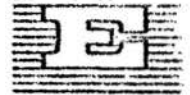


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Observer: Mrs. ACUNA DE CHACON Inter-American Commission of Women

Representatives of non-governmental organizations:

Category A: Miss KAHN World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)

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Mrs. SPRAGUE) World Federation of United Nations
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Category B: Miss GUTHRIE International Alliance of Women

Mrs. FREEMAN International Council of Women

Miss HYMER International Federation of Business
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Miss SCHWARZENBACH International Federation of Friends
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Mrs. TENISON-WOODS Representative of the Assistant
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Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER Secretary of the Commission

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK FOR MEN AND WOMEN WORKERS (E/CN.6/169)

Mrs. GRINBERG-VINAVER (Secretary of the Commission), speaking on a point of order, informed the Commission that the Secretariat had been in touch with United States officials about the arrival of the representative of the Women's International Democratic Federation, and had been told that they would receive information on the matter that day. The Commission would be given the information as soon as it arrived.

/Mrs. POPOVA

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Secretary of the Commission for her statement. She regretted that the Commission was approaching the end of its work without the presence of the representative of the Women's International Democratic Federation, who had been delayed because of the action taken by United States authorities. She hoped that the matter would be settled soon.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the Secretariat had received a cable from its representative on the Commission on Human Rights, meeting in Geneva, stating that the Commission on Human Rights had adopted by 16 votes to none, with 2 abstentions, an article relating to measures for the protection of mothers and children. Since the adoption of that article, the Lebanese representative on the Commission on Human Rights had circulated a proposal for an article recognizing the right of equal enjoyment by women of the economic, social and cultural rights enjoyed by men under the Covenant on Human Rights.

Mr. WINSLOW (International Labour Organisation) wished to report on the work the International Labour Organisation had done since its previous session on the question of equal pay for equal work for men and women workers, and to indicate the main points to be discussed at his organization's conference in June 1951.

The item had been placed on the ILO's agenda as a result of a resolution adopted in San Francisco in 1948. Pursuant to that resolution, the ILO had circulated a questionnaire to governments, and the answers had provided the information on which it had based the report prepared for its previous conference. Document E/CN.6/169 summarized the main points of the report. ILO document VII (1) gave a summary of the discussions which had taken place between workers and employers on the subject, and ILO document VII (2) gave the replies by governments referred to in paragraph 5 of document E/CN.6/169.

.../He wished.

He wished to emphasize the educational value for governments, employers, and workers of the discussions which had taken place under ILO auspices. The various groups concerned had been led to give serious consideration to the difficulties of implementing the principle of equal pay for equal work.

Section II of document E/CN.6/169 recorded the proceedings in the Committee on Equal Remuneration, in which the problem had been fully and frankly discussed. The Committee was composed of 72 members, 36 representing Governments, 18 employers and 18 workers. The representatives of employers and workers had double votes, however, so that in effect each group had equal voting power. The Committee had drawn up recommendations and resolutions which had been submitted to the conference.

Section III of document E/CN.6/169 showed the action taken by the Conference.

He pointed out that on pages 36 and 40 of document E/CN.6/169 the reference to "explanatory notes of Drafting Committee" was not strictly correct. Technically it was not a drafting committee, but the International Labour Office itself which had rephrased the text emanating from the Conference.

The views of workers as to the form which international regulations for the implementation of the principle of equal pay should take were given in paragraph 55 of document E/CN.6/169. Workers were unanimously in favour of a convention. As could be seen from paragraphs 56 and 57, governments were divided. The views of governments were given in greater detail in ILO document VII (1) pages 4 to 10, and VII (2) pages 3 to 13. He also drew attention to paragraphs 63 to 67 of document E/CN.6/169, which gave the position of employers' representatives, and paragraphs 68 to 71, which gave that of workers' representatives.

Those in favour of the adoption of a convention believed that strict regulations, which could only be embodied in an international convention, were necessary. On the other hand, those who favoured a recommendation considered that at the present time there were some practical difficulties in the way of the adoption of a convention. Among the difficulties were the question of free

collective bargaining and government intervention in it; the fact that some governments did not at present have any wage-fixing machinery; and, particularly in the under-developed countries, the fact that some governments had no personnel trained in the working of such machinery. The biggest issue before the ILO Conference in June was whether a convention or a recommendation should be adopted to implement the principle of equal pay. A two-thirds majority would be required for the adoption of a convention.

Another major point which the Conference would have to consider was the definition of the principle of equal pay. The ILO document reported the discussion on the definition in some detail and showed some of the problems involved in such expressions as "job content" and "remuneration". In its new definition, the International Labour Office had eliminated the term "job content" and had substituted the phrase "conditions of work", which could be more accurately defined. It had done so in deference to the wishes of the French and Belgian Governments, which favoured a convention, and therefore wanted precise definitions which could be readily and accurately translated into other languages.

Finally, the Conference would consider the problem of application of the principle in countries which had different wage-fixing procedures. The proposed new text was given in document E/CN.6/169, pages 35 to 45.

Mrs. GOLDMAN (United States of America) took pleasure in reminding the Commission that it was a woman member of the ^{United States} Cabinet, Miss Frances Perkins, ^{Secretary of Labor} who had been responsible for the United States becoming a member of the International Labour Organisation in 1933.

The United States had long supported the principle of equal pay for equal work. Its practice by employers on a voluntary basis had increased markedly in recent years, and the movement for equal pay legislation at the national and state levels was gaining added support.

/The movement

The movement for equal pay in the United States had been based on a series of factors, and the sound economic reasons for equal pay had long been recognized. Equal pay for equal work discouraged employers from attempting to hire women for less money; it discouraged them from replacing men with women at lower rates. It protected fair employers from the unfair competition of those who attempted to use women to undercut men's wages, and thus provided greater economic security for families by protecting male wages.

A review of United States experience showed that the movement to establish equal pay for women was not a temporary expedient inspired by the last war, but a sound wage policy, established in some measure for many years and with a growing body of support behind it. The support came from workers, employers and the public, and had taken the form of both law and voluntary practice.

Public attention in the United States had been sharply focussed on the question of equal pay for women during the First World War, when the War Labor Board had enforced the policy of no discrimination against women in wage disputes coming before it. During that period, women had flocked into emergency war industries and the movement for equal pay had grown so strong that it carried over to some extent into the post-war period. Two states had given the principle of equal pay the force of law in 1919, and in 1923 the Federal Government had adopted it for its own employees.

In the Second World War, there had been even greater gains. War industries had instituted equal pay for women on a wide scale. In 1942, the War Labor Board had issued an order specifying that "adjustments which equalize the wage or salary rates paid to females with the rates paid to males for comparable quality and quantity of work on the same operations, and adjustments in accordance with this policy which recognize or are based on differences in quality or quantity of work performed, may be made without approval of the National War Labor Board". Voluntary wage adjustments involving some 60,000 women had been made under the order. Many additional thousands of women workers had gained increases in salary through the Board's decisions in disputed cases. Federal agencies, including the Army and Navy, had reaffirmed their support of the principle of equal pay, and

four more states had passed equal pay laws. During the period 1946-1949 six other states and one territory had passed equal pay laws, making a total of twelve states and one territory in which equal pay laws were currently in effect.

In the United States, women constituted a substantial proportion of those employed in the various branches of the public service, including teaching. For the past quarter of a century, the Federal Government had recognized the principle of "the rate for the job", irrespective of sex, in the case of its own employees. The principle had been established in practice for federal workers by the Classification Act of 1923. Under that Act a uniform salary was established for each specific grade and class of work in the departmental service, and variation because of sex was eliminated. Before 1923, there had been considerable variation between men and women in opportunity to qualify for jobs and in entrance salary for a given type of position.

About one fourth of the states had passed equal pay laws specifically for teachers. A number of large cities and other individual school districts had also fixed scales of minimum rates which provided for equal salaries for both sexes.

A federal equal pay bill to cover workers in private industry in interstate commerce had been introduced in the current Congress and had Administration support. It was estimated that federal equal pay legislation would cover about six million women workers.

Many labour organizations had expressed themselves in favour of the principle of equal pay for women. An analysis of 321 collective-bargaining agreements in five major industries showed that one out of every five agreements carried some form of equal pay for equal work clause.

The principle of equal pay for women was essential to a healthy economy. It protected the wage levels, not only of women, but of all workers and thereby sustained consumer purchasing-power. It was axiomatic that, when large numbers of workers could be hired at lower rates of pay than those prevailing at a given time, the competition of such persons for jobs would result either in the displacement of the higher-paid workers or in the acceptance by them of lower rates. Over a period of time that tended to depress all wage levels.

/Consideration

Consideration of the importance of women workers in United States economy showed that the practice of wage differentials between men and women on any large scale could very seriously affect the wage structure. Women workers numbered over eighteen million in January 1951, a substantial part of the labour force, and their number was ever increasing. Most women worked because of economic necessity. Many had entered the working force because of the growing need for additional workers to maintain production schedules in a highly-g geared economy. Many had special skills and were admitted to nearly all industries employing men, which increased the area of potential wage competition with men.

Experience had much increased the recognition of women's high industrial skills and had exploded the theory that women were less efficient industrial workers than men. Wartime records were full of statistics showing that in a great variety of operations performed by both men and women under comparable conditions, many women had matched and even outstripped the quantity and quality records established by men on the same jobs. Women today could be found working efficiently side by side with men in almost every industrial plant.

Miss KAHN (World Federation of Trade Unions) said that her organization welcomed the opportunity of making a statement before the Commission on the Status of Women, but regretted that the discussion was to be confined once again to primary steps to implement decisions long since taken by the United Nations.

The only documentation on the subject was the progress report on the work of the ILO (E/CN.6/169). Her organization thought that the debate should cover more than the report. The problem of equal pay had long been on the agenda of the United Nations and of the Commission. The principle of equal rights for men and women was set forth in the preamble of the United Nations Charter, and the right to equal pay for equal work was stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Resolution 121 (VI) of 10 March 1948 expressed the support of the Economic and Social Council for the principle. The resolution resulted from an item placed on the agenda at the request of the World Federation of Trade Unions and a memorandum submitted by it. Her organization had carried on the fight for equal pay in the United Nations since it had first raised the problem in 1946. Genuine equality of pay for women workers was a major part of the WFTU's programme in all the 56 countries in which there were affiliated labour organizations.

Document E/CN.6/169, the report of the Secretary-General on the proceedings taken by the 33rd International Labour Conference in June 1950, was the first real report since the adoption of the Economic and Social Council resolution in February 1948. The ILO had deferred discussion of the item to the 1950 Conference so that the consideration of the draft convention had had to be deferred to the 1951 session. Workers' delegations had unanimously opposed the delays within the ILO, but, as they had only 25 per cent of the votes, their protests had been unavailing. There was still no guarantee that any action would be taken.

The subject had been considerably narrowed down; the original WFTU memorandum had made it clear that the establishment of uniform rates of pay based on jobs themselves, and not on their occupants, was only a first step, and that the solution of related social problems of women workers must also be included.

WFTU believed that the Commission should renew its campaign on the subject until it was possible to record progress in the economic field comparable to that in the field of women's political rights. All the significant and constructive statements in the ILO report had been placed before the Commission long ago in WFTU reports, most particularly in documents E/627 and E/627/Add.1 and in supplementary WFTU reports to the third session, held at Beirut. It was undesirable that the debate should be limited to the narrow confines proposed by the ILO.

The increase in the number of women employed, inflation and the rising cost of living, and continuing discrimination against women workers in pay made the problem more acute than it had ever been since the formation of the United Nations. The situation constituted discrimination against all workers.

Flagrant discrimination persisted in both the United States and the United Kingdom. In both countries there was unequivocal trade-union support for the principle of equal pay for equal work. The United Kingdom supported equal pay in principle, and in the United States a good example had been set by the Federal Government, but the example had proved inadequate. At the Trades Union Congress in September 1950, British workers had spoken in favour of the application of the principle of equal pay. But British women workers, both in government and other employment, were still receiving less pay than men of the same grade. British women workers were reduced to trying to pay the increased cost of living with a principle, and they were finding it impossible.

/Although the

Although the scales of pay in the federal civil service of the United States were uniform, not more than 5 per cent of the women in the nation were employed in that service. In January 1941 the Bureau of the Census had reported that 17,577,000 women were employed, that is, more than 30 per cent of all women in the country. A fifth of all mothers with children under 18 were working. The Secretary of Labor had reported a year previously that 92 per cent of employed women living with their families contributed between 50 and 100 per cent of their earnings to the family. The average age of working women had increased, as had also the number of working women over 45.

In the garment industry, in which women were 75 per cent of the labour force, the Bureau of Labour Statistics had found large differences in wages in the women's coat-and-suit manufacturing industries in eleven of twelve cities. The difference between men's and women's average hourly earnings ranged from fifty-two cents an hour in Baltimore to \$1.45 in Los Angeles. In the cutting, marking and pressing industry, in which men predominated, it was found that in Kansas City men cutters and markers averaged \$1.74 per hour, while women averaged 98 cents.

The same differences were found in "white-collar" work. Class B women file clerks in Atlanta received less than office boys, while women accounting clerks received \$43.00 a week as against \$52.50 for men. In the field of social work, where three-quarters of all case-workers were women, the Bureau of Labour Statistics had made a survey on the earnings of an estimated 75,000 social workers. Women averaged \$2,666 per year as against \$2,860 for men. In executive posts, in social work, men averaged \$4,430 a year as against women's \$3,180. Women executives would find small comfort in the fact that the average for the profession was \$3,700.

Legislative efforts to win equal pay in the United States had borne little fruit. At Congressional hearings on the proposed federal equal pay law the previous year, Mr. Beime, President of the CIO Communication Workers, had pointed out discrimination in the telephone monopoly, the country's largest employer of women. In Baltimore men were paid a maximum of \$90.00 a week, while women doing the same work were receiving \$59.00. The New York Times, in its issue of 18 May 1950, had commented on that hearing that the equal pay bill had never been reported to the floor of either house of Congress. The reason had

/been made

been made clear by a spokesman of the National Association of Manufacturers, who had stated that the NAM endorsed the principle of equal pay, but who appeared to oppose a law to implement the principle.

Several states, together with Alaska, had laws against inequality, but they had had little result. The speaker knew from personal experience the inadequacy of the California statute, while the Director of the Bureau of Women in Industry of the New York State Department of Labor had told a committee of the legislature that investigations under the New York law were a waste of time.

The situation was the same in many other countries. In Australia, it had been reported in the International Labour Review for February 1951, the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration had set women's wages at 75 per cent of men's. Although that appeared to be an improvement over the 54 per cent laid down in 1919, it in fact merely continued the practice which had obtained since the Second World War. A report in the New York Herald Tribune of February 1951 had stated that in Sidney the basic wage for men had been set at £ 9 while the basic wage for women was £6-15-0.

The February 1951 issue of the International Labour Review revealed inequalities in the pay of men and women workers in Japan, Germany, Israel, Norway, Sweden and New Zealand. In Switzerland, in October 1948, the average hourly rates for unskilled and semi-skilled male workers were 40 per cent above the rates for all women workers, skilled and unskilled, while the hourly rate for skilled men was almost 70 per cent above the rate for all women.

The United States Government report "Facts on Women Workers", of 28 February 1951, referred to bad conditions among women tobacco workers in Greece, whose wages were stated to be 30 per cent below those of men. In 1948, the Greek Government had replied to an inquiry by the Secretary-General that it was the policy of the Greek Labour Ministry to extend equal pay "to the manual workers in industry". She doubted whether that would ever be more than policy unless the Commission pursued its campaign.

Documents submitted to the Commission by the Secretariat such as the report on women in public services and functions (E/CN.6/158) showed the extent of discrimination in public service. Inequalities in pay existed in the United Kingdom, Australia, and Northern Ireland. There were cases where women were debarred from Government posts, restricted to certain types of work or discriminated against in promotion, pensions or other collateral benefits. The Commission had on the previous day discussed additional disqualifications of married women. Reports such as document E/CN.6/159 showed similar inequalities in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Opportunity and protection must be provided for women in employment. They should be particularly encouraged to join trade unions and to defend their rights. Continuation of unequal pay for women threatened ultimately to lower all wage rates. Her organization considered the matter so serious that it was submitting for the Commission's consideration a draft resolution recalling that the principle of equal pay for equal work had been laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of resolution 121 (VI). The resolution further noted that the International Labour Office had taken no final action after more than three years to implement the principles of the resolution or of the Charter or to ameliorate the condition of women workers discriminated against with respect to remuneration. Considering the seriousness of the problem, it called upon States Members of the United Nations to take concrete steps immediately to implement the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women workers within their own territories and in Non-Self-Governing Territories and Trust Territories.

In submitting the resolution, the WFTU expressed its hope that the Commission would accept its share of responsibility in the campaign to implement the declarations of the past. It was clear that reliance could not be placed on the International Labour Organisation alone. Adoption of the resolution by the Commission would do much to facilitate the translation of principle into practice, to the benefit not only of women workers, but of all workers and all nations.

Mrs. POPOVA

Mrs. POPOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the subject had been under discussion at four sessions of the Commission. Yet discrimination persisted in many countries. It lowered the dignity of women and impaired their economic situation. Its final result was the lowering of wages all around. The situation in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom had shown that, despite the experience gained in the Second World War, the situation had deteriorated since then.

In the Economic and Social Council some delegations, headed by that of the United Kingdom, had originally sought to bring about the rejection of the WFTU resolution. They had maintained that the principle could not be implemented in their countries, and had pressed to have the WFTU proposal studied by the ILO. The Council had nevertheless adopted a decision on equality of pay for men and women, and had called upon Member States to implement it.

Many Governments, however, continued to ignore that fact. The principles learned in the United States during the Second World War were no longer being implemented. In only 19 States out of the 48 was there any legislation in conformity with it and there was no legislation on a nation-wide scale. Proposals had been made before Congress to improve conditions, but in the last thirty years Congress had been unable to find any time to implement them. Since 1923, a vote on the subject had been taken only once. According to Senator Gillette, the United States did not provide equality for women. The United States had refused to sign a treaty which called for equality.

In the United Kingdom, the workers had called for equal pay for equal work for men and women. But the Government was refusing to implement the principle on the grounds that it was not economically possible to do in present circumstances. The difficult economic situation was caused by the armaments race in the United Kingdom.

From the ILO report, which the Commission had heard that morning, it appeared that in the Netherlands, the Union of South Africa, New Zealand, and Greece there was still no implementation of the principle of equal pay. The ILO, which the Economic and Social Council had requested to study ^{urgently} and report on the matter, had done nothing. It must be remembered that two-thirds of the member countries of the ILO did not implement the principle of equal pay for equal work.

The ILO report did not refer to implementation of the principle as a matter of urgency, but merely advocated collective bargaining as a means for attaining the end. It envisaged no special measures or training for women. It was clear from the Report of the 33rd Conference of the ILO that workers were in favour of the principle of equal pay, but that employers were not.

The position taken by the ILO in that matter showed that the organization acted not in the interests of workers, but in the interests of employers. In the USSR the principle was guaranteed under the Constitution, and equal rights were granted to women in all fields. They received social insurance benefits, maternity care and bonuses for large families, while children's homes were provided to care for the children of women in employment. Not only did women have rights in the USSR; they were given full opportunities to make use of them. In the USSR women could work everywhere, not only in the metallurgical industry, as the United States representative had apparently suggested.

It was obvious that no one in the United States was prepared to fight for the principle of equal pay for equal work, although many were prepared to pay lip-service to the ideal. Only in the people's democracies had it proved possible to implement the principle in a short time.

In conclusion, Mrs. Popova said that she supported the resolution proposed by the World Federation of Trade Unions, and called upon the Commission to ensure its implementation.

Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) thanked the ILO representative for his statement.

As regards the Commission's approach to the problem, she said that at that stage in its work it could not revert to a discussion of the principle of equal pay for equal work. It had already exhausted every argument to show that it was essential to adopt an international instrument which would firmly establish the principle. The women workers of the world were awaiting the Commission's action. If the world wished to progress it must go forward on the basis of complete equality for all.

One of the Commission's functions was to propose ways and means of eliminating discrimination on the ground of sex. It was therefore the Commission's duty to adopt a resolution on the principle of equal pay for equal work for submission to the forthcoming ILO conference.

Experience had shown that resolutions were not enough, however, for they did not always accomplish their ends. For that reason she invited the Commission and non-governmental and other organizations to ask their governments and workers' organizations to propose that the principle of equal pay for equal work should be adopted at the coming ILO conference.

Mrs. GUERY (Haiti) said that in the Haitian civil service equal pay for equal work was the rule. On the other hand, industry, which was just beginning to develop in Haiti, followed various practices. The sugar-cane factories used very few women. More women workers were employed in the sisal factories and large numbers of women worked in the cotton industry. In certain occupations, however, women were preferred to men because they accepted very low wages.

As regards paid domestic workers, although they received low salaries, they also were given additional compensation in the form of food, laundry and housing. Their condition was largely dependent upon the goodwill of the employer.

The legislation requiring paid yearly vacations of one month was not always observed. On the other hand, the law also laid down a minimum wage of 70 cents for a working day of twelve hours and the state adhered to that wage scale.

As a general rule women in Haiti worked more than men. They did the work of the fields, kept the house, prepared the meals and looked after the education of the children. In towns, working women were hired as domestic servants and laundresses and engaged in commerce. They bore most of the responsibility for community life.

Trade unions were still in their infancy in Haiti, and, although they would ultimately benefit the worker, too often they irritated the employer and aggravated conditions for the workers.

Mrs. de GONZALEZ (Cuba) supported the proposal of the representative of the Dominican Republic.

Article 62 of the Cuban Constitution ensured equal pay for equal work without distinction as to sex. Furthermore, measures had been adopted relating to child welfare which would make it easier for women with a family to continue working.

It was essential, however, for the Commission to take some action on the matter of equal pay for equal work, either by adopting the WFTU resolution or by referring that text to the Committee on Resolutions so that a formula satisfactory to a majority of states could be found. /The struggle

The struggle for recognition of the principle of equal pay for equal work should be the concern not only of the Commission, but of any organization which wished to establish justice and equality in the work.

Mrs. TSAIDARIS (Greece) thanked the Secretary-General for the helpful memorandum on the question of equal pay for equal work.

The problem of equal pay arose chiefly in Greece in connexion with manual labour. In response to the Secretary-General's appeal, the Greek Government had adopted the principle of equal pay for equal work and had put it into practice in many fields. Evidence of that was to be found in the large numbers of women who had attained posts of great responsibility. The 1937 Act on collective bargaining, which for the first time had established a minimum wage, made a distinction between men and women workers. The first governmental decision after the enemy occupation, however, had re-established salaries on the basis of equal pay for equal work, and therefore, in theory, there was complete equality of treatment although in practice the principle was often infringed for considerations such as years of service and basic pre-war salary.

Under the Act of 1945 salaried workers were entitled to a yearly paid vacation of eighteen days and labourers were entitled to a maximum of twelve days a year of paid vacation, depending on their years of service. Vacation resorts for the working people had been established by the state as well as by private organizations. Greece was also exerting great efforts to establish nurseries, kindergartens and pre-natal and children's clinics to help the working women.

Working women were also entitled to a paid maternity leave of six weeks before the birth of the child and six weeks after. A mother also received an allowance during that period equal to one-third of her salary, and additional assistance to pay expenses arising out of her confinement.

Women workers had been protected by law in Greece ever since 1912. In fact Greek legislation had been so thoroughgoing that only minor modifications had been required to bring it into line with the 1919 ILO Convention

In Greece women had access to all professions and occupations. In order to promote the education and vocational guidance of women the State had established a large number of home-making schools, professional training institutions and art centres, many of which had been destroyed or damaged during the war and which had had to be completely restored.

Private enterprise had also contributed to the programme of practical education. Domestic science had been advanced by the establishment of a women's association for training in domestic science. With a view to aiding working mothers, the Queen of Greece had recently helped to organize children's homes in the northern part of the country. In those centres the children were given practical and technical training, instruction in hygiene and recreation. The training would help to develop the spirit of co-operation necessary to rebuild the country and prepare them to be better citizens.

As regards the actual number of women gainfully employed in Greece, until the figures from the recent census were available she could only say that the percentage of women workers was increasing day by day.

Mrs. SEN (India) thanked the representatives of the ILO and WFTU for their informative remarks. She also expressed her interest in the Secretary-General's report on the question of equal remuneration for equal work. She noted with satisfaction the progress made by the ILO towards achieving international regulations on the question and was gratified to learn that it intended to take final action in the matter during 1951.

The Indian Government had always supported the principle of equal pay for equal work and had incorporated that idea in article 39(d) of the Constitution. The Central Pay Commission and the Fair Wages Committee set up by the Central Advisory Council of Labour had also endorsed the principle. Nor did the Minimum Wages Act of 1948 derogate from it, although it recognized the need for fixing different rates of pay for adults, children and apprentices. Moreover, the principle of equal pay had been confirmed in awards of the Indian industrial tribunals. Civil service positions in India were open equally to men and women. In fact, there were some professions in India in which women were paid more than men.

/When India

When India had acquired independence, it had inherited a system of discrimination in certain occupations which it was working actively to eliminate.

Her Government felt that international regulations were needed to expedite progress. Some Governments favoured the adoption of a convention on equal pay for equal work, whereas other Governments held that recommendations would suffice. It should be borne in mind that technically less advanced countries would find it more difficult to evaluate "job content". India was therefore anxious that sufficient flexibility should be allowed as to the time of application of any international regulations. For that reason, the Indian Government felt that the best solution would be to prepare recommendations and not a convention.

It was unnecessary to revert to the principle of equal pay for equal work as in its previous sessions the Commission had expressed itself strongly in favour of its adoption and implementation.

The records of the ILO indicated that the principle of equal pay had already been accepted and that the discussion now turned on the ways and means of implementing it. The ILO expected to complete its work on the question during 1951. She therefore felt that the Commission should merely note the action contemplated by the ILO and express the hope that final action would be completed during the ILO's 34th session.

She reserved the right to comment on any draft resolutions on the principle of equal pay for equal work which might be submitted to the Commission.

Miss SUTHERLAND (United Kingdom) agreed with the Indian representative's view as to the action which the Commission should take, and also supported the view of the representative of the Dominican Republic that no debate on the general principle was necessary at the present stage.

As she had stated at previous sessions, the United Kingdom Government had accepted the justice of the claim for equal pay, but, because of the economic and financial circumstances of the post-war years, had been unable to implement the principle in respect of its own employees. It was impossible to say when a beginning could be made. The heavy cost of rearmament which the Government had been compelled to undertake because of the international policy of the USSR had not made the financial position easier.

/In reply

In reply to the WFTU representative, she pointed out that the Trade Union Congress had supported the principle of equal pay, not only in 1950 but over many years. She challenged the WFTU representative's suggestion that women workers were depending on the Commission to protect their interests in that respect. Women workers in the United Kingdom certainly did not look to the Commission for action on a matter which was properly within the province of the ILO, in whose work their Trade Unions had participated for over thirty years.

She disagreed with the contention that the ILO had wasted time and made little progress on the question of equal pay. Its reports showed that the question was extremely complex and emphasized the need for precision in the drafting of an international instrument.

In the free democracies the Trade Unions were not agents of the Government, and it was important that their rights in regard to collective bargaining and negotiations should not be prejudiced by any international instrument. She did not therefore agree that all wage rates should be fixed by Governments.

In conclusion she said that the ILO reports on equal pay and the statement by the ILO representative provided data which were indispensable to the Commission in its study of the subject.

The CHAIRMAN said that she had just been informed by cable that on 30 April 1951 the Commission on Human Rights had adopted an article on the right of all persons to just and favourable conditions of work, including a minimum remuneration which would ensure to all workers a fair and equitable salary for equal work and guarantee them a decent livelihood for themselves and their family.

Mrs. TSALDARIS (Greece) asked that the text of the cablegram should be circulated to the Commission.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.