, the husbands do seven minutes. That total includes such onerous activities as fetching the newspaper. Japanese working wives spend about three-and-a-half hours a day on domestic duties—on top of their paid work.

But men in the West are no angels either. In dual-earner families in the EU, the fathers typically spend little more than half as much time looking after children as the mothers do. In America, if you ask the women, most of them will tell you that they

do all or most of the household chores. If you ask the men, they will disagree, but will probably admit that they do less than half. However, in the younger age groups the men's share seems to be creeping up. Even in the egalitarian Nordic countries the chores are still not evenly distributed, but at least the language is changing. When this correspondent asked one young Swedish father whether he helped with the child care, she was rebuked for asking the wrong question. He did not "help": he did his share.



Balancing act

IS NOW a better time to be a woman than 50 years ago? In many ways, the answer has to be yes. Women everywhere in the rich world have got the same legal rights as men; to vote, to work, to do as they please. They have equal access to education at all levels, and mostly make full use of it. If they are working, they are protected (up to a point) by equal-pay and equal-opportunities legislation. Sexual harassment at work may not have stopped dead, but is being more effectively curtailed, if only because of the risk of legal fees and damages. Some of these changes may have been speeded up by feminism, however tedious that may have seemed at its height. But the most effective instrument for changing attitudes has been women's mass exodus from home to workplace. For most women in most of the rich countries, being "just a housewife" has become a thing of the past.

Some pundits, particularly in Europe, continue to argue that if lots of women pour into the labour market, there will be fewer jobs to go round for men. But most governments now understand that the larger the share of the population at work, the better it is for the economy. Those at work are increasingly being sandwiched in-between young people spending longer on their education and the growing number of older people moving towards retirement. Without women, the filling of active workers in that sandwich would become worryingly thin.

The qualitative argument for having more women in the workplace is also becoming more widely accepted. If employers in rich countries want to retain their competitive edge, they must ensure that they have the best possible staff, drawn from the widest possible pool of talent. The world's top companies, particularly in America, are beginning to take this on board. At the very least, they understand that being seen to give women a fair deal is good public relations.

Yet sooner or later any discussion on women's progress in the workplace seems to lead to the same inevitable phrase: "They have come a long way, but they still have a long way to go." Looking at the evidence, it is impossible to disagree. If women in some countries now make up nearly half the labour force, you might expect them to be doing a broad range of jobs, similar to those done by men. Instead, a disproportionate number are stuck with the sort of "women's work"—low-status, often insecure and poorly paid—which a modern service economy seems to create in ever-growing quantities. And women who are trying to get ahead in high-flying

professional and managerial jobs continue to find it a struggle as men close ranks against them.

If they want a family as well, the odds against success lengthen. "Having it all"—career, husband, children, a life—turns out to be dreadfully hard work, requiring exceptional stamina and determination. Career women drily note that their efforts would be greatly eased by a supportive wife. But in the real world they mostly have husbands who are running at least as hard as they are; or else they stay single to keep their lives manageable.

Women's wholesale arrival in the labour force has involved a big social shift. As such things go, this has come about remarkably rapidly, leaving attitudes, norms and institutions behind. By going out to work whatever their family circumstances, women in rich countries are pioneering a new,

Still far from perfect



What would they do without us?



This survey has drawn on conversations with a great many women (and a few men) whose expertise and enthusiasm made it a pleasure to explore the subject. Thanks are due to all of them for being so generous with their time, their knowledge and the contents of their filing cabinets.

Offer to readers

Reprints of this survey are available - price £2 in Britain / £2.50 abroad. Minimum order 5 copies. Please send your order with pre-payment by cheque to: The Economist Shop, 15 Regent Street, London SW1Y 4LR. Tel +44 (0)171 839 1937. Or fax credit card orders on +44 (0)171 839 1921.

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dual-earner family model. But the world around them was designed for the traditional model of male breadwinner, female homemaker and child-carer. That applies not only to work but in a myriad other ways, from tax policies to shop hours to who does the laundry. Moreover, that traditional model lives on in hundreds of millions of heads, female as well as male, and still governs many dreams and aspirations. Model and reality have got out of synch. How to bring them back into balance?

Here to stay

Start by recognising that the clock cannot be turned back. Modern economies could not function without women workers, and few women now would want to function without jobs. If they have been prepared to toil away for decades even though the system has been rigged against them, they will go on doing so unless stopped by force. But the present system is neither as fair nor as efficient as it might be. To make it better, governments, employers and individuals all need to rethink their roles.

- First, governments. As this survey has shown, the sort of incentives or disincentives they offer can make a big difference to the way people organise their lives. If, for example, the tax system favours the traditional breadwinner/housewife family, fewer women will go out to work. The same is true of social-security systems. If governments want women to be able to make a free choice about taking jobs, they need to tailor tax and social-security systems to individuals rather than family units.

They may also want to make it easier for women to combine work and having children. Both involve questions of public interest. More people at work means lower taxes or better public services. Children ensure that society goes on. At present none of the rich countries except America and perhaps some of the Nordic states is producing enough children to replace its population. In a world that, on balance, remains in danger of being overpopulated, that may be no bad thing, but if there were to be a rundown it would need to be orderly and grad-

ual to avoid causing big problems, particularly over pensions. Most governments in rich countries would prefer to keep numbers stable, if not rising. That may mean offering incentives.

It is perfectly possible to devise a system that will produce more children and still keep women at work, though it may not come cheap. The principle of free education for school-age children is already entrenched throughout the rich world; there would be nothing incongruous about extending it further down the age range. In the Nordic countries, widely available and good-quality child care, together with generous maternity and parental-leave arrangements, has kept birth rates near replacement level even though most women go out to work. Many other rich countries make a nod in this direction by subsidising child care and giving either tax allowances for children or some form of direct child benefit.

- Second, employers. The biggest and best-run businesses increasingly believe that to attract and retain the best staff, they need to accept that people have a private life as well. Where possible, many of them now allow their employees to work more flexibly to make for an easier balance. But if such policies are aimed exclusively at women, they can backfire by inviting discrimination. Better to acknowledge that men also have families, and encourage them to spend some time with them. In a buoyant labour market, such as America's at present, innovations of that sort come more easily than where unemployment is high, as in much of Europe. But even in America, as well as in Britain, hours worked by both men and women have actually increased over the past ten years.

- Last, individuals, both men and women. Many women seem prepared to accept traditional sex divisions of labour, both at work and at home, even though their careers are being held back by them. But it is hard to tell whether they are doing this by choice or simply because they see no alternative. Many men, particularly among the older generation, seem to want to perpetuate the status quo at

work and at home because it is weighted in their favour. But women's march into the labour market has had a profound effect on men too; not so much because they have suffered from more competition for jobs (which the continued segregation of male and female labour markets still restricts), but because they are so often the other half of a dual-earner couple. Unless they take on a more equitable share of the domestic burden, they will find home a less peaceful place than they might have hoped. There is some evidence that this is sinking in among the 18-32-year-olds known as "generation x".

So when, in another ten or twenty years' time, women make up half the labour force everywhere, will they also hold half the top jobs, earn the same as men and split housework and child care down the middle? Certainly not then, and perhaps never. But, with luck, their choices will be wider and their lives more civilised than today.



Food for thought