

## WOMEN'S ECUMENICAL LIAISON GROUP

Press Release  
October 29, 1971

The Women's Ecumenical Liaison Group ( WELG ) held its fourth meeting at Cartigny ( Geneva ), October 25 to 29<sup>th</sup> 1971.

Plans were developed with SODEPAX for a 3-year programme on "Women's Role in Peace Education". The first stage will be the meeting, in May 1972, of an international ecumenical task-force composed of women engaged in action for peace at local, national or international levels.

Follow-up was discussed to the WELG European Consultation on "The Image of Woman in the Mass Media" held in Vienna in June 1971. Reports are being received from participants in various countries. In England, for instance, by a joint decision of Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist women, attention is to be focussed for a definite period on TV monitoring.

The Group reviewed the four-year experience of WELG. A report is to be prepared for the 1972 meeting of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. WELG was set up in 1968 on the recommendation of the JWG, although its origin goes back to a first international ecumenical meeting of women - religious women, deaconesses, laywomen - held near Rome towards the end of the second Vatican Council on the joint initiative of the World Council of Churches and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.

WELG's areas of concern and future plans cover the responsible participation of Christian women, and their co-operation with men, both in the renewal and development of the Church and in the changing context of modern society.

Is women's contribution fully used in the interpretation of the Gospel to the modern world? What of the potential contribution of women theologians? What are the possibilities for women's participation in decision-making bodies of the various Churches? What is the actual practice in this regard? What are the attitudes implied? What roles are women playing in the development of new forms of Christian community? These are some of the questions to the Churches emerging in WELG discussions.

Other questions are addressed to WELG itself by the present societal context : What can be the attitude of Christian women to current developments as regards sexual relationships and marriage? What does "liberation" for women - and for men - really mean? What is "Christian education" for the year 2000? Is discrimination against women a thing of the past?

Answers to some of these questions would seem to show that, whatever the will to cooperate with men - there is still a task for women's groups, and that WELG can usefully serve and stimulate their action in an ecumenical context and for the overall aims of the ecumenical movement.