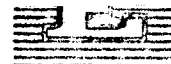


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EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

Report prepared by the International Labour Office

Note of the Secretariat: The Secretary-General has received from the International Labour Office, and has the honour to circulate to the Commission on the Status of Women, the following report on the Application of the International Labour Convention No. 100 and Recommendation No. 90 Concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value.

INTRODUCTION

1. At its sixteenth session the Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution^{1/} in which it:

"Invites the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the International Labour Office, to furnish annually additional information on the progress being made in the various countries towards elimination of discriminatory wage practices against women, as well as similar reports on steps taken or methods used in those countries to put the principle of equal remuneration into force."

2. The Commission on the Status of Women adopted at its eighth session a resolution^{2/} in which it:

"Requests the Secretary-General... to continue, in collaboration with the International Labour Office, to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation on Equal Pay for discussion by the Commission."

3. The present report has been prepared by the International Labour Office in accordance with these requests and supplements those presented to the seventh and eighth sessions of the Commission.^{3/} It contains the information which has

^{1/} Economic and Social Council resolution 504 G (XVI).

^{2/} E/2571 - E/CN.6/253.

^{3/} E/CN.6/231.

reached the International Labour Office on the action taken to further the application of the equal remuneration principle in various countries since the issuance of the previous report.

I. RATIFICATION OF THE EQUAL REMUNERATION CONVENTION, 1951

4. Since the last report was submitted to the Commission, three more countries have ratified the Convention on Equal Remuneration, 1951 - Cuba, the Philippines and Poland. The Convention, which entered into force on 23 May 1953, had consequently been ratified by nine countries on 1 November 1954^{1/}.

II. NATIONAL ACTION IN CONNEXION WITH CONVENTION NO. 100 AND RECOMMENDATION NO. 90

5. The Government of Brazil suggested that the Convention should be ratified when it is submitted to the competent authorities in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation.^{2/}

6. The Italian Government indicated in a statement to the International Labour Conference Committee on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations in 1954 that it proposes to ratify the Convention.

7. The Government of Luxembourg indicated in its "Exposé des motifs" preceding the ratification bill of 29 May 1953 covering a number of International Labour Conventions, that Convention No. 100 raises very important questions for which it will be difficult to find an immediate solution.^{3/}

8. In the Netherlands, the Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health had decided to consult the Economic and Social Council before presenting the Parliament with a definite proposal on Convention No. 100. The Council recommended in its report that the principle of equal pay should be applied

^{1/} The nine countries which have ratified the Convention No. 100 are: Austria, Belgium, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, France, Mexico, the Philippines, Poland and Yugoslavia.

^{2/} Cf. E/CN.6/220.

^{3/} Parliamentary Document No. 473.

gradually.^{1/} However, an ad hoc Parliamentary Committee, which was set up to study the Council's conclusions, held that the gradual application need not prevent the immediate ratification of the Convention.

III. NATIONAL ACTION TO FURTHER THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL REMUNERATION

B. In Canada, an Act^{2/} to ensure fair remuneration to female employees, to be cited as the Equal Pay Act and to come into force on a date to be fixed by proclamation of the Lieutenant-Governor,^{3/} was passed in British Columbia on 7 October 1953. British Columbia is the third Canadian province to enact equal pay legislation after Ontario^{4/} and Saskatchewan.^{5/}

C. The United Kingdom Government, having accepted the principle of equal remuneration in relation to its own employees, intends to begin to give effect to it within the present financial year ending in March 1955. The Government's decision was made known at a meeting held in May 1954 between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and a deputation from the staff side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council. It was agreed that negotiations would take place on the Council, with object of evolving a scheme by which equal pay might be introduced in the non-industrial Civil Service. The immediate effect would be on some 30,000 women who are employed in Civil Service positions which are common to men and women. There are another 100,000 women in the Civil Service who are employed on women's rates for women's work and who would probably get some increase. The indirect effects would extend to other occupations, most notably

Cf. E/CN.6/231.

An Act to Ensure Fair Remuneration to Female Employees, 1953 (Second Session), Chapter 6, pp. 121-122.

The Act came into force on 31 December 1953.

Cf. E/CN.6/220, p. 4.

Cf. E/CN.6/231, p. 5.

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to the teaching profession where the annual public cost of raising women's salaries to the level of men's would be much greater than in the Civil Service. The Chancellor of the Exchequer recently estimated the Civil Service cost at £13,400,000 and that for the teaching profession at £17,200,000.^{1/}

^{1/} The Times (London), 20 May 1954.