

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

SECOND SESSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING

Lake Success, New York

Monday, 19 January 1948 at 3.00 p.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Mrs. de CASTILLO LEDON	(Mexico)
Rapporteur:	Mrs. A. Kandaleft COSMA	(Syria)
	Mrs. Jessie Street	(Australia)
	Mrs. I. I. Uralova	(Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)
	Miss C. Zung	(China)
	Mrs. G. Morales de Echeverria	(Costa Rica)
	Mrs. Bodil Begtrup	(Denmark)
	Mrs. S. B. de Monzon	(Guatemala)
	Begum Hamid Ali	(India)
	Mrs. E. A. Popova	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
	Miss M. Sutherland	(United Kingdom)
	Miss D. Kenyon	(United States of America)
	Mrs. Isabel de Urdaneta	(Venezuela)

Representatives from Specialized Agencies:

Dr. M. Fairchild	(International Labour Organization)
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Observers from Non-Governmental Organizations:

Miss Tony Sender	(American Federation of Labor)
Mr. Peter D. Garvan	(American Federation of Labor)

Other Observers:

Miss M. Bernardino	(Inter-American Commission Women)
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Secretariat:

Dr. T. Schwelb	(Assistant Director, Division of Human Rights)
Miss L. M. Mitchell	(Secretary of the Commission)

CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (document E/CN.6/74)

The CHAIRMAN invited comments on Chapter XIII of the Commission's report, which dealt with the programme of future work.

Miss KENYON (United States of America) suggested altering the wording of paragraph C to read as follows: "The presentation of material to the Commission should be on a subject matter comparative analysis basis".

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) objected to points 3 and 4 which stated that information on the status of women could be obtained from "individuals able and interested to supply them", and from "general research". She felt that individuals would not be in a position to supply the necessary data, and she did not understand who would carry out the "general research". She, therefore, proposed that those two items should be deleted from the resolution.

Miss KENYON (United States of America) pointed out that the reservations made by Mrs. Popova had been noted and appeared in the report at the end of the resolution on questionnaires.

Mrs. STREET (Australia) asked whether it would not be possible to consider a change in the title of that chapter, inasmuch as most of the report dealt with the programme of future work of the Commission, and the chapter under discussion dealt almost exclusively with the questionnaire. She also proposed an amendment to paragraph B of the resolution on the programme of future work, changing the text to read "...particularly as to nationality, guardianship, domicile, marriage..." etc.

Miss KENYON (United States of America) agreed that it might clarify matters if Chapter XIII was divided in two parts. One could be entitled "Collection of Information", and the other "Resolution on Questionnaires".

Mrs. URALOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) suggested putting to the vote the proposal submitted by Mrs. Popova on the question of deleting points 3 and 4 of the resolution on questionnaires, which she supported.

Mrs. BEGRUP (Denmark) stated that the work of collecting information and of general research on the status of women throughout the world would be carried out by the technical staff in the Secretariat of the United Nations. Information thus obtained could be compared with the official information supplied by Governments, non-governmental organizations and other bodies.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) insisted that it was not the correct procedure for private individuals to supply information or carry out general research. Points 3 and 4 seemed to imply that the Commission did not trust the information supplied by Governments, and it was not for the United Nations to appraise or check on information supplied by those

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Governments. She, therefore, urged that her proposal should be voted upon.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the proposal submitted by Miss Kenyon modifying item C of the resolution on questionnaires.

The proposal was adopted by eleven votes, with two abstentions.

The proposal submitted by Mrs. Popova was rejected by seven votes to two, with one abstention.

Miss KENYON (United States of America) proposed adding at the end of item C, as amended, the reservations made by Mrs. Popova and eventually by Mrs. Uralova on the inclusion of items 3 and 4 in Chapter XIII.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) agreed and the CHAIRMAN put Miss Kenyon's proposal to the vote.

The resolution was adopted by twelve votes.

Miss KENYON (United States of America) proposed the addition of a new paragraph, to appear after paragraph 42, citing all previous resolutions which, together with items A and B of the resolution contained in paragraph 42, would constitute the programme of future work. Items C, D and E would be deleted and the new chapter would be entitled "Programme of Future Work".

Miss MITCHELL read out the text of the resolution as redrafted by Miss Kenyon.

The amended resolution was adopted by eleven votes, with two abstentions.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the resolution on the strengthening of the Secretariat, the CHAIRMAN announced that she had been informed that Mrs. Amanda Labarca had been appointed Chief of the Status of Women Section of the Division of Human Rights.

Miss MITCHELL (Secretary of the Commission) read out the curriculum vitae of Mrs. Labarca, after which congratulatory speeches were made by Miss KENYON (United States of America), Begum HAMID ALI (India), Mrs. BEGTRUP (Denmark), Mrs. de MONZON (Guatemala), Mrs. STREET (Australia) and Mrs. URDANETA (Venezuela), who all expressed pleasure that such a distinguished woman had been appointed.

Mrs. URALOVA proposed an amendment to the last paragraph of the resolution on the strengthening of the Secretariat, by the addition of the words "within the limits of the money allotted for increasing the Section" between the words "Commission" and "assigning".

The amendment proposed by Mrs. Uralova was rejected by six votes to five.

It was decided to postpone discussion of the second part of paragraph 42 which spoke of Mrs. Lefaucheux' proposal with regard to conscription of women, and to vote upon the resolution only.

The resolution on the Secretariat was adopted by eleven votes to none, with two abstentions.

Upon Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) asking whether paragraph 43 was still necessary in view of the appointment of Miss Labarca, Mrs. STREET (Australia) pointed out that the suggestion in paragraph 43 was that the Status of Women Section should be made a Division of the Department of Social Affairs, which would give added prestige to the Commission.

Mrs. URALOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) thought that since that paragraph expressed the view of one member only, it would be sufficient to include it as a footnote.

The proposal of Mrs. URALOVA was rejected by six votes to two, with four abstentions.

Paragraph 43 was adopted by ten votes.

Miss KENYON (United States of America) read out the new paragraph she had proposed for insertion immediately after paragraph 42, as follows:

"The Commission decided that the above proposals, together with those in preceding chapters of this report (namely, those contained in the resolutions on the political rights of women, nationality, educational opportunities, property rights of married women, place of next session of the Commission, and influencing public opinion), should constitute the programme of future work."

Mrs. STREET (Australia) suggested the substitution of the word "including" for the word "namely".

The paragraph proposed by Miss Kenyon and amended by Mrs. Street was adopted by eleven votes.

Begum HAMID ALI (India) proposed that Annex A should be deleted from the report. While she agreed with most of it, she would wish to change certain parts, and she considered that the subject required more careful study than the Commission was able to give it at the current session. She thought it would be better to leave the matter over until the next session.

Mrs. STREET (Australia), Mrs. URALOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) and Miss KENYON (United States of America) supported the proposal.

The proposal to delete Annex A, with a view to a more thorough examination of the subject at the next session, was adopted unanimously.

Mrs. STREET (Australia) proposed that Annex B should form a chapter of the report, under the title "Abolition of Prostitution" and with a slight redrafting of the first few lines.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) pointed out that it had been decided to insert it as an annex because there had been no time for the thorough examination of the subject which would have been necessary before it could figure as a part of the report.

/In reply

In reply to Mrs. STREET's request that there might at least be some redrafting of the opening lines, to link it with the report as being within the terms of reference of the Commission, the CHAIRMAN emphasized that the subject in question was not the concern of the Commission, which had already been criticized by the Economic and Social Council for going beyond its terms reference, and Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) pointed out that even the Social Commission regarded the subject of venereal disease as coming more within the competence of WEO.

Mrs. STREET (Australia) withdrew her proposal.

Annex B was adopted unanimously.

After a short exchange of views, in which it was agreed that Mrs. Lefaucheux had been quite prepared to withdraw her suggestion, contained in the second part of paragraph 42, a vote was taken.

The second part of paragraph 42 was rejected unanimously.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) read the text of the new paragraph 31 in Chapter IX proposed by the drafting sub-committee: "The Commission, although believing in the ultimate desirability of arranging for visits of its members to Member States and of regional conferences of Member Governments summoned by the United Nations, felt it necessary for budgetary reasons to set aside these ideas for the moment. The Commission, however, draws attention to the resolution in the next chapter where suggestions are made for a regional conference outside the framework of the United Nations but with which the Commission might co-operate."

Paragraph 32 would begin the new chapter.

The new text of paragraph 31 was adopted by twelve votes to one.

The report (document E/CN.6/74), as amended, was adopted by eleven votes, with two abstentions.

Mrs. URALOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) explained her abstention in the vote on the report as a whole. While she fully supported the resolution which had been adopted concerning the political and economic rights of women, she could not support the recommendation with regard to ILO, the resolutions concerning the Commission on Human Rights contained in paragraphs 26 and 27, or the resolution in paragraph 42.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) explained that she had abstained from voting on the report as a whole, since the solution of certain of the questions discussed by the Commission had not satisfied her.

RETIREMENT OF FIVE MEMBERS

The CHAIRMAN reminded the Commission that certain Member States, namely Australia, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, China, Guatemala and India, ended their term of office with the current session

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of the Commission. She congratulated the representatives of those countries upon the zeal, intelligence and tact with which they had performed their work, and said that the Commission would much regret their absence at future sessions.

STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION

Miss ANTHONY (Women's International Democratic Federation) reminded the Commission of the delay that had occurred in the granting of a visa to Mrs. Leclercq of the Federation to attend the session. When certain members had asked for some mention of the incident to appear in the report, the reply had been that the Secretariat must rule upon whether a footnote to that effect could be inserted. Since the Commission had helped materially in obtaining the visa for Miss Leclercq, Miss Anthony urged that such a vital matter should appear in the report in some form.

Dr. SCHWELB (Assistant Director, Division of Human Rights) pointed out that rule 43 of the rules of procedure of functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council stated that commissions should report to the Council on the work of each session. It was the Commission that reported and the report should be on its work. The work of the Commission did not consist only of the decisions adopted by the majority; defeated proposals submitted by the minority also formed part of the Commission's work. Therefore it had become the practice for minority views to be included in some form in reports. The Commission retained, however, its right to decide upon the manner of presentation of dissenting opinions. Applying those rules to the case before them, the Commission itself had to decide whether the incident was related to its work and, if so, whether, and in what form, it should be mentioned in the report.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), supported by Mrs. URALOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), urged that the incident should be mentioned. On the basis of Dr. SCHWELB's interpretation of rule 43, she considered it the duty of the Commission to report both majority and minority views.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) pointed out that the Commission had already discussed the matter and had decided by a majority vote not to include mention of it. The incident involved the Secretariat, the United States Government as well as the Women's International Democratic Federation and since the only version available to the Commission was the version given by the Federation, the Commission was not in a position to report the matter. Moreover, it was not an incident which affected in any way the work of the Commission.

Miss ZUNG (China) supported the opinion of Miss Sutherland, and drew

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attention to the fact that, while all members regretted that Mrs. Leclercq had not been able to arrive on time, the Federation had been well represented at every meeting.

Mrs. STREET (Australia) thought it would be tactful not to over-emphasize such a regrettable incident, but suggested that a paragraph might be inserted in that part of the report where mention was made of those attending the session.

The proposal of Mrs. Street was rejected by five votes to four, with two abstentions.

APPEAL TO THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD, PROPOSED BY MRS. BEGTRUP

Mrs. BEGTRUP (Denmark) asked for the support of the Commission for an appeal she had drafted, calling upon the women of the world to safeguard the peace. The people of the world looked to the Commission on the Status of Women to express the desires of women throughout the world, and it was right that the growing influence of women in public life should be an influence for peace.

She proceeded to read the appeal, as follows:

"We the representatives of fifteen countries gathered in the Status of Women Commission of United Nations to safeguard the interests of all women, appeal to the many millions of women throughout the world to work in every possible way for the peace and prosperity of peoples everywhere.

"Peace throughout the world is the ardent dream of all women. We the women of the entire world must take our stand against war. Let us proclaim that there is no material difficulty or mental conflict between peoples that can in reality be solved by war because it ruins all peoples.

"Women are more than half the population of the world. Let us use our time wisely. Let us show the world the growing influence of women in public life is an influence for peace and for patient striving to build friendly relations between all peoples and nations.

"There is no woman anywhere in the world who wants war, who does not know that the only guarantee for the happiness of her children and her home is that the peace of the world should be secure.

"Let the voice of the women of the world ring out strong and clear to remind statesmen that their most urgent task is to work to remove the causes of war.

"We have a meeting ground for constructive work for peace in the United Nations. Let us strengthen this instrument. Let women play an historical part in the prevention and removal of present and future threats of war, so that it can realize the deepest aspirations of women

/everywhere

everywhere for a world of peace and freedom for their children and generations yet to come."

The Commission supported the appeal unanimously.

Mrs. Leclercq (Women's International Democratic Federation) emphasized the need for the world to understand that the United Nations and women throughout the world were acting together to defend peace throughout the world.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) was not altogether satisfied with the appeal, which did not state forcefully enough that women everywhere were called upon to fight for peace. The appeal should go further, and call for propaganda against a new war.

Mrs. STREET (Australia) considered the appeal all-embracing, but thought it should be accompanied by some request for action. One suggestion might be that it should be read or distributed at the next General Assembly.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) asked the Secretariat to give the appeal the widest possible publicity. Beyond that, she thought it would be difficult to make any concrete suggestion for further action. The Commission had decided to send out the appeal as a body concerned with the rights of individuals, reminding women that they could not create a new world simply by being women. They must win the fight for peace by accepting their responsibilities towards their own and future generations.

Miss KENYON (United States of America) stated that the Commission itself was a practical demonstration of peace and peace-mongering. The appeal could be furthered by the fifteen members of the Commission telling their own countries of the work for peace done by the Commission and urging that peace was within their reach if they had the will to achieve it.

Mrs. de ECHEVERRIA (Costa Rica), Mrs. URDANETA (Venezuela) and Begum HAMID ALI (India) assured Mrs. Begtrup that women of their countries would support the appeal wholeheartedly.

The CHAIRMAN considered the launching of the appeal an important step on the part of the Commission. The hope of peace was the hope of women throughout the world.

After expressing her satisfaction with the conclusions of the Commission, the CHAIRMAN declared the second session closed.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.
