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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Sixth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Saturday, 29 March 1952, at 10 a.m.

CONTENTS:

pages

- Educational opportunities for women (item 7 of the agenda) (continued):
- (b) Study of the report of the International Labour Office on vocational training of women (E/CN.6/178, E/CN.6/L.64, E/CN.6/L.66) (continued) 4 - 11
 - (a) Study of the progress report prepared by UNESCO in collaboration with the Secretary-General of the United Nations (E/CN.6/191, E/CN.6/L.65) (resumed from the preceding meeting) 11 - 13
2. Status of women in public law (item 5 of the agenda) (resumed from the 108th meeting):
Consideration of supplementary reports on sections C and E of part I of the questionnaire on the legal status and treatment of Women, based on such additional information as may be supplied by Governments (E/CN.6/L.63/Rev.1) 13 - 18
3. Equal pay for equal work for men and women workers (item 8 of the agenda):
Report on the action taken by the International Labour Conference at its 34th session held in June 1951. (E/CN.6/179, E/CN.6/L.69, E/CN.6/L.70). 18 - 24

Present:

Chairman: Mrs. LEFAUCHEUX (France)

Members:

Miss LUTZ	Brazil
Mrs. NYLIN	Burma
Mrs. NOVIKOVA	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
Mrs. FIGUEROA	Chile
Miss TSENG	China
Miss MANAS	Cuba
Mrs. de l'OFFICIAL	Dominican Republic
Mrs. FIROUZ	Iran
Miss PELLETIER	Netherlands
Mrs. ROSS	New Zealand
Begum Fida HASSAN	Pakistan
Miss KALINOWSKA	Poland
Mrs. POPOVA	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Miss SUTHERLAND	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Mrs. GOLDMAN	United States of America

Representatives of specialized agencies:

International Labour Organization	Miss FAIRCHILD
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Miss DAS

Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations:Category A

World Federation of Trade Unions	Mrs. CHIOSTERGI
	Mrs. NOCE

Category B

Catholic International Union for Social Service	Mrs. SOUDAN
International Association of Penal Law	Mrs. ROMNICIANO
International Bureau for the	
Unification of Penal Law	

International Conference of
Catholic Charities (replacing
Caritas Internationalis

Miss OSTERTAG

International Council of Women

Miss van EEGHEN
Mrs. JACKSON-HAIGHT

International Federal of Business
and Professional Women

Mrs. HYMER
Miss TOMLINSON

International Federation of Friends
of Young Women

Mrs. FLECHTER

International Federation of
University Women

Mrs. FLECHTER

International Union for Child Welfare

Miss FRANKENSTEIN

International Union of Catholic
Women's League

Miss WEBER

Liaison Committee of Women's
International Organizations

Miss BARRY
Miss van EEGHEN
Mrs. HYMER

Pax Romana

Miss ARCHINARD

World's Women's Christian
Temperance Union

Mrs. CHAIX-CONSTANTIN

World Union for Progressive Judaism

Lady NATHAN of CHURT

Register

St. Joan's International Social and
Political Alliance

Miss CHALLONER
Miss HILLS YOUNG

Secretariat:

Mrs. Tenison-Woods

Representative of the Secretary-General

Mrs. Grinberg-Vinaver

Secretary to the Commission

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN (item 7 of the agenda) (continued):

- (b) Study of the report of the International Labour Office on vocational training of women (E/CN.6/178, E/CN.6/L.64, E/CN.6/L.66) (continued)

Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland) said that the Polish delegation had always supported the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women. In its broad aspects, that question was connected with the question of the access of women to all kinds of work, including work which in many countries was still considered as the exclusive prerogative of men, the intention being to keep the vocational attainments of women at the lowest possible level and to pay women less and exploit them more, in the interests of the employers. The fact that participation in skilled work in industry improved the qualifications and cultural standards of women was the reason why employers preferred to keep them out of skilled trades. Skilled work was of greater value to the individual than unskilled work, and in Poland it was the women who benefited from participation in it. No one could reasonably allege that skilled work was harder than unskilled work. In Poland, every effort was made to provide mechanical appliances to reduce physical effort to a minimum. Skilled work in industry, while requiring greater knowledge, demanded no greater expenditure of physical energy than the simple jobs which it was generally considered women could best do. She could not see why people who objected to women doing skilled work did not at the same time pity those women engaged in unskilled jobs where, as she demonstrated by reference to jasmine pickers and laundry workers, women had to carry extremely heavy loads. How well women could do the work of blacksmiths, turners, fitters and the like was amply shown by their activities in the vocational schools of her country: schools which trained people for engineering, building and other trades, and which had over 25,000 women students, equal to two-fifths of the total attendance. Those women students came from working or farming families, and, after completing their secondary education, took up vocational training while at work. Young workers were paid the standard rates while attending school, while adults attended evening classes. It would be noted that, as a result of the increased mechanization of agriculture, skilled women workers were being enabled to devote considerable leisure to recreation and social and cultural pursuits. It would not be alleged that driving an agricultural machine was harder work than ordinary, unmechanized ploughing.

The CHAIRMAN reminded the Polish representative that at the preceding meeting the Commission had decided to limit to ten minutes the time allowed to members of the Commission for their statements on the item of the agenda at present under discussion. Of course, representatives were perfectly free to submit any supplementary remarks in writing, if they considered that they had not been able to speak in sufficient detail owing to that limitation. Comments submitted in writing by non-governmental organizations should not, however, exceed 2,000 words.

Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland) said that she would try to be brief, but was not sure that the Commission had decided to limit the time of speakers.

The CHAIRMAN said that the decision to limit the time of each speaker had been formally taken by vote, and that it was her duty to enforce that decision.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking to a point of order, said that the Chairman had laid down that representatives could speak for from ten to fifteen minutes, and urged that everyone be given the opportunity of speaking for that length of time.

The CHAIRMAN said that her memory was perfectly clear on the point, and that the proposal put to the vote had been that the time of members of the Commission should be limited to ten minutes, and that of representatives of non-governmental organizations to five minutes. That decision was reported in the summary record of the 110th meeting.¹⁾

Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland) could not understand why the Chairman had called her to order, because she had been referring in her statement to conditions in Poland.

The CHAIRMAN explained that she was asking the Polish representative to bring her statement to an end not because she was giving examples of opportunities for vocational training for women in Poland, but because the decision taken by the Commission at the preceding meeting must be enforced.

Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland), resuming her statement, said that in Poland there was no question of forcing women into industrial work; neither was there any question of obliging them to go to school. But things had changed since the time when, in the interests of certain groups of individuals, every effort had been made to prevent women getting education. The opportunities now afforded to women in Poland were very considerable, and their lot was not at all to be pitied.

1) See document E/CN.6/SR.110, page 22.

They entered industry because they wanted to, and incurred no penalties if they declined to do so. Conditions might not be ideal in Poland, but women there now had an opportunity of obtaining adequate instruction and were seeking it in great numbers.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that vocational guidance and technical education for women deserved the closest attention because they were closely connected with general education and political and economic equality. The International Labour Office had drawn attention to difficulties it had encountered in its work, caused by the multiplicity of legislative systems, but that obstacle could be overcome if the information submitted by governments was properly analysed. It was clear from the discussion that in certain countries women were being discriminated against, particularly in the field of vocational guidance. In many countries, reactionary elements were endeavouring to show that there was no need for women to enter skilled trades. Experience, however, had disproved that contention, and women were playing an ever-growing part in economic life. The deterioration of living standards made it necessary to employ them more and more.

According to the International Labour Office, the number of women engaged in industry had recently declined. That was attributable to the fact that the growth of unemployment in certain countries affected women first, because they were employed on work that was less skilled than that done by men. As the Chilean representative had rightly pointed out, in many countries, industrialized and under-developed alike, a number of restrictions had been imposed on the access of women to technical and vocational education. That was due to the absence of equality between men and women, and to the fact that employers preferred unskilled labour because it was cheaper. All that went to show how discrimination in the economic field was reflected in the difficulties women encountered in seeking vocational training.

In the Soviet Union, women made up 40 per cent of the total labour force. They were also busily engaged in educating the country's children. The granting of full equality with men in the economic, political and social spheres had made it possible for women to participate fully in all types of activity - industry, agriculture, scientific research, the arts and so on. Hundreds of thousands of

women took special technical and practical courses, and were inspired and assisted by the spirit of socialist competition that prevailed. Equal pay and child-care and other facilities made it possible for women to qualify for the skilled occupations they deserved to enter, and they grasped their opportunities unprompted by any sort of threat. When they had completed their training they took their part alongside men in some of the country's immense development projects, where there was notable co-operation between the sexes. For seven years now, women had been proudly participating, on a highly technical mechanized basis, in the work of the large agricultural, hydro-electric and irrigation projects that were turning deserts into rich, arable land capable of supporting many millions of people.

The question of technical education was most important, and it should be approached in such a manner as to lead to the drafting of appropriate recommendations to a number of countries to ensure that the women of those countries were able to obtain the technical education they now lacked.

Miss CHIOSTERGI (World Federation of Trade Unions), speaking at the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, said that she would limit herself to comments on the report of the International Labour Office; however, she intended to submit to members of the Commission in writing the information on which some of those comments were based.

In the first place she noted that the report in question (E/CN.6/178) failed to supply certain information which would have made it possible to form a general idea of the whole problem of vocational training for women, to assess the situation more accurately, and hence to formulate appropriate practical proposals. In a report of that kind, and in similar studies which might eventually be undertaken, a comparison should be made, on the basis of reliable figures, between the actual extent of the participation of men and women respectively in vocational and technical education. Such information would also make it possible to identify the causes of certain variations in the figures. For instance, the official figures showed that in the United States of America the number of women who had obtained a vocational training diploma had decreased, by comparison with the number of men, since the second world war. The figures also showed that in that same country the number of women taking courses at vocational, commercial and industrial schools had been considerably less in 1948 than in 1930. Moreover, the report submitted by the International Labour Office to the 33rd International Labour

Conference had recognized the progress made in the vocational training of women in Poland, Czechoslovakia and China, and she considered that those advances might have been commented on at greater length and the reasons for them explained. In any case, such progress contradicted the United Kingdom representative's assertion at the preceding meeting that the absence of information on vocational training for women in Non-Self-Governing Territories was due, not to any voluntary omission, but to the fact that the situation in those territories was similar to that in self-governing countries in the same areas. Owing to the absence of such information from the report of the International Labour Office, it was impossible to call certain countries to account for their unpardonable dilatoriness in the field of vocational training for women. It was likewise impossible to study the causes of such backwardness or the reasons for the progress achieved in the same field by certain other countries. She noted that it was stated on page 20 of the report that: "There was still a tendency in many cases to consider the presence of girls and women in the labour market as a temporary circumstance." Indeed, the report seemed to suggest that female labour was to be regarded purely as a supplementary factor in the labour situation. She did not, however, share that view, and agreed with the Chilean representative that female labour was tending more and more to become a permanent feature of economic life, and establishing itself in all branches of activity. The Commission should take account of that fundamental truth in any resolution it might adopt on the subject, and should also include a recommendation that governments ensure that women enjoyed the same right to work as men on conditions of equality.

Moreover, it was not enough to request governments to promote vocational training for women. Every country should be urged to allocate larger sums for the establishment of training schools where girls could receive appropriate technical education. Finally, governments should be requested to enact legislation to make apprenticeship compulsory, and to compel employers to organize such apprenticeship for girls as well as boys under trade union supervision. According to the United Kingdom representative, the problem was one which concerned a very large number of countries.

Governments should be urged to promote the establishment of joint committees of representatives of trade union organizations and of women's organizations to

implement the measures recommended by the Commission and to submit concrete proposals to governments concerning the supervision of the execution of apprenticeship and vocational training programmes and the administration of the whole system set up on that basis. The World Federation of Trade Unions would submit written proposals on the subject to the Commission.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the rules of procedure made no provision for a non-governmental organization to submit a proposal direct to the Commission. It could, however, arrange for such proposal to be submitted through the delegation of a country member of the Commission.

Miss CHALLONER (St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance), speaking at the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, said that her organization believed that women should have an equal opportunity with men of finding employment, and that they should enjoy equal protection from exploitation.

In some countries trade union regulations barred women from apprenticeship to certain skilled trades, for example, the textile, printing and building trades in the United Kingdom. An investigation into that situation might well be carried out by the International Labour Office, whose report she commended.

Miss TSENG (China) observed that the reference to China in the report of the International Labour Office was to Communist China, and not to Nationalist China. That being the case, she would draw the attention of members to the fact that, after Communist China had entered the Korean War at the end of 1950, a large number of women workers had been engaged in Shanghai and in Manchuria on armament work, and, together with their male comrades, had been forced to offer their services for less pay as a so-called contribution to anti-American aid to the Korean movement. All the workers had been called to meetings and obliged, under threat of denunciation as reactionaries, to follow the dictates of their leaders.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) observed that vocational training courses in the United States of America were established and paid for by the federal and state governments within the framework of the general education system. They were open to full-time and part-time women workers, and to women seeking to prepare themselves for employment. There had been a considerable increase in the number of women attending schools and in the number of women in industry.

As to the comparison between skilled and unskilled workers, surely much skilled work in steel mills, a branch of industry in which the Soviet Union prided itself, was inevitably harder and heavier than any unskilled work. It was somewhat startling to hear some speakers relate the question of compulsory labour to that of compulsory education, particularly when the general trend was towards freedom in education. In the Soviet Union, forced education was becoming the law of the land, and was being closely integrated with the economic programme. There was also ample documentary evidence of forced labour operations in that country, and it was an insult to the intelligence to claim that forced labour brought women the joy of being able to choose their occupation for themselves. They were actually forced into mines and heavy industry, where they were doing much hard work for the benefit of the Soviet Union economy.

In the field of vocational training, the Soviet Union was faced with the problem of resistance on the part of graduates, many of whom did not like to be pressed into the service of certain State enterprises; but refusal was punishable by a term of imprisonment.

She believed in vocational training programmes for women, but there must be no compulsion on them to make use of them. The provision of adequate vocational training facilities and free access to it would enable women to choose their occupation freely.

Mrs. SOUDAN (Catholic International Union for Social Service), speaking at the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, said that she would like to dwell on a point in the International Labour Office's report which was of special interest to her organization, which was interested in the status of women not only from the theoretical, but also from the practical point of view, and whose members represented half of the social service schools in the entire world. The point related to the vocational training of women in under-developed countries. Earlier in the session, the United States representative had very rightly stressed the importance of the development of handicrafts in such countries. The Catholic International Union for Social Service shared that representative's concern, and, while not wishing to limit women's activities to the home, would further like to stress the need for perfecting the training of women in domestic economy. Reference to Belgian statistics, for example, showed that 68 per cent of the net

national income went to meet household expenses. Since the family budget was controlled by women, it was essential that they should know how to make the best use of the resources at the disposal of the family group. It was superfluous to point out that the rationalization of household expenditure had a bearing not only on family life but also on the national economy, so that the problem fitted in perfectly with one of the declared aims of the United Nations, namely, the improvement of economic conditions throughout the world.

The CHAIRMAN declared closed the general discussion on item 7 (b) of the agenda, and invited the Commission to consider the draft resolutions submitted on that item.

Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland) said that the Polish delegation would sponsor the proposals put forward by the representative of the World Federation of Trade Unions and move them as amendments to the Chilean draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.64).

The CHAIRMAN proposed that pending the circulation of the Polish amendments, the Commission should consider the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.65) submitted by the New Zealand representative on the progress report of UNESCO.

It was so agreed.

(a) Study of the progress report prepared by UNESCO in collaboration with the Secretary-General of the United Nations (E/CN.6/191, E/CN.6/L.65) (resumed from the preceding meeting).

Mrs. ROSS (New Zealand) said that, having regard to the very full expression of views in the general discussion, she did not feel it necessary to expatiate on her draft resolution, which was self-explanatory. After referring to certain paragraphs of the preamble, she pointed out that the paragraph beginning "Notes however that the report of UNESCO does not include" had been inserted because in many countries no schools existed, and it was desirable to make sure that there was no legal impediment to their establishment.

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) wished to know whether the Commission would request the Secretary-General to continue to collaborate with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Mrs. ROSS (New Zealand) had no objection to the passage referred to by the Chilean representative being re-drafted in that sense.

The CHAIRMAN explained that the draft resolution submitted by the New Zealand representative used the same terms as the resolution adopted by the Commission at the fifth session.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that the point raised by the Chilean representative deserved full consideration. In her (Mrs. Popova's) view, it was neither necessary nor desirable to repeat automatically the phraseology of a previous resolution.

The CHAIRMAN explained that the paragraph in fact recommended the continuance of action along the lines indicated in the resolution adopted at the fifth session.

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER, Secretary to the Commission, pointed out that the Commission could only address a direct request to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Any request to the Director-General of a specialized agency must be made through the Economic and Social Council, otherwise it would not be possible to give effect to the resolution.

Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) asked if there had previously been collaboration between the Secretary-General and the Director-General of UNESCO. If so, there was surely no need to refer to it. If there had been no collaboration hitherto, the point should be made clear in the text.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) said that the form of words employed had been used before, and there was no need to seek the specific approval of the Economic and Social Council. If a different form were used on the present occasion the impression might be created that the Director-General of UNESCO had been reluctant to collaborate with the Secretary-General on the matters mentioned in the draft resolution. As members were well aware UNESCO had been most co-operative in meeting the desires of the Commission.

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) thought it extremely important, when trying to establish collaboration between the United Nations and a specialized agency, to follow the proper procedure. She thought the right way would be to invite the Secretary-General to continue to seek the collaboration of the Director-General of UNESCO, and saw no reason why the request should not be made in the form of a recommendation to the Economic and Social Council, and not direct.,

The CHAIRMAN said that that proposal amounted to an amendment to the New Zealand draft resolution and asked the representative of Chile to draft a suitable text.

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile), following comments by Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER, Secretary to the Commission, and the CHAIRMAN, suggested that the opening words of the penultimate paragraph of the New Zealand draft resolution might be amended to read:

"Requests the Secretary-General to continue to seek the collaboration of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization"

Mrs. ROSS (New Zealand) accepted the Chilean amendment.

The New Zealand draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.65) was adopted, as amended, by 13 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.¹⁾

2. STATUS OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC LAW (item 5 of the agenda) (resumed from the 108th meeting):

Consideration of supplementary reports on sections C and E of part I of the questionnaire on the legal status and treatment of women, based on such additional information as may be supplied by governments.

Draft resolution submitted jointly by the representatives of the United States of America, the Netherlands and Brazil (E/CN.6/L.63/Rev.1)

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) asked for some explanation why the particular form of words used in the third paragraph of the joint draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.63/Rev.1) submitted by the representatives of the United States of America, the Netherlands and Brazil had been chosen. She wished in particular to know whether the authors were requesting the Secretariat to provide a simplified summary of the replies by governments to sections C and E of part I of the questionnaire, or whether they were requesting that such a summary should deal with nationality, fiscal laws and political rights as well.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) presumed that the proposed non-technical summary on discrimination against women would cover the information obtained on the basis of the whole of part I of the questionnaire. Summaries

¹⁾ For full text of the New Zealand draft resolution as adopted, see the report of the Commission on its sixth session (E/2208 - E/CN.6/204), paragraph 58.

comparing the situation in different countries and showing the progress achieved provided the Commission with a most useful instrument. She did not think that the suggested publication would in any way duplicate any of the work which was already being done in the field in question.

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER, Secretary to the Commission, asked whether the United States representative wished the Secretariat to prepare a further pamphlet on the question of nationality. If so, she would like to know in what way it was to differ from the previous one. She referred members of the Commission to paragraphs 65 (a) and (b) of the Commission's report on its fifth session (E/1997/Rev.1).

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) said that there was no need to repeat the excellent information given in the pamphlet on the nationality of married women. She assumed that the proposed summary would emphasize new topics.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) asked whether it was intended to include in the pamphlet information about political rights. She agreed with the United States representative that there was no need to summarize once again the information on the nationality of married women, unless the non-governmental organizations felt that such a summary would be useful. It was always difficult to present material adequately in summary form.

The CHAIRMAN understood that the aim of the pamphlet would be to present more simply the information transmitted to the Secretary-General in reply to the questions dealt with in documents E/CN.6/156/Add.1 and 2 and E/CN.6/157/Add.1 and 2.

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER, Secretary to the Commission, added that the revised text of the pamphlet on political rights of women was in course of preparation, and would be published shortly. As to the question of the nationality of married women, she thought it could hardly be presented more briefly than had been done in the previous pamphlet. So far as concerned fiscal laws, the Commission had noted that no flagrant discrimination existed in that field and that the question therefore need not be pursued.

Miss LUTZ (Brazil) thought that the proposal as set forth in the draft resolution was perfectly clear. The pamphlet must explain those problems which were covered by sections C and E of part I of the questionnaire. The problem of nationality had already been dealt with, and questions of educational opportunity did not fall within the field of public law.

She agreed with the United Kingdom representative that the process of summarizing was by no means easy, but was sure that the Secretariat would carry it out satisfactorily, since it had both the experience and the ability to do that type of work.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) thought that if it was intended to exclude any reference to education, that should be made clear in the draft resolution. Education was included in part I of the questionnaire.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) agreed with the United Kingdom representative. She had, when speaking in the general discussion on the status of women in public law, referred to the great interest taken by the United States of America in the problem, and had hoped that the pamphlet might have dealt with fiscal law, including such aspects as reduction of income-tax for working women etc.

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER, Secretary to the Commission, explained that so far as concerned the question of fiscal laws, to which section F of the questionnaire referred, the study had not been brought up to date for the present session, since the resolution adopted at the fifth session related only to sections C and E of part I of the questionnaire.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America), Miss PELETIER (Netherlands) and Miss LUTZ (Brazil) withdrew the final clause of the third paragraph, beginning at the words "with particular attention to".

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) did not consider that the third paragraph should be thus amended. Many representatives had stated that insufficient information was available on the part played by women in government service. She presumed that was why the sponsors of the draft resolution had originally made the text explicit on that point.

The CHAIRMAN appreciated the anxiety of the Chilean representative to avoid requesting the publication of a pamphlet which would merely cover the same ground as the earlier one. A study on the question of nationality was in course of preparation, and it would be desirable to await the results of the fourth session of the International Law Commission before asking the Secretariat to prepare a fresh pamphlet. As to fiscal laws, the preliminary studies on that question had not yet been completed. Accordingly, the only material suitable for

summary reproduction in a pamphlet at that moment was the replies of governments to the questions contained in sections C and E of part I of the questionnaire on the legal status and treatment of women.

Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) was also opposed to the third paragraph being amended.

Further, she considered that, since it was admitted in the first paragraph that discrimination against women existed, explicit reference should be made to the various grounds on which discrimination could be based, namely, sex, race and religion. The inclusion of those words would serve as a guide to the authors of the proposed pamphlet.

She would therefore propose the insertion of the words "on account of sex, race and religion" after the words "against women" in the first line of the first paragraph and in the third line of the second paragraph, and the insertion of the words "against women on account of sex, race and religion" after the word "discrimination" in the fifth line of the third paragraph, the final clause of that paragraph being retained.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) supported the deletion of the final clause of the third paragraph. As to the amendments proposed by the representative of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, she would point out that governments had not been asked to give information on discrimination on grounds of race or religion. That subject had not been included in the questionnaire, and it was impossible to deal in the pamphlet with problems which had not been studied. She had been struck by the fact that in listing the various forms of discrimination, the Byelorussian representative had not included discrimination on grounds of political opinion.

Replying to the CHAIRMAN, Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) agreed that her amendments should be put to the vote as a whole.

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) enquired whether the Commission possessed any information at all on discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality or religion.

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER, Secretary to the Commission, replied that the Secretariat had no information on those forms of discrimination.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Commission was not authorized by its terms of reference to call for information on discriminatory measures against men

and women alike, but merely on those discriminatory measures that affected women alone.

Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Commission was well aware of the fact that there was discrimination against women on grounds of race and religion. Surely it would be good to ensure that the documents issued under the aegis of the Commission reflected existing circumstances.

Miss KALINOWSKA (Poland) requested that the vote on the Byelorussian amendments be taken by roll-call.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

The Dominican Republic, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first. The result of the voting was as follows:

in favour: Poland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,

Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Against: Dominican Republic, France, Netherlands,
New Zealand, Pakistan, United Kingdom, United
States of America, Brazil, China, Cuba.

Abstaining: Iran, Burma, Chile.

The Byelorussian amendments to the joint draft resolution on the status of women in public law were rejected by 10 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions.

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) said that she had abstained from voting not on the ground that questions of discrimination did not come within the scope of a publication of the Commission on the Status of Women, but because the Secretariat had no information on the subject covered by the Byelorussian amendments.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) said that if the various forms of discrimination were to be enumerated, discrimination on account of political opinion should be mentioned.

It was agreed that the final clause of the third paragraph, beginning with the words "with particular attention to", should be deleted.

The joint draft resolution on the status of women in public law (E/CN.6/L.63/Rev.1) was adopted, as amended, by 13 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.¹⁾

1) For full text of the joint draft resolution as adopted, see the report of the Commission on its sixth session (E/2208 - E/CN.6/204), paragraph 44.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) said that at a previous meeting the Soviet Union representative had stated that the Soviet Union Government had replied to the questionnaire on the legal status of women. She (Mrs. Goldman) had been unable to find any information on that point. Yet an examination of the documents showed that the Government of the Soviet Union had indeed replied on education, fiscal law and civil liberties.

The Soviet Union representative had, at the 108th meeting, challenged the accuracy of her (Mrs. Goldman's) quotation from the Soviet Union representative's statement about the position of women in the Soviet Union in public law. In discussing maternity welfare, Mrs. Popova had said that if a woman were pregnant she could not be directed to a job. Before referring to that statement she (Mrs. Goldman) had taken very great care to secure an accurate translation of the words used. She regretted the fact that the Soviet Union representative had thought fit to stoop to personal abuse. The United States Government had given full information on the status of women in public law, and she had accordingly refrained from herself making lengthy comments on the subject, in order to save the Commission's time.

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that she was not prepared to reply there and then to the slander just uttered by the United States representative, and accordingly reserved her right to give an appropriate explanation later.

3. EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK FOR MEN AND WOMEN WORKERS (item 8 of the agenda)

Report on the action taken by the International Labour Conference at its 34th session held in June 1951 (E/CN.6/179, E/CN.6/L.69, E/CN.6/L.70)

Mrs. GRINEBERG-VINAVER, Secretary to the Commission, submitted the report (E/CN.6/179) prepared by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the proceedings of, and action taken by, the International Labour Conference at its 34th session on the question of equal pay for equal work for men and women workers.

The Secretary-General had thought it advisable to prepare a report on that subject in order to assist the Commission in its study of a particularly difficult and technical question. The report described first the proceedings of the Committee on Equal Remuneration, then the action taken by the plenary Conference, and finally the various positions taken in the debate in plenary Conference by the representatives of employers, workers and governments.

The Secretary-General had thought it useful to annex to his report the texts of the Convention at various stages of its preparation, namely: the draft submitted by the International Labour Office to the 34th International Labour Conference, the draft submitted to that Conference by the Committee on Equal Remuneration, and the text finally adopted by the Conference. The texts were presented in tabular form to facilitate comparison, and in order to set out clearly the successive amendments made to them. The texts of the recommendations were presented in the same way.

Miss FAIRCHILD (International Labour Organisation), speaking at the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, said that copies of the International Labour Office Bulletins containing the Convention concerning equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value and recommendations agreed upon during the 34th International Labour Conference were available for members of the Commission.

The International Labour Office regarded the adoption of the Convention by the Conference as only the first stage in its efforts to secure equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value. The next stage would be the ratification of the Convention, and members of the Commission, as well as the non-governmental organizations represented at the present session, were asked to regard that as a task for them. The International Labour Office would be glad to assist them so far as it lay in its power to do so.

One merit of the Convention lay in article 2, which provided that the principle of equal remuneration might be applied by means of national laws or regulations; by means of recognized machinery for wage determination; by means of collective agreements between employers and workers; or by a combination of all three methods. Those provisions were intended to make the administrative application of the principle in countries with different constitutions easier than had hitherto been possible with international labour conventions.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.69) commending the Convention and the implementation of the principle it proclaimed.

Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) reserved the right to submit certain general comments on item 8 of the agenda at a later stage. At present she would confine her remarks to the United States draft resolution.

At its 34th session the International Labour Conference had adopted a Convention, which had been signed and ratified by most of the States Members of the International Labour Organisation. She therefore thought it advisable to use in any resolution which the Commission on the Status of Women might adopt on the subject the terminology used in the title of the Convention, namely: "equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value".

The question of terminology had already been raised during the discussions at the thirteenth session of the Economic and Social Council on the relevant section of the Commission's report on its fifth session. The Chilean delegation had on that occasion stressed that it was essential not to confuse different concepts, for example, the terms "pay" and "remuneration", the latter of which covered not only pay proper, but also various benefits and allowances in respect of which the treatment of men and women might differ.

Some representatives had pointed out in the Council that the question of equal remuneration for men and women did not arise in their countries, since most women workers were unmarried and therefore did not receive family allowances. But at the present session of the Commission the United States representative had stated that seven out of eight women at work in the United States of America were married. It would therefore appear that the information supplied to the Council had been erroneous.

Similarly, the expression "equal work" did not mean the same thing as "work of equal value". For instance, legislation providing for equal pay for equal work had been in force in Chile since 1925; but there was no equality of pay in practice. Some work was done almost exclusively by women, and in that case no comparison was possible. The same applied in many other countries, and it frequently happened that women earned only 60 per cent of what men earned for work of equal value.

She had made those points in the hope that the United States representative would be prepared to ponder them and consider the possibility of amending the wording of her draft resolution accordingly.

Muss LUTZ (Brazil) regretted the tendency to substitute for the words "equal pay for equal work" others that were less concise and less accurate. It was more difficult to define remuneration than pay, and work of equal value was a more nebulous concept than equal work. Moreover, the latter required an evaluation

of work which would certainly be fallible, and possibly prejudiced. She would prefer to see all subjective elements eliminated, and to revert to the use of the simple and accurate phrase which had been current since the inception of the campaign to ensure equal pay for equal work for men and women. In her own country, both in the government service and in industry and business, pay was associated with the job, and the holder, whether male or female, was paid the same rate.

Mrs. NOVIKOVA (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) regarded the question of equal pay for equal work for men and women workers as one of the most vital before the Commission. The duty of the United Nations to ensure the universal recognition of that principle derived from the Charter itself, and in particular from Preamble thereto. Discrimination against women in matters of pay resulted in a decline in the status and economic value of women workers, and provided a means of reducing the status and wages of men workers as well, while intensifying the deterioration in the standard of living in capitalist countries and swelling employers' profits. In spite of the insistent demands of the workers of the world, in many countries little had been done to implement the principle in question. United Nations reports showed that in several countries women were still denied access to certain professions. Employers and trade unions continued to reserve entry to certain trades for men alone, and in a number of countries the remuneration received by women was as much as 50 per cent lower than that received by men doing the same work. In the United States of America, for example, only nine States had applied the principle of equal pay for equal work, and even in those nine States limitations were imposed on its application, such as that the principle should apply only to women in industry or only to women in the non-commercial professions. Despite constant pressure, the United States Congress had failed to pass federal legislation to compel recognition of the principle.

Similarly, in the United Kingdom the workers had not yet succeeded in ensuring application of the principle. The Government had admitted its justice, but claimed that economic and financial conditions were such as to prevent its implementation for the time being. In that country, women were still denied access to professional status in mining, forestry, banking and other careers.

In Belgium, Sweden, France, Australia and Canada women were still denied their rights to the same pay as that earned by men doing the same work, and in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories women were almost entirely denied their economic rights. A variety of pretexts were invoked for that remissness, such as financial and economic difficulties, and even the disadvantages of employing women, but in view of the vast amounts being spent on armaments in the capitalist countries, and the continual increase in the profits of employers there, it was clear that those excuses were not valid.

War preparations in capitalist countries were causing a deterioration in the financial position of women workers. A high proportion of the unemployed in the United States of America and in the United Kingdom were women, though government statistics on the point could not be relied on, as married women were not regarded as unemployed and were not eligible for unemployment benefits.

In the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, on the other hand, the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women was fully implemented. The Constitution of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic made specific provision for equal rights of men and women in economic and public life, and contained guarantees which ensured that the principle would be honoured in practice. Of those employed in industry, 45 per cent were women, all of whom enjoyed their right to the same pay as men for the same work. It was therefore obvious that the implementation of that principle was possible for all governments, whatever their organizational structure, and the United Nations should ensure its recognition in all countries, whether or not States Members of the United Nations.

Although aware of the situation, the Commission on the Status of Women had been content to act as an impassive observer. It had rejected specific proposals put forward by the Soviet Union delegation and had referred the matter to the International Labour Organisation. That Organisation, after three years of lengthy debate, had adopted a Convention which, on examination, proved to be weak and ineffective. Article 2 of the Convention as finally adopted at the 34th International Labour Conference provided only that signatory States should "promote and ensure the application to all workers of the principle of equal remuneration ...". Thus, so long as governments promoted the idea, they would not be required to put it into practice.

Similarly, article 7 weakened the whole Convention by making it possible for signatory States not to apply its provisions to any or all parts of their territories. A convention so flexible and vague was clearly not designed to bring about early implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

The position remained as it had been six years earlier, and the Commission could no longer shirk its duty to make constructive and positive recommendations which would ensure prompt and effective action by governments. Moreover, it should recommend that the draft International Covenant on Human Rights should provide for the recognition of the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women workers. For that reason, the Byelorussian delegation had submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.70) for the Commission's consideration.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) said that the Convention of the International Labour Organisation embodied many of the ideas defined by Mary Anderson, a former Director of the United States Women's Bureau. Miss Anderson had come to the United States of America as a Swedish immigrant, and had first been employed as a domestic servant in 1889. Among the views expressed in a book Miss Anderson had written was the opinion that day-nurseries should be only a temporary measure, and that no economic pressure should be brought to bear on married women to make them both home-maker and wage-earner. Mary Anderson had helped to establish a labour code for women in the United States of America, which laid down, inter alia, the principle that the wage rate should be based on the job and not on the sex of the worker.

As to the phraseology used in her draft resolution, she agreed with the Brazilian representative about the value of the phrase "equal pay for equal Work". In the draft resolution she had submitted to the Commission, she had mostly stuck to that phrase, and had used the phrase "equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value" only when making express reference to the Convention.

The United States Government took particular satisfaction in the provisions for applying the principle of equal pay, as laid down in article 2 of the Convention. Sub-paragraph 2(c) of that article, which provided for the application of the principle by means of collective agreements between employers and workers, would enable that to be done through collective bargaining, which was

widely practised in her country.

She regretted that the Byelorussian and Soviet Union Governments had not sent representatives to the 34th International Labour Conference. The Polish representative at that Conference had spoken many times, and had doubtless influenced the International Labour Organisation's final decisions.

She noted with interest that the workers' and employers' representatives at that Conference had shown by a large majority their desire to preserve intact the practice of collective bargaining.

In conclusion, she expressed the view that where there was no freedom to choose an occupation, there was little meaning in the term equality, except as equality in slavery.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.