

Women's labor movement shifting family work roles

United Press International
AUSTIN — Women's increased movement into the labor force is the "most important labor market development" of the 20th century, says a University of Texas professor and former cabinet official.

Ray Marshall, labor secretary in the Carter administration, noted the number of working women rose from 34 percent of the work force in 1950 to more than 52 percent in 1981.

Marshall predicts women will make up two-thirds of the growth in the labor force during this decade.

"In 1950, 70 percent of the American households were headed by men whose income was the sole source of family income," he said. "Today, less than 15 percent of the households fit this traditional model, even though many of the nation's employment policies assume it still to be pervasive."

For that reason, Marshall recommends "more systematic policies which deal with the reality that women are permanent and integral parts of the labor force and that the traditional

pattern of men being the only family income earners is obsolete."

Marshall's comments were made in an analysis he prepared for the Women's Research and Education Institute of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues.

U.S. labor market policies should take into account career selection and development, childbearing and re-entry into the work force, ability to enter nontraditional jobs and health care for women, he said.

In the future, Marshall said there may be a complication for working women ranging in age from 25 to 44.

"In 1975 there were only 39 million people in this category," he said. "By 1990 there will be over 60 million. This will greatly intensify job competition among workers between the ages of 25 and 44, who will constitute over half of the work force in 1990."

Marshall also noted women continue to lag behind men in earnings.

At the start of the 1980s, he said "despite some occupational upgrading, women had about

the same earnings relative to men that they had at the beginning of the 1970s. Women who worked full time earned about 60 percent as much as men."

Marshall said studies have found that less than half of the gross earnings difference can be attributed to such factors as education, training, experience and skill requirements.

"The large unexplained residual is attributable to overt and institutional discrimination, especially job segregation," he said.

Only through public support for affirmative action programs

can the trend be broken, said Marshall.

"Experience suggests that the major impetus for change must come from women themselves, and effective change requires careful analyses of institutions and power relationships and the development of effective tactics to achieve change," he said.

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Eric Evan Lee, Battalion staff

National Vigil

Members of the Brazos County Mothers Against Drunk Drivers gathered for a vigil Monday night to remember those in Brazos County who were killed in the past

year by drunk drivers. About 30 people, including College Station mayor Gary Halter attended the vigil. The group lit a candle each time a name was read.

Strake criticizes Gov. White for 'soft' state criminal laws

United Press International
AUSTIN — Texas Republican Party Chairman George Strake Monday accused Gov. Mark White of being soft on crime for seeking to commute life sentences given to prison inmates under the state's old habitual criminal law.

"I think Mark White is showing more compassion for the repeat offenders than for victims and creating a policy that sends the wrong signal to those who contemplate crimes against our citizens," Strake said.

In a letter last September, White asked the Board of Pardons and Paroles to review and recommend commutations for habitual criminals ineligible for parole.

When he wrote the letter, White noted that lawmakers had changed the state's habitual criminal law, which called for automatic life sentences for people convicted of three felonies.

He also cited a U.S. Supreme Court case that said life sentences for habitual criminals are not unconstitutional in general, but may be so if the crimes do not fit the punishment.

Since receiving White's letter, Strake said, the parole board has advised district attorneys that several hundred inmates might have their sentences commuted.

In one instance, Strake said, Harris County District Attorney John Holmes was advised that one inmate with 20 prior convictions and another with 10 convictions were being considered for commutation.

"These are mostly habitual robbers, drug users and forgers, people who have already shown that they will steal again," Strake said. "That's why the juries of Texas put them away for life."

Under the new habitual offender law, which does not apply to inmates convicted under the old statute, a judge or jury has the discretion of ordering a prison term ranging from

25 years to life for three-time losers.

The change in the habitual criminal law was recommended by former Gov. Bill Clements' Blue Ribbon Commission on Criminal Justice but opposed by the prosecutors.

White responded to Strake's criticism by saying he had not recommended any early re-

leases as yet, but merely had instructed the parole board to consider the possibility of commuting certain sentences.

If White does commute any life sentences assessed under the old law, a set term for the crime would be established and the inmate would be eligible for parole when one-third of the term was served.

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Atheists plan winter display

United Press International
AUSTIN — The winter season, officially known as Winter Solstice, begins Dec. 21, and the American Atheist Center said Monday it will mark the event by erecting a lighted sign atop its building that says "Merry Solstice."

Gerald Tholen, vice president of the American Atheists, said the sign will remain on display until spring arrives March 20.

"The peoples of the world deserve to have their legitimate annual times of celebration returned to them," he said. "Religious mythologies played no part in the establishment of this historic natural event."

Tholen said the equinoxes and the solstices "have been historically confiscated by absurd ideological religious leaders over the ages."

The Winter and Summer Solstices refer to the distance of the sun from the equator when days are the longest or shortest. The equinoxes mark the time when the sun crosses the equator, making night and day of equal length worldwide.

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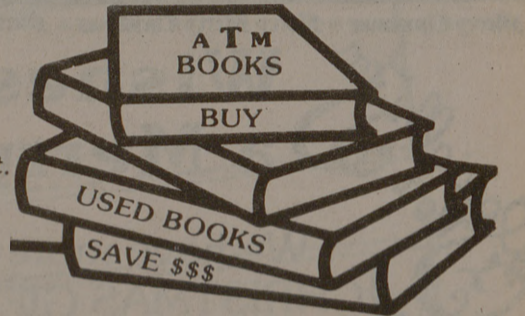
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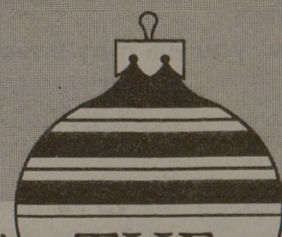
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