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COMMENTS OF GOVERNMENTS ON PROPOSALS FOR STANDARDIZING
DEFINITIONS AND METHODS OF ENUMERATING INDUSTRIAL
OR SOCIAL STATUS GROUPS IN POPULATION CENSUSES

(Memorandum prepared by the Secretariat)

1. Since the preparation of E/CN.9/43 - E/CN.3/C.1/22, replies to the request for comments on the proposals for defining and enumerating industrial or social status groups in population censuses have been received from seven additional countries: Austria, Belgium, Colombia, Finland, Guatemala, Singapore and the United Kingdom. The communications from Colombia and Singapore merely acknowledged receipt of the document containing the Population Commission's proposals on this subject (E/CN.9/C.2/3/Rev.2). The other five countries, however submitted comments which are summarized here.
2. Definition of economically active population. According to provisional plans for the 1951 census in the United Kingdom, the economically active population will include persons who have retired from an occupation. The recommendations of the Population Commission call for the classification of retired persons with the inactive population.
3. Unemployed. In the industrial or social status classification proposed for use in the next census of the United Kingdom, a separate group of persons

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work" is shown. Apparently no attempt will be made to classify these persons according to their status in some previous job. With regard to unemployed persons who have never been employed before, Austria states that these persons cannot be identified separately in the census and that their status is known only in so far as they apply for work at the labour exchanges. Canada, on the other hand, expects to follow the Population Commission's suggestion and classify these persons as a separate group.

Major categories of industrial or social status. All five of the countries agree that it will be possible to furnish data for the four major industrial and social status categories proposed by the Population Commission. In discussing the content of the "employer" group, the United Kingdom calls attention to the need for emphasizing that this group should be restricted to those persons who operate their own businesses and that it should not include managing directors of incorporated businesses even though they may own nearly all of the stock in a company and have the function of engaging and dismissing staff.

Criteria for defining unpaid family workers. The United Kingdom, in its 1951 census, plans to classify as an unpaid family worker any member of a household who is chiefly occupied in giving unpaid help in a business carried on by the head of the household or another relative. Noting that some discussion centres around the word "unpaid", the United Kingdom feels that the Population Commission's recommendations regarding the treatment of family workers who receive some pay in kind or in allowances should be clarified. The definition to be used in the 1951 census of the United Kingdom is intended to cover all family members chiefly occupied in a family enterprise who do not receive a specific wage or a fixed share of profits. In discussing the use of minimum amount of work as a criterion for defining unpaid family workers, Canada expresses the opinion that it would be unwise to adopt such a minimum for use in the next census of that country. Instead, it is planned only to exclude those family helpers whose work was incidental. Finland notes that the problem of determining when farmers' wives should be classified as unpaid family workers is still unresolved in that country, and further decisions of the Population Commission on this subject are awaited.

Sub-divisions of employees

6. Guatemala, although regarding the proposed sub-divisions of employees as being very useful, believes they would complicate the task of enumerators too greatly to warrant their use in the 1950 census of that country. As many of the specified groups as possible will be obtained by means of the occupation classification.

7. Wage earners and salaried employees. In emphasizing the difficulty of separating wage earners from salaried employees, the United Kingdom raises the question of the proper classification of an individual who is paid weekly a proportion of an agreed annual sum. It is pointed out that a rough approximation of the two groups might be obtained by grouping relevant categories of the occupation classification. The reply from Finland indicated that data on these two groups will be obtained in the next population census of that country but no mention is made of the criteria which would be used to distinguish between them. In Belgium, the distinction between these two groups is made on the basis of social security legislation.

8. Managers and directors. Replies from Finland and the United Kingdom stated that separate data will be obtained for this group in future population censuses. The United Kingdom believes it is essential that managers and directors be identified separately from other employees so that, for some purposes, they can be combined with the employer group.

9. Professional workers earning wages or salaries. The United Kingdom is of the opinion that data on this group should be obtained from the occupation classification. Austria also believes that this group is more closely related to occupation than to industrial or social status. Finland, although raising no specific objection to the group of professional workers, does not intend to include it in the industrial or social status classification to be used in the next census of population.

10. Domestic servants. The occupational aspects of the group "domestic servants" are pointed out in the reply from the United Kingdom. This group has been omitted from the industrial or social status classification which will be used in the next Finnish census.
