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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
(Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Fourth Session)Lake Success, New York
Wednesday, 19 March 1947 at 3:00 pm

PRESENT:

The PRESIDENT: Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar

Mr. Kaminsky	Byelorussian SSR
Mr. Smith	Canada
Mr. Santa Cruz	Chile
Dr. Yang	China
Mr. Perez Cisneros	Cuba
Mr. Papanek	Czechoslovakia
Mr. Querin	France
Mr. Kirpalani	India
Mr. Hakim	Lebanon
Mr. van Kleffens	Netherlands
Mr. Nash	New Zealand
Mr. Moe	Norway
Mr. Arca Parro	Peru
Mr. Turhan	Turkey
Mr. Morozov	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Mr. Phillips	United Kingdom
Mr. Stinebower	United States of America
Mr. Zuloaga	Venezuela

The PRESIDENT: The Council is in session.

The Council will now resume the discussion of the Report on the Status of Women.

REPORT OF COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN

MR. SANTA CRUZ (Chile)(Interpretation from Spanish): Mr. President, I represent a country in which social life is, to a great extent, based upon the woman, and this particularly among the people where the woman is the support of the home, fighting against conditions of life which are due very much to the improvidence of man.

I represent a small country, but my country has given to Latin America the first women educators, the first women teachers, the first women who were employees of commerce and industry; and my country was also the first to make laws for the protection of work in which women engaged.

My country has little over five million inhabitants, but it surprised the world by producing a writer who received the Nobel Prize for Literature--and this writer was not a man but a woman. I also represent a Government the President of which has for his motto the equality between men and women on all planes: social, political, economic, cultural, and legal.

I declare here that Chile is in full sympathy with the effort of the United Nations to comply with the principles of the Charter; that is to say, that there should be no distinction of sex. We are not going to deal now in detail with the Report of the Commission. There may be some defects in the Report, practical defects as to the manner in which the aim which is intended to be attained should be attained. But I think that it should be sufficient to justify the work of this Commission. It would be sufficient to read Chapter X in which the programme is explained. The basic principle of the work of the Commission, I declare here that Chile is in full agreement with.

I conclude by repeating here the sentence which is the motto of the President of the Chilean Republic now and that is that we want complete equality between men and women in the political, social, economic, cultural and legal fields.

MR. KIRPALANI (India): Mr. President, may I at the outset beg your permission to be associated with the observations you made in sponsoring the debate on this Report. I should like to compliment the Commission on the very excellent Report they have placed before us.

Sir, I would ask the Council to recognize the fundamental fact that women, or shall I say "females", form half the human population of the world, and our democratic ideology and democratic practice demand that, even on the purely mundane ground of numerical strength, they be permitted to play a part in solving the problems that face the human race, and that part must be a full half role. Women are not going to be satisfied with less.

Historically speaking, sir, there has been a matriarchal age when women ruled with the rod. Then that age was succeeded by the patriarchal age, which still persists, and I submit that the time has come when we have arrived at a new age and a new understanding, where men and women play an equal part in solving the problems that face the human race, so that we may be all the richer for it.

In the patriarchal age we have treated women either as pets or dogs, or at other times we have raised them to the status of goddesses or even autocrats. We in India have known ~~what~~ great autocrats women can be, and in our own homes, not ~~what~~ just/prestige, but what authority and power they wield--and how!

But, sir, we must admit to ourselves that by and large--and I will say for the large part--we have endeavored to confine woman to the domestic sphere. Now, whether there has been the sanction of custom or law behind it, or whether we have evolved a kind of philosophy that supports such customary or legal presumptions, I do not know. But I do know for a fact that man's effort has been hitherto to confine woman, by and large, to the domestic sphere.

Women now want to play a full part in the political field, in the economic field, the educational field, the social field, and indeed ⁱⁿ every sphere of human activity, and we cannot now reconcile ourselves, or reconcile women, to allotting

E/P.V. 75
4-10

them only a partial role. They insist on playing a full role, and if we do not allot them that full role, we stand in danger of making them suffragettes, not only politically, but in all fields, and that is a predicament I cannot contemplate with equanimity.

Sir, speaking in a more serious vein, we have got to the stage of giving sympathy to the demands that women have made on us. We have acknowledged the justice of their case, but we have done precious little to implement such acknowledgment. The very fact that this Council, at the Second Session, decided to accord the status of ^a full commission to what was then a Sub-Commission on the Status of Women, a sub-commission of the Commission on Human Rights, is proof of admission on our part that there was a full-sized job to be done.

I see in the paper circulated by our friends from the United Kingdom that the view is taken that many recommendations made in this Commission are such as had best be dealt with by other commissions. I do not want to go into any great detail, sir, but I shall take one subject, and I shall seek the forgiveness of the Council for bringing up that subject, the subject of prostitution. It has been suggested that this is a subject that had best be dealt with by the Social Commission. Sir, in all earnestness I ask us men: We have had the control or the ordering of the solution of this problem for many, many years, and what have we done about it? If women are not going to be permitted in their own Commission to decide how they may protect, save and safeguard not only the honour, but the physiques and bodies of what are going to be the future mothers of mankind -- well then, I fail to understand what else there is that is more important for the women's Commission to understand and study and try to solve.

Finally, sir, I shall end with a plea to women. I have looked at the membership on the Commission on the Status of Women, and I do suggest that it is in line with their desire to play an equal part, an equal role with men in trying to solve the problems of humanity, that on that very Commission there should be some men. I suggest that the work of the Commission on the Status of Women will be all the better done, will be all the more balanced. We shall get a proper perspective on it if men and women sit on that Commission and play

E/P.V.75
12-15

their part together. By the same reasoning, sir, I know that we have women on the Social Commission; we have women on the Human Rights Commission; but I plead that we give them a greater representation on those Commissions.

MR. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I asked to speak earlier in this discussion. My delegation has submitted a paper, E/353, and I want particularly to draw the Council's attention to this paper. At the same time, I am very happy to speak after the distinguished representatives of Chile and India, because they have said in general, a good deal of what I wanted to say about the importance of this subject.

I cannot agree with all that the representative of India said, and I will revert a bit later in my remarks to some of the points which he made. This is a subject to which my Government attaches great importance. In my country, we have been fortunate enough broadly to achieve the goals which have been set out in this Report. That has been through a process which has not been free from difficulty. It is because we attach so much importance to this subject--and we are aware of the difficulties of this subject--that we have submitted this paper which you have before you, which makes our suggestions. The purpose of this paper is to suggest for the Council's consideration what, in our opinion, is the best practical approach to the problem of providing, over the world as a whole, an equal status for women.

In considering which is the most practical approach to this, we can none of us ignore that the problems which are facing this Commission have been with the world for a very long time and are very deeply rooted. Even in countries where conditions were favourable to the full development of women's rights, women have won them only recently and with difficulty. It is clear that the advice which is given to us by the Commission, and the resolutions which we pass here on the basis of that advice, will be most effective to the extent to which it takes full account of these difficulties.

We consider, therefore, that an extremely important task of the Commission is to examine the causes of discrimination against women in different parts of the world. We think it should spotlight the customs and the practices which are at the roots of this discrimination. In this way, it will focus the attention of world opinion, of all governments, and above all, of the men and women of the countries themselves, to the processes of change which are necessary to bring these practices into line with the ideals of the Charter and the aspirations which the Commission has at heart.

In the view of my Government, emphasis must be placed on education and publicity as a means of bringing these changes about. If we do not make the fullest use of these two means, we shall not have created the conditions under which legislation will be fully effective. By all means, let us have legislation, but do not let us think that this is the whole of the story.

In the light of this approach, which is the approach my Government adopts to this problem, I would like to turn to certain sections of the Report.

Frankly, my Government feels some anxiety about Chapter X which is labeled, "Programme of ^{Future} Work", but which in fact confines itself to stating principles and aims. It is clearly important that we should have a statement of principles and aims, but this must be supplemented by an actual programme of work clearly defined. The resolution at the end of the paper which we have submitted sets out our view for such an immediate programme of work.

As regards the organization of the Commission's work, it will be noted from our paper that we have set out in paragraphs 7 and 8, three matters, some aspects of which are not ^{with-} in the competence of other organs of the Council or of specialized agencies. I would not wish there to be any misunderstanding about this. We are not suggesting that these subjects in their entirety should be withdrawn from the purview of the Commission. We do, however,

suggest that the Commission should concentrate on those aspects which may involve discrimination on grounds of sex, whether in the political, economic or social fields. It is right for the Commission to consider by what means women can attain the same franchise rights as men, whatever those rights are at any particular time and in any particular country. But it is surely wrong for the Commission on the Status of Women to consider by what means men and women alike can attain certain political rights, such as adult suffrage in countries where those rights are not yet established.

We do suggest also that the Commission should take the fullest account of what is being done by other organs of the United Nations, such as the Social Commission and other agencies, such as the ILO, in matters which affect women.

The social and economic questions indicated in Chapter X of the Report may embrace a wide variety of questions, and we wish to emphasize the need for avoiding duplication of effort and securing ^{the} closest collaboration on questions of concern to more than one organ or agency.

The representative of India mentioned the example of prostitution. Curiously enough, that was precisely the example which I intended to give the Council to indicate the other point of view. A few days ago, we heard another representative of India, when the Social Commission's Report was being discussed, drawing attention to the importance of this question,

as a matter to be dealt with by the Social Commission. The view that my Government takes is that the problem of prostitution is a social question affecting society as a whole and not only a question affecting women. It affects society as a whole. It is a question that must be considered in the broadest possible social context. It is a matter which falls within the ambit of the Social Commission. It is a matter on which the Social

Commission has already started work. It clearly would be unworkmanlike if we had two commissions considering precisely the same subject.

I do not want, Mr. President, in any of the remarks I have made, to imply in any way that my Government feels that the Commission on the Status of Women has not performed extremely useful work in the task that it has carried out so far. My Government suggests an alternative approach. In doing so, we are entirely behind the aspirations which animate the Members of the Commission. We support them fully in their objectives.

In particular, I would like to take this occasion of saying that we welcome the work of the distinguished lady who is Chairman of the Commission, who has kept both before the Assembly and before the Council the importance of this field of work. I hope very much, Mr. President, that the Council will be able to adopt the suggestions made by my Government for focusing the work of this Commission on the best practical approach and laying down an actual programme of work.

We sit here as representatives of Governments, and it is our duty to bring to bear on all the advisory reports put forward by our advisory commissions, the best practical suggestions we can make. The suggestions that we are able to make in that spirit are contained on page 4 of Document E/353, which my Government has submitted.

MR. NASH (New Zealand): Mr. President, this, I think, is one of the most important subjects that we have yet touched on in the Council.

Its importance has been realized by four references in the Charter.

First, the opening words of the Charter, as quoted in the Report on the Status of Women, refer, in the second paragraph to "the equal rights of men and women and nations large and small". That is, the United Nations affirm their faith in the fundamental human rights and equal rights.

Then again, we find a reference in Article 13 "for the initiation of studies and the making of recommendations for the purpose of promoting fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion".

Then again, in Article 55, which authorizes the setting up of this Council, it is again affirmed that the United Nations "shall promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race and sex, language or religion."

Then, in the setting up of the trusteeship system, it is again referred to in Article 76, which says: "The basic objectives of the trusteeship system ...shall be...to encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all"--again--"without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."

So, I assume from the setting up of this Council in the Charter, Mr. President, that we are committed to what is in this Report in Chapter X. I cannot read a word in it, as I read it, that suggests other than equal rights for men and women, committing each one of the nations that signed the Charter.

If there were some discussions as to the rights of women as such, it is often talked of at the present time about the amazing contribution that women made in connection with the result that was achieved in 1944 and 1945 in the defeat of the enemies to freedom. I know in our little country, and I know in the United Kingdom, that there was no part of the community which rendered a greater service towards doing what had to be done than the women of the old country--or the United Kingdom--and the women of New Zealand.

Then, there is some comment--and I say this by way of an aside--in the United Kingdom resolution, relative to overlapping. That is quite possible, but I would suggest that, instead of holding up anything that is recommended in this Report, the Commission on the Status of Women should arrange as soon as possible with representatives of the ILO, the Social Commission, and the Human Rights Commission to get together to avoid the overlapping, provided there was no conflict--and I do not see any reason for conflict--with the objectives and recommendations set out in the paper that we are considering for the moment.

Having said that on the general objective, I would like to point out one or two thoughts that come to my mind in this connection. If the situation is not watched and watched early and carefully dealt with, the woman of the

white race will be taking complete charge of education. The position is becoming such in many of the European and British countries that the teaching section is becoming overwhelmingly women. If they will seize that opportunity, they need not worry much about their status, because they can then probably butt into the minds of the young what the young ought to think about women. But I think that would be a real danger to the world and would require some watching. However, they are running to the position in most of the countries where the women are the only people left to do the teaching.

Then, there is another danger, and I really think, whilst this might think appear to be cynical or perhaps with a tinge of humour, it is not either, as far as I am concerned. There is a danger of the women not becoming subservient to the men but the men worshipping them so much, and the women having to do so little, that they will forget what they are in the world for, and that is not thinking of the status of women in the highest and best sense. I have seen a tremendous lot of it. I have seen it tremendously also in the other direction, where the mother has done all the job right through the years of marriage with regard to the youngsters and with regard to everything else. I have seen that in the industrial circumstances of Britain, and of my own country. I think there is an even graver menace in the other direction that I am talking about, because when we have thought it out, we will have removed the injustices that mothers and women have suffered throughout the ages. We will remove them. I am satisfied of that. But that other danger is real, and I would like some people who are in charge of the Commission to watch that and say that ought not to happen.

With regard to equal rights to work, we have been affirming that as we have passed through the proceedings of the Council, and talked about full employment. We have always meant that for women as well as for men. The woman in the main

is not subject, as some people think she is, to look after the home. She does that as a magnificent work, because in the main there is no one anything like as competent as the mother to do the job; that is why, not because her place is the home, but because there is no one anything like as competent as the mother to do the job that is done in millions of homes in the world today. But to suggest that the women's place^{is} in the home--the suggestion generally comes from those who are afraid of the women, and think they ought to keep out of politics, ought to keep out of business affairs--is a wrong, and a grave, and a dangerous approach.

I think, in connection with positions in general, they should go to the person most competent to perform them irrespective of sex, but there are certain positions in which sex makes the person more competent. At that point, then, the sex factor ought to be weighed and given its full weight. I can say this, I think, Mr. President, with regard to the Report in particular, because I have read it through very carefully and persistently, particularly Chapter X, its principles and its aims. I cannot find one that is not operating in the country that I am representing here.

We have had arguments with regard to equal pay for equal work. That is the most difficult of the lot. I see some of that even in my own country.

I used to, many years ago, know something about the clothing world. I ~~know that~~ at that time, thirty years ago, they paid a male coat-maker for eighteen hours, to start, at one and threepence, shall we say, an hour, and the woman coat-maker for eighteen hours, to start, at tenpence an hour, and they made the same coat. You--not you, yourself, sir, but no one around this table--would have known the difference between the two at the finish. That, to me, is entirely and completely wrong. It is the value of the work that is in the commodity that ought to be paid for to the person irrespective of sex.

I think I could justly call the attention of the Council to one or two of the things that have been done in my country. I believe that we were the first to give the franchise to women. I do not know how many years ago, but the women have had the vote in New Zealand for many decades. They could not have had it for many centuries, because we are only 106 years old.

But also, on top of the vote, we were the first Government, or one of the first, to take women into our Legislature. A year or two ago, we went a little further, because we first gave them the right to vote, and the right to vote in New Zealand carries with it the right to be nominated for Parliament. They are on the roll; that is the qualification for the right to enter Parliament. So that women, when they were entered on the roll as electors or as voters -- and I think 87 or 90 per cent of them voted at the last election; some in the right direction -- do not vote as they are told by their husbands. Some of them help their husbands by voting the same way, and some of them discount their husbands' votes by voting in the right way, when their husbands vote the wrong way.

But we did something a year or two ago that went beyond the voting stage. We have what we call a Legislative Council which is a second chamber, membership in which is for seven years on the nomination of the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister obviously represents the majority in Parliament, and appointed by the Governor-General. So that goes with what the electors have said in the main.

I could not help but think of a place called England, where they have some very competent women in their House of Representatives or House of Commons but none in the House of Lords. I thought I might suggest to our friend from Britain that they should alter the name and call ^{it} the House of Lords and ^{and} "Lordesses" let the

E/P.V.75

30.1.1942

women have the same right there as they have in the House of Commons.

Then, we have done something more. We have in New Zealand what is called a family benefit system, which means that the mother receives, irrespective of income, ten shillings a week. It buys a lot more down there than up here. She receives ten shillings a week for every child until that child reaches the age of sixteen years or, if it continues at school or college -- and most mothers want their youngsters to continue at school or college -- it goes on till eighteen years.

If the male of the partnership dies, we pay to the widow two pounds a week for herself, as a widow, and that is discrimination because we do not pay it to widowers; we only pay it to widows. We pay two pounds a week to widows and twenty-five shillings a week as a mother's allowance if there are any children, and then ten shillings a week for each one of those children. There is a benefit to widows only at fifty-five years of age if they have been married for fifteen years, with no benefit for widowers until they become sixty years of age. So our discrimination is the other way round.

The other point is that, looking to education -- and the large proportion of our teachers are women -- there have been a lot of arguments with regard to the payment of a marriage allowance to the male teachers when they marry. That claim has been made on one or two occasions--and I do not know whether it has been satisfied -- by the women teacher that she is entitled to a marriage allowance too. It did not matter until a year or two ago, until trouble came during the war, because we would not allow a female teacher to go on teaching when once she was married. She automatically went out of the profession when she was married. The circumstances of the war and the shortage of teachers brought the female teacher who was married back again into the schools, and I think they are likely to continue there.

Then one other point that I was concerned about: They mentioned four items in particular, you will notice, Mr. President, on page 12. One, universal adult suffrage. That is available in New Zealand. Two, equal right to vote. That is available in New Zealand. Three, equal right to be elected. That also is available. Then, four, equal right to hold public office.

We had some discrimination^{there} against the female sex, in that there was no provision -- and I think it has been made either late last year or early this year -- for female cadets, because of the inference that later they would marry

and automatically go out of the service. Now we have made provision for female cadets the same as for male cadets, and I know of no discrimination in New Zealand against women.

We took a number of women into our railway service during the war. We had a very close inquiry made into it as to the value of their work compared with the men. We paid the women porters, if my memory is right, twenty per cent less than the male porters. There was a reason, again, behind that. They could not do all the work that the male porters could do. As it was seen -- whether it was right or wrong -- they could not climb on top of the railway carriages or the engines to pour the water in. The male had to do that, and it was fairly well measured up and decided that they were, in that particular field, worth twenty per cent less.

They also drove our trams and they received the same rate of pay. You call them "street cars" in the United States, but you use two words and one is just as well. But there is now some objection coming from the men in the trams -- and I hope this will not be cabled to New Zealand, because I would be in trouble-- but I am sorry, the objection is coming because they say they are not able to recruit as many male tram drivers as they were able to do before because of the women coming in. They generally go through the stages of conductor to tram driver and they have not yet got to the stage where the women can take on the driving of the tram with competence . the way that is necessary. They have got just as much in general --you have all been behind women drivers going back to New York, I am sure -- but they have just as much competence as the man, and they have got a better nervous reaction than some of us. That is causing some difficulty, and that is one of the minor difficulties which inevitably will come along when women are allegedly qualified for all jobs.

They have done the job that I mentioned, our tram work, very well indeed. The situation of the driver is occasioning some difficulty because the Tramwaymen's Union is saying that is delaying the introduction of men again into their Union to go on to the driving stage.

I mention these things pro and con because I feel that they ought to be mentioned. There is nothing in the Report that I have read that could not and ought not to be given effect as soon as it is possible to do it. I think, as a male, that we ought to be really happy to think things are as they are, because in one species that I read about some years ago described by a competent scientist, on a certain occasion the female, when she knows that she is to become a mother, to ensure that nutrition is there for her child, retains the male to ensure that the nutrition is available out of his body.

Well, the females in the human race have not done that yet, and I think that in many ways we are fortunate in having men and women that can think these things out, but unless we give full play and full understanding to the principle in the second chapter -- or the second verse, shall we say -- of the Charter, then we cannot have the type of world that we want. And I think there is a tremendous lot of credit due to those who drew up this Report on the Status of Women, particularly in their words in Chapter X and some of their words in Chapter XI.

MR. MOROZOV (USSR) (Interpretation from Russian): The Commission on the Status of Women was created by the Economic and Social Council in order to prepare recommendations and reports to the Economic and Social Council on promoting women's rights in economic, political, civil, social, and educational fields, with the object of implementing the principle that men and women shall have equal rights.

As a representative of the Soviet Union, I am glad to be able to report that in my country not only are these principles recognized, but they are being protected by law. The Report of the Commission on the Status of Women to the Economic and Social Council must, in our opinion, be considered as the first step in the direction of implementing these aims of the Commission. This Report and the recommendations it contains will be, I understand, studied by the appropriate committees of the Economic and Social Council. Therefore, I want to limit my speech today to certain observations with regard to the proposal presented to us today by the representative of the United Kingdom and contained in Document E/353. This document also includes the draft resolution that the United Kingdom representative suggested be accepted. The first impression in reading this document is that the delegation of the United Kingdom fears that the Commission on the Status of Women will go too far in implementing its aims. I do not share these fears, and I cannot agree with certain provisions contained in the document presented to us by the United Kingdom. Especially, we are unable to agree to the following provision in paragraph 4 of the British document. On page 2 it is said: "The poor status of women in many undeveloped regions of the world is founded not primarily on legal systems, but on beliefs and customs of long standing of whatever origin." What is the main idea of this statement? It cannot be understood solely in the following manner: that the United Kingdom delegation considers the rights of women, and specifically the political rights

of women, not to be paramount, but to be secondary. This is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, so properly brought to our attention by the honourable representative of New Zealand. Such an understanding would be contrary to the decisions of the General Assembly with regard to the political rights of women.

In the appropriate resolution of the General Assembly it says it recommends that all Member States which have not already done so adopt measures necessary to fulfill the purposes and aims of the Charter in this respect, by granting to women the same political rights as to men.

My second observation is with regard to the idea expressed in the United Kingdom document, which recommends to the Commission on the Status of Women not to deal with specific economic rights of women. Such recommendations cannot be accepted, and it seems to us that the particular part of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women, which deals with the aims of this Commission in the field of economic rights, is perfectly correct and contains the enumeration of the main problems that are to be dealt with by this Commission. The fact that certain of these aims are being dealt with by specialized agencies of the United Nations does not mean, and should not mean, that the economic rights of women should not constitute one of the most important tasks of the Commission on the Status of Women. Therefore, we cannot agree with the point of view of the representative of the United Kingdom.

We cannot agree with the United Kingdom delegation also on the question of prostitution. It is true that prostitution represents a wide social problem. However, it does not mean that the Commission on the Status of Women should not deal with such a problem. In fact, we hope that this Commission will deal with this question, and if it is true that corresponding measures are being

considered also by the Social Commission of the Economic and Social Council, it means that the Commission on the Status of Women will have to work in accord, commonly, together with the Social Commission. But this does not mean that they should overlook such an important problem.

These are the remarks which the Soviet delegation wanted to bring to the attention of the Council with regard to the British proposal. As to the Report and the proposals and observations that the Soviet delegation has to make to these observations the Report itself, we will make/ when the Report is being considered in the appropriate committee of the Council.

MR. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I would like your indulgence to intervene a second time, because of the remarks that have just been made by the Soviet representative.

The Soviet representative said that the impression was gained from paragraph 4 of our paper that we were trying to prevent the Commission from going too far in implementing its aims. I thought I had made clear in my statement -- it certainly is made clear in this Resolution -- that our purpose is to secure some implementation of its aims.

The difficulty we feel about Chapter X is that, although it is labelled "a programme of future work", when you read it there is no programme of future work.

I was rather disappointed to hear from my colleague from New Zealand that he rather gave the impression that everything was lovely in the garden, if I may use a colloquialism, in referring to Chapter X.

Concerning Chapter X, the point of the British delegation is that we must have a programme of work, and indeed we have suggested at the end of our document the following words. We have said: "The Economic and Social Council having examined the report of the Status of Women Commission requests the Commission at the next session to take as its immediate programme of work the examination of existing legal and customary disabilities of women as regards political rights and educational opportunities with a view to framing proposals for action."

In this programme of work, there is no programme of work. There is no statement giving a programme of action. Many of the aspirations are simply a repetition of aspirations in the Charter. A certain number are carried forward. By all means let us have those aims stated, but let us go further and also have a programme of work.

The particular sentence which the Soviet representative read is as follows: "The poor status of women in many undeveloped regions of the world is founded not primarily on legal systems, but on beliefs and customs of long standing of whatever origin." That was simply put in as a matter of fact, and I must confess it still seems to me to be a matter of sociological fact. The emphasis of the approach of the United Kingdom to this problem is to recognize the facts and to see how we can deal with them. That was the purpose of inserting that sentence.

The next point that the Soviet representative raised was that he, I / think, misunderstood what I said about economic rights. I did not say that the Women's Commission would have no interest in the subject or should in its entirety disassociate itself from it, but I did point out that other organizations were very intimately concerned. The ILO, for instance, has been dealing with this subject for years and has passed a large number of recommendations, and so on, dealing with women's problems.

My purpose in putting this forward was to make sure that there is no duplication and overlap of effort.

That brings me to the final point, which was the point about prostitution. There, again, it is simply a question of how the work of preventing prostitution is tackled, in its most workmanlike manner. I think it would be a very easy but unwise decision of the Council to say, "Well, this concerns a number of Commissions. Let them all get on with it."

Inside a government service, work is allocated carefully. You do not say that certain work can be dealt with by a number of departments, and just let them get on with it. One has to have regard to economy, and one has to have regard to concentration of effort and co-ordination of policy. Accordingly, one allocates the work carefully, and one allocates a primary responsibility.

I think that there is also a tendency in international gatherings for people to pass resolutions and to allocate work very generally, but I think we have in the international field just the same kind of responsibility we have in the national field, to see that work is correctly and adequately allocated. Accordingly, I think there is importance in the Council's recommending that the work of prostitution is properly a subject which concerns the whole social field, and the primary responsibility must rest with the Social Commission. The Status of Women Commission will, of course, take an interest in the subject, but I think it is important that we should lay down the primary responsibility. That was the purpose of our paper in referring to these particular items where there was a danger of overlap.

MR. ARCA PARRO (Peru): Mr. President, I think it is very right to say that there is intrinsic ^{value} to this Report. After the comments that have been made by the different representatives, particularly by Mr. Nash of New Zealand, I should like to make a few remarks on the interpretation that could be given to the paper or document presented to us by the Commission on ^{the} status of Women.

I think the Commission has attached rather great importance to the juridical aspect of the questions that are dealt with in the terms of reference of this Commission. I do not object to any of them, because if we consider that the aims of the Commission as such are expressed in the paragraphs under Chapter X, really there is nothing new that could be admitted, from a very general point of view. I think Mr. Nash was right in making his statement that practically all the things were already working or were contained in the legislation of his country.

But my remark is from another angle. The Commission makes this statement, supporting the declaration of Philadelphia on this matter, which reads as follows: "All human beings, irrespective of race, creed, or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and spiritual development in conditions of freedom and of economic security and equal opportunity."

This declaration was made by the International Labour Organization, and ^{as} inasmuch / the Commission supports it, it means that they are expected to work or develop their programme on this ground, in some way implementing this declaration. If we try to analyze this declaration, really the constituent parts of this declaration have been left out, at least in some aspects, by the work of the Commission in attaching a greater importance to just one aspect of this whole problem, the juridical aspect. But they have not touched, really, the economic aspect. They have not considered that the situation of women in a good number of countries -- and I would say in all the countries -- has a direct correlation with economic developments, with the economic life of such a country.

So, really, we consider that if any change is going to take place in the status of women, it is a consequential element, a consequential phenomenon to the developments or changes that have to take place within the economic field. And this is the aspect that the Commission has not really studied, or at least has not emphasized. I think this should be not only emphasized but over-emphasized so as to reach a given goal.

Starting from that point of view, of course the Commission reached a very mediocre programme that could not be considered as representing or expressing the aims of a large part of women in the world. It is a very conservative one, I should think, because there is nothing new, nothing that could be considered as a new concept in this changing world of ours nowadays. Maybe they have taken into account that they should have sort of "average" aims / not to try to point out many new questions, but ^{even} if they try to establish a sort of average scale, they should have more ground on economic and social questions, because, as I said, those are just consequential.

But they attach great importance to them and, according to their own statements, they think -- because the Economic and Social Council is going to recommend to the General Assembly that the laws of all countries should be codified, to enforce equal rights impartially to all citizens, or, when necessary, ^{recommending} that each country will be requested to codify all its laws, political, economic, civil and social and have a complete equality of rights for all women -- that that is going to be fulfilled. That is a dream absolutely, because no body will take any step in changing its legislation and giving equal rights to women, ^{if} the background of such a phenomenon has not changed, if economic conditions are imposing a certain slavery on women, if there are certain vested interests behind cheap labour because women ^{the idea of} accept/working for a lower salary. That is not going to work. So much for the comment on that gap that the Commission has not filled.

On the other hand, I think they have made an important effort to gather all this information and to present to us what we may recognize or accept as an average aim of this Commission. But what surprises me is that, in spite of this situation, in spite of the fact that this programme, if we could consider it such, does not represent anything that could be considered as too progressive, there are some delegations that are trying to restrict even those aims.

I do not understand what is the meaning of the proposal made by the British delegation. Does it mean that we are going to impose a sort of restriction on the work of this Commission? Does it mean that the only resolution that the Council is going to pass on this Report will be this one? Or is this just implementing some other resolution which is, so far, unknown? If that is so, I really have no right to insist on the meaning of the resolution. But if the British delegation expects to introduce this as the only resolution to be passed by this Council, it is not anything that we would be willing to support. Why? Because the only thing that we accept is what the Commission recommends to be done by the Secretariat.

There are a number of recommendations from the Commission to implement the work that has to be developed by the Secretariat, and the only thing that the British proposal considers very carefully is those recommendations as to the work that will have to be done by the Secretariat. What is the Commission going to do in the meantime? Just sit around?

In the first paragraph of the resolution of the United Kingdom, it says as follows: "The Economic and Social Council having examined the report of the Status of Women Commission requests the Commission at the next session to take as its immediate programme of work the examination of existing legal and customary disabilities of women as regards political rights and educational opportunities with a view to framing proposals for action. . ."

In plain language that means that we consider that the Commission has done nothing worth being accepted by the Council. We recommend that they should start over again, that they should get ready for work, to do this interesting research work on "legal and customary disabilities of women". Maybe we could ask some seminar in a university to do that. Maybe that work has already been done by somebody else. I am sure that if we were to go to the New York Public Library we would find more than one volume on that.

What is the use of charging our Commission with such a dry piece of legal work? It would mean that all the Members of the Commission would have to be changed by their respective Governments, that lawyers would have to be sent with them. We are recommending that they merely engage in legal research.

"Further, the Council instructs the Secretary-General to carry out the proposals in paragraphs 22 (c) and 26 (a) and (b). . ."

Now, let us see what it says. Paragraph 22 (c) says: ". . . the Secretary-General be asked to request the Member States to reply without delay to the questions in Part I, paragraph D. . ." That gives more work to the Secretariat, but nothing for the Commission so far.

Paragraph 26 (a) says that the Commission decided:

"To recommend to the Economic and Social Council that the Secretary-General be requested to urge each Member Government to complete and transmit to him by 1 June 1947 if possible, the following sections of the Questionnaire on the Legal Status and Treatment of Women: Part I, Public Law, Section A, Franchise, and Section B, Eligibility to Hold Public Office, and to indicate as far as possible, any changes in law or practice concerning these matters since the General Assembly Resolution was passed."

That sounds useless because, as I said on a similar subject, if I were to go to a good library like the New York Public Library, or the Congressional Library in Washington, I am sure that I would be able to provide that information in twenty-four hours. What is the use of charging our Secretary-General with that work? In the meantime, we are practically saying to the Commission, "You may go home." What is the idea of that? Are we trying to impose a sort of interdiction on our Commission? If that is so, let us be plain and tell them: "You have done such work that makes you unworthy of remaining in such a Commission." I am not accustomed to agreeing with this kind of a game.

Coming back to some of the aspects of the Report to which Mr. Nash has so clearly referred, I would like to associate myself with some of these comments about the evolution of the legal or juridical ideas on the rights of women. I would just mention that there are a few cases in some countries where those concepts are so different from what we may consider the traditional concepts on that matter, and that if some discrimination could be found, it is really on the other side.

Mr. Nash mentioned some cases in which the legal statutes are more favourable to woman than to men. Well, that might have some grounds. I would like to give an illustration. About twenty years ago, in my country, Peru, when we had

no legislation obligating an employer to pay certain indemnities to an employee in case of dismissal, women were already provided for in that regard. Three months' salary was supposed to be paid to any woman dismissed without legal cause. That was a precedent that was utilized later on to make a general rule in this respect for any employee. It was the same in social security. We have a number of provisions that in some ways really give more benefit to women who are engaged in industry.

That is only right. I think it is right because in spite of the claim of equality of the sexes, I think it is a biological question, according to which women have to be granted more benefits, more consideration. It is not merely the aim of anybody or everybody having women doing the same kind of work. In some way, biology divides the kind of work that has to be done by one or the other.

So, if we go through the legislative progress that has been made, particularly in the new countries and in certain small countries, in undeveloped countries, we will find that this program does ^{not} mean anything new to those countries -- absolutely nothing. With regard to my country, Peru, the only new issue would be as regards political capacity, because the women of Peru have the right to vote only in municipal elections. However, an amendment has already been introduced for the purpose of giving full powers to women.

But as to the other aims, there is really nothing new. From the point of view of my Government, there would be no trouble at all in coming to any agreement, if it were necessary. But let me insist once more that I do not think that the aims of the Commission will be realized -- as I am certain that the Members of the Commission would wish -- if they do not utilize the correct ways and means

of doing it. If they consider that there is something to win, if they really feel that women must conquer certain rights, they have to fight for them. It is not a matter of having those rights granted as ^{gratuitous} ~~gratuitous~~ favour. No! It is not merely up to recommendations from the General Assembly. It is a change that has to be taken in the economic field. Nothing has been suggested by the Commission from that point of view.

That is really the only criticism that I make of the work of this Commission.

On the other hand, I am willing to support the approval of any resolution that would endorse the recommendations of this Commission, because we want to give them a chance to show us that they are able to carry on their own work, but not, as I said, to impose restrictions or create an impasse in the work of the Commission by approving the proposal of the United Kingdom.

MR. STINEBOWER (United States): Mr. President, we do make some progress around this table, whether it is always apparent or not. Not very many sessions ago it was customary for many speeches on this subject to begin with a sort of apologetic and timid expression of male intrusion into this field. I have not heard any of those today, and I think that is an encouraging aspect, evidence of the progress we are making towards the freedom from fear. For my own part, I should say this is a subject on which I should scarcely dare to be silent at this table.

The interest of the United States, Mr. President, I do not have to emphasize on this subject, and the importance to which we traditionally have attached to the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women. The women of this country, too, have succeeded in achieving a very large measure of the objectives of equality. But we do not allow our satisfaction ^{with} that progress to blind us to problems which we still have to overcome. Another evidence of the interest and the importance we attach to this subject is, if I may recall it, that it was the United States which proposed at the second session of the Council that the Sub-Commission on the Status of Women be made into a full commission. That was in recognition then, as we still recognize now, that there are a great many involved and complex problems in the field of women's rights which warrant consideration by a full commission. The inequities which prevail in legislation and in custom are many. To overcome these inequities will be a long and arduous task, as is clearly stated in the paper submitted by the United Kingdom delegation. The ways and means of eliminating them must be given careful and prolonged study.

Now, sir, as to the balance of my remarks, I do become a little apologetic because I had assumed, rather, from the item on the agenda that this was to be a discussion not of the question of the status of women in general, but a debate on the Report of the Commission, and the balance of my remarks are to points in the Report, rather than to the more general subjects which have occupied

most of our discussion. It may be too detailed and maybe this should have been put off for a committee, but I do propose to go ahead with these points.

In the first place, a criticism has been levied at the resolution which has been put before us by the United Kingdom delegation, that it seems to whittle down the work of the Commission. Well, sir, if I may begin on a critical note, which I hope not to end on, I have, since that criticism was levied, gone through the Report. I cannot find any programme of work or any positive suggestions, whether headed "programme of work" or whether in the rest of the Report, which we could pick out and say that it ought to be pursued by the Commission. They have not given us any further items on which a recommendation could be based. On that much of the Report we may perhaps register a certain amount of disappointment that there is not a more positive set of recommendations in the Report to which we could give approval. But I am sure that what the Commission wants, and what the Council wants the Commission to do, is to pick out some positive tasks and go ahead. In particular, it does seem to us that the questions of political rights and educational opportunities for women, and of economic opportunities are such positive tasks.

In our view, the Commission has proceeded wisely in deciding to make a thorough study of certain subjects, before coming to any detailed substantive recommendations on them. I particularly refer to the study programme which has been proposed concerning political rights and educational opportunities. The preparation and circulation to Member Governments of the first section of the questionnaire on the legal status and the treatment of women is an important first step which the Commission has recognized as being of great value for its future work. The United States delegation is confident that such a study by the Commission will give greater strength to any recommendations which it may later on formulate, and will expedite, rather than delay, the work of the United Nations in this field.

In order to make that effective, we trust that Governments will recognize the need for sending in early replies to the questionnaire which has been sent to them, in order to give effect to this programme.

Then, in connection with the Commission's proposal that the Secretary-General be requested to prepare a questionnaire on the economic rights for women, it is my understanding that the International Labour Organization has already prepared and circulated to its Member Governments a very detailed questionnaire on this subject, the replies to which will undoubtedly contain a great deal of material which will be needed by the Commission. We would suggest, therefore, that this Council ask the Secretary-General to request the ILO to furnish the information available for this questionnaire in order that it may be placed before the Commission on the Status of Women.

Now, as to the promotion of women's rights, the United States delegation supports the recommendation that the Secretariat be entrusted with the task of serving as a clearing house for the exchange of information and publications on the use of the franchise. This is a measure which, we feel, should be of very practical value in implementing the General Assembly Resolution on the political rights of women.

The next point is to the regional conferences which the Commission has discussed. We note that the Commission's proposal does not at this time call upon the Council to convene any such regional conference. The proposal relating to conferences in general is, it seems to us, acceptable in principle; but while we recognize the possible value of such conferences, we do agree with the suggestions of the Commission that the Secretary-General should study this matter and report back to the Commission before any action is taken, either by the Commission or by this Council.

With regard to the recommendation which calls on the General Assembly to give consideration to the means of securing complete adult suffrage in those

countries where it is limited or curtailed, particularly as regards women, it seems to us that it would be more appropriate for the Commission to examine this problem further than they have, and to make further suggestions as to the means which they believe might be useful to this end.

As to their recommendation requesting the General Assembly to arrange for the codification of national legislation giving equal rights to women, we find it difficult to understand the precise intent of the proposal. Codification, whether on a national or international scale, is a long-range problem and, therefore, it seems to us that this is a question which might well be referred back to the Commission for further study and clarification before there is any action taken on it here in the Council.

The Commission has also suggested that this Council recommend to Members States that they encourage the establishment within each country of a co-ordinating agency for non-governmental organizations interested in the problems of women.

With that proposal, Mr. President, we do have to disagree. We believe that this Council should not ^{take} action along those lines. We believe that it would violate the basic concept of the free and voluntary character of private organizations, and, under certain circumstances, could even bring into doubt the non-governmental character of the organizations which we might later on be asked to recognize. They might, by the process of being set up, take on a quasi-public character.

If any existing agencies which represent non-governmental organizations of a given country in this field do apply for consultative status, it will, of course, be the task of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to review such applications just as it reviews any other applications of other types of national organizations.

In that same connection, we do note with some regret that the records of the Commission seem to indicate that it spent an undue amount of its time giving consideration to its relationships with non-governmental organizations, a task which is certainly the task of this Council and not of its individual Commissions.

The United States delegation has noted with a great deal of satisfaction the recommendation of the Commission which concerns the co-operation with the Inter-American Commission of Women and considers that it would be helpful if arrangements were made for the exchange of information and for the presence of an observer from the Inter-American Commission of Women at the meetings of

the Commission on the Status of Women.

Finally, we would agree with some of the remarks of the delegation of the United Kingdom, which stressed the importance of this Commission's avoiding duplication of work with other Commissions or specialized agencies. Certainly, once again, while these Commissions are finding their feet in their first sessions, it will not be unduly critical if the Council brings to the attention of the Commissions in some form of communication that the task of co-ordinating specialized agencies is a function of this Council and not of the Commissions.

There are a few more points of detail, Mr. President, which I shall reserve for discussion in the Committee to which I assume this Report will

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The PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Before calling upon other Members of the Council who are to participate in this discussion, I would request the Rapporteur to offer to the Council her valuable remarks.

MRS. URALOVA (Rapporteur) (Interpretation from Russian): Mr. President, I am grateful to you and to all the Members of the Economic and Social Council for the very careful study you have given to the Report of the Commission on the Status of Women and for your understanding of the problems which are presented to you in the Report of this Commission.

I was given the great honour of presenting this Report of the Commission on the Status of Women--a Report which was unanimously adopted, with the recommendations to be presented to the Economic and Social Council.

We knew that our task would be easy in view of the fact that the Members of our Commission are all full of the spirit of the necessity of establishing full rights for women and full equality of men and women. These ideas are expressed in items 26, 29 and 35 of the Report.

I must say that the proposal of the United Kingdom delegation is somewhat unexpected by me. At first glance it seems to represent a ^{ward} step back from the recommendations unanimously adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women. It appears from this document presented by the United Kingdom delegation that the United Kingdom wants to limit the scope of the task within the purview of the Commission on the Status of Women to questions of education primarily. Such a limitation would certainly circumscribe the activities of the Commission in the political, social and economic fields. We hope therefore that this question will be discussed thoroughly in the appropriate committee of the Economic and Social Council.

The Commission on the Status of Women was guided in its work by the terms of reference as expressed in the decision of the Economic and Social Council on 21 June 1946. The Members of the Commission understood the role of this Commission, and therefore all of them took part in the elaboration of the recommendations now presented to you, and they were especially active in the implementation of the Resolution of the General Assembly with regard to the political rights of women, which are presented to you in item 26 of the Report.

I should like to reply to the honourable representative of Peru, who said that he did not see why the questionnaire to be sent out to the Member Nations should be answered by the 1st of June 1947. This question was debated thoroughly in the Commission, and we came to the conclusion which is presented to you now for the following reason: we intend to meet in June, and therefore, in order to continue our work it was considered important to ask the Secretary-General and the Economic and Social Council to see to it that the replies to the questionnaire should be accelerated by the Governments so that they would be received in time.

The Commission has discussed very carefully its programme and it took the decision that the Commission should collaborate in seeing that the forces of fascism should finally be liquidated, that international collaboration be promoted, and that the establishment of a democratic peace be promoted so that no new aggression would ever be possible. To achieve this aim it is necessary, in the view of the Commission on the Status of Women, to improve the general status of women in the world and to establish equal rights and freedoms with men. The abolishment of all discrimination is paramount, whatever customs and habits have established such discrimination.

In its work the Commission on the Status of Women has elaborated its list of aims in the political, civil and other fields which are listed in the Report on page 12 and the following pages.

With regard to the economic and social rights of women, the Commission is of the opinion that women should receive full economic rights and full equality with men, and in order to prevent discrimination against women in the social and economic fields, irrespective of their nationality, race, language or religion, women should be given equal rights with men with regard to wages, labour, holidays, and other economic and social rights.

The Commission intends to take up other items in its programme whenever such problems may arise and are brought to the attention of the Commission.

In accordance with the decision of the Economic and Social Council of 21 June 1947 the Commission on the Status of Women found it necessary to make an addition to the definition of the functions of the Commission. This addition deals with the problem of implementing the principle that men and women shall have equal rights, and the working out of proposals to give effect to such recommendations. The full text of the functions in its final form is to be found on page 2 of the Report, reading as follows:

"The function of the Commission shall be to prepare recommendations and reports to the Economic and Social Council on promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields with the object of implementing the principle that men and women shall have equal rights, and to work out proposals to give effect to such recommendations. The Commission shall also make recommendations to the Council on urgent problems requiring immediate attention,

E/P.V. 75
84-90

defense of women's rights. The Commission may submit proposals
to the Council regarding its terms of reference."

We have decided to ask the Economic and Social Council to accept these additions which are dictated by life itself. The Commission on the Status of Women desires to participate in the elaboration of the International Bill of Rights, and, therefore, we desire that the second session of our Commission be convened at such a time as would allow us to collaborate in the establishment of the International Bill of Rights, in order to participate in the work of the Commission on Human Rights.

In order to co-ordinate the work of our Commission with other organs of the United Nations and to avoid any duplication of effort, we established the principles of collaboration with such organs of the United Nations, which are presented to your attention in Chapters IV, VI and IX of our Report.

Gentlemen, the Commission on the Status of Women expects full sympathy from you and knows that they will find full understanding and belief in the aims and in the future of our work. In presenting the Report of our Commission to your attention, we would like to express the hope that you will approve this Report and that you will make easier the task of implementing the fundamental rights of women, especially in view of the fact, which I would like to bring to your attention, that this Report has been unanimously accepted by the Commission on the Status of Women. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT: Before I call upon the next speaker, I would like to say that it is my desire to conclude the general discussion on this Report tonight and to refer it to the Committee of the full Council.

MR. PAPANEK (Czechoslovakia): Mr. President, if you do not have any other speakers, I am willing to give up my right to speak. If you have others, I will be very brief.

The PRESIDENT: It depends upon the representative of China.

MR. YANG (China): If my distinguished colleague from Czechoslovakia wishes to abdicate, and if it will make the Council happier, I will be glad to waive my right, too.

MR. van KLEFFENS (Netherlands): Mr. President, may I associate myself with the two previous speakers?

The PRESIDENT: I do not consider this as a discourtesy to the Report on the Status of Women, but rather as a compliment that they were ^{going to} only repeat all the good things that have been said about the Report.

I should like now to announce the work for tomorrow. At ten a.m. the Drafting Sub-Committee of the Social Committee of the Full Council will meet to consider the Draft Resolutions of the Social Committee. That Drafting Sub-Committee consists of the representatives of the following countries: France, Lebanon, United Kingdom, United States and the USSR.

At 11 a.m. the Council will sit in Plenary Session and continue the consideration of the items on the agenda of today's session which have not been disposed of; that is to say, the Report of the Population Commission and then the Report of the Statistical Commission, and then later the two Assembly Resolutions put on today's agenda.

There will not be a Plenary Session of the Council in the afternoon, but the Social Committee of the Full Council will sit at 2:45 tomorrow afternoon to consider the Report of the Human Rights Commission and the Resolution on Genocide. At 2:45 again the Committee on the Economic Reconstruction of Europe--the Full Committee--will meet to consider the Drafting Committee's Report. That Committee,

the Committee on the Economic Reconstruction of Europe, is composed of the representatives of Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Lebanon, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States and the USSR.

The Council will now adjourn and meet at 11:00 tomorrow.

(The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.)