

Believes Feminists Would Destroy The Home

(By C. V. Service)

ST. LOUIS—That the operation of a total war should occasion tremendous changes in our way of life is not astonishing. Not only are habits and conduct changing but likewise the entire social pattern. But in no way is the effect more pronounced than in the case of women.

How different are conditions today from those of former centuries. Then women watched their husbands and sons march off to war and awaited their return. Today women join the WAACS or the WAVES or seek and obtain a job in a war plant. Homes without number have been deserted, divorce is on the increase, and in recent months we have observed a new phenomenon in the establishment of more and more war nurseries to care for the children of women working in war industries.

It is easily understandable that the militant feminists should delight in the changing conditions. At the recent Philadelphia convention of the National Women's Party, composed of this brand of feminine emancipators, the delegates could not restrain their jubilation at the turn of events. They indicated the belief great blessings would result from the increase in the employment of women in industry that henceforth they could not be denied the right to determine their status in society irrespective of traditions. Late issues of Equal Rights, organ of the Party have contained numerous expressions of the same thought.

Equal Rights Amendment

Of course, uppermost in the minds of these feminists is the favorable position enjoyed today in the Senate by the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, which has been knocking at the doors of Congress for more than fifteen years now. It is not unlikely the measure will be adopted while the country is distracted by the war. The suggested amendment would make women the equal of men before the law, regardless of the restrictions nature places on women, of marital obligations, motherhood, etc. A vague amendment it masquerades as a progressive measure, whereas in reality it is dangerous to women, as it would cut deeply into laws and customs intended to protect them from hardships unsuited to their sex.

This is the one fact that stands out in the jumble of words writ-

ten to explain the proposal; women would obtain the right to work side by side with men in any occupation of their choice, regardless of whether they were physically or mentally fitted for a particular job or not. In addition, advocates of equal rights completely ignore the status of society, refusing to accept the natural order representing a Divine plan binding upon all.

Mother's Best Work

But what of the future, if mothers of young children continue to work in war plants, even though not driven to it by necessity, if the boom in war nurseries continues. If false ideas of equal rights are adopted? Bishop Joseph H. Schlarman, of Peoria, told delegates to the convention of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, held in October, that a mother's best war work is still bringing up a family. When women go into defense plants, he added, the birth rate declines. Christianity and moral decrees recede. At the Central Verein convention in St. Louis Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara, of Kansas City, called the employment of mothers and young children outside the home "the last resource of a tottering nation." The production of planes and tanks and guns and explosives and ships, Bishop O'Hara insisted, "must be left to other hands while mothers tend to their babes and form their children into Christian men and women."

On the same occasion Bishop Christian H. Minkelsmann, of Wichita, quoted a pastoral of the Canadian Hierarchy reminding the people "it is scarcely necessary to mention the apprehension we experience at seeing so many women, and especially mothers, drawn away from their homes by wartime regulations into factory work and other occupations so foreign to their sex." "We need mothers," Bishop Winkelsmann commented, "and mothers cannot be engaged in war industries and at the same time perform their God-given duties. . . . Instead of the Government building nurseries for the

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