

CONFIDENTIAL

Not for general circulationRC/WCC WOMEN'S ECUMENICAL LIAISON GROUP

M I N U T E S

of the

# Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

Meeting held in Rome, Italy

October 26th - 30th, 1970

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P A R T I C I P A N T S

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Members of Group:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Miss Pilar BELLOSILLO (Spain)               | - President, World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations             |
| Frau Marianne DIRKS (Germany)               | - President, Zentralverband der Kath. Frauen- und Müttergemeinschaften |
| Mother M. St. Charles HENAFF, o.s.u.        | - Vice-Provincial in Greece of the Ursulines                           |
| Miss Maria MEERSMAN (Belgium)               | Christian Workers Movement   |
| Miss Maria de Lourdes PINTASILGO (Portugal) | - International Grail Movement   |

"Consilium de Laicis"

- |                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Miss Rosemary GOLDIE (Australia) | - Associate Secretary |
| Miss Maria VENDRIK (Netherlands) | - Member              |

Observers:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Miss Marie-Ange BESSON (France)         | - Pont. Commission "Justice and Peace"                        |
| Sister Lydia LASCANO, ICM (Philippines) | - R.C.C.  |
| Miss Margaret MEALEY                    | - Executive Director, National Council of Catholic Women, USA |
| Mrs. Dulcinea RODRIGUES                 | President, National Council of Catholic Women, India          |

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Members of Group:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Mrs. Athena ATHANASSIOU-TSOUDEROS (Greece) | - Greek Orthodox Church  |
| Dr. Marga BÜHRIG (Switzerland)             | - Swiss Protestant Church Federation                                       |
| Miss Ruth WALKER (United Kingdom)          | - Secretary, Council for Women's Ministry in the Church, Church of England |

W.C.C. Staff:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Miss Brigalia BAM   | - Associate Secretary, Department on Cooperation of Men and Women; Anglican Church of the Province of South Africa      |
| Dr. Madeleine BAROT | - Secretary for Development Education, Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee & World Service; Reformed Church of France |

Apologies:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Frau Liselotte NOLD  | - Evangelical Church in Germany (Lutheran)  |
| Dr. Margaret SHANNON | - Executive Director, Church Women United, USA; United Presbyterian Church in the USA |

(over)

Observers:

Madame Kafui NOMENYO (Togo)  
Mrs. Katherine S. STRONG (USA)

- World Council of Churches
- Consultant on Ecumenical Relations,  
World YWCA; United Church of Christ

Secretariat:

Miss Ellen BOGLE  
Miss Maria CAROSI

- World Council of Churches
- "Consilium de Laicis".

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

RC/WCC WOMEN'S ECUMENICAL LIAISON GROUP

## Third Meeting

ROME, October 26th - 30th, 1970.

Alternate Chairmen: Dr. M. Bührig (WCC) and Miss M. Vendrik (RCC)

P R O G R A M M EMonday, October 26th

- Morning : General Introduction  
Report of work and exchange of experience since the second meeting of WELG  
Rev. Jérôme Hamer, o.p., Secretary of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.
- Afternoon : Sharing of experience (continued)  
Report on WUCWO congress at Torhout, Belgium, with comments from various participants.

Tuesday, October 27th

- Morning : "Case-Studies" - Presentation by Miss M. Meersman.  
Division in three working groups to discuss these.
- Afternoon : 1) Results of group discussions on case-studies (Chairman: Mrs. K.S. Strong)  
Suggestions for future.
- 2) "Women in the Church" - Documentation received (Miss R. Goldie)  
Discussion and suggestions for future.

Wednesday, October 28th

- Morning: "The Image of Woman in the Mass Media"  
Report of the sub-committee responsible for the organization of the European Conference. - Discussion.
- Afternoon : 1) "Women, Development and Peace"  
Discussion with representatives of SODEPAX.
- 2) "Women's Liberation Movements"  
Information and discussion - Attempted assessment.

Thursday, October 29th

- Morning : Business Session. (I)
- Afternoon: 1) Collaboration with the programme "Living in a Changing World" of the WCC Division of Ecumenical Action.
- 2) Case-Studies - Questionnaire to be sent out.
- 5 p.m. Tea with guests. Information session.

Friday, October 30th

- Morning: Business session (II) - End of meeting.

M I N U T E S

I. The Chairman (Miss Vendrik) warmly welcomed all the participants, those who attended last year's meeting at Cartigny as well as those coming for the first time. She expressed the hope that this meeting would be able to make good plans for the coming twelve months.

Miss Rosemary Goldie, organiser of the meeting, explained the proposed agenda, which was accepted with one or two slight amendments.

The programme started with a statement by Miss Brigalia Bam on the work done during the year since the meeting of the group at Cartigny, December 1969. She reported good progress in several directions, and felt the members of WELG were truly proving to be good "multipliers", in getting more and more women around them involved and interested in the work. She briefly described some of her own experiences on travel during the year, when she had mentioned many times the activities of WELG. She felt it would be worthwhile seizing opportunities for contacts with women in publicity and the press. The Women's Liberation Movements had focussed interest on the problems of the man-woman relationship and dialogue and, indirectly, had caused the WCC Consultation on the Ordination of Women (September, 1970) to get quite good reports in the press. Referring to the developments regarding the World Day of Prayer, she mentioned the progress made in Germany, due to the efforts of two WELG members, Frau Dirks and Frau Nold, who had decided to join forces and organise a conference in Europe in the near future. The inspiration from this group had been very important. On the international level, there had been important decisions taken during the last two years, especially with regard to the participation of the Roman Catholics in the celebration of the World Day of Prayer. The sub-committee which had been planning the Conference on "The Image of Woman in the Mass Media" (Vienna, June 1971) would also bring news of important contacts made. Miss Bam was persuaded that the effectiveness of the work WELG achieved would much depend on the quality and variety of relations and contacts that the members were able to make.

II. Participation of Roman Catholics in the World Day of Prayer

Mrs. D. Rodrigues made a statement on how the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations had shifted its annual day of prayer from March to May, in order to enable its members to participate in the World Day of Prayer observation with the Protestant women. She had been nominated a member of the World Day of Prayer International Committee, at their meeting in Bangkok in September 1970.

### III. Sharing Experiences

Mrs. Rodrigues reported on the ecumenical situation in India, and stated that, on the whole, ecumenism was developing, in a broad sense, towards a deeper collaboration between the different religions, on the person to person level, even though there was nothing official at all.

After some discussion, it was concluded that it would be good for the WELG to try and pin-point something of the "depth" of ecumenism, and this might help other groups also.

Miss Maria Meersman reported on developments among the workers. There was a significant desire among many people to seek understanding, not only of other Christians but also of non Christians.

Mrs. Katherine Strong gave a brief report on the ecumenical activities of the Y.W.C.A.

Miss Ruth Walker reported on the work of women in the Church of England, which was in the throes of reorganisation throughout its structures, and the tendency was therefore to look more inwards. Her particular Council was trying to support developments towards the ordination of women, but this was still difficult. There were more attempts, she thought, to further ecumenical relations.

Sister de St. Charles Henaff reported more specifically on ecumenical experiences among the women religious of different denominations. Compared with a few years back, a great effort had recently been made, and she gave a series of examples of genuine ecumenical relations between Roman Catholic sisters and Protestant, Orthodox or Anglican sisters, in a variety of situations. (Prayers in common, aid given to others in need, etc.)

Mrs. Athena Athanassiou spoke of the present situation in the Greek Orthodox Church and stated that she felt too much lip-service was being given to the word and notion of "ecumenism"; realities were not faced, especially by a majority of the same tradition, while little was done for ecumenical encounter in depth with one's own neighbours. She appealed to WELG to endeavour to stimulate with patience both real encounters and more study in depth within the groups of the Christian family itself.

Sister Lydia Lascano gave a description of the ecumenical work done by her community in the Philippines, and on recent developments there on the social and political level with regard to women.

Frau Marianne Dirks described the collaboration now taking place in Germany between the Roman Catholic and Protestant women's groups, as well as the difficulties arising due to the reactions of young people in their rebellion against

established society. Church women in Western Germany were endeavouring to maintain contact as much as possible with church women in Eastern Germany. In many respects, lay movements were forging ahead of official church circles, as far as ecumenism was concerned.

Miss Margaret Mealey, reporting on developments in the United States, stated that "grassroots ecumenism" was very popular; women's groups of other churches were often invited into the Roman Catholic parishes. There was now close collaboration between the National Council of Catholic Women, of which she was Executive Director, and the Protestant Church Women United (e.g. "living-room dialogues" were mutually encouraged; effective publications in common, etc.). Social concerns, she thought had brought women together to a greater extent than worship. For example, recently they had had a great mutual experience of ecumenical relations, on the part of five largest women's organisations of religious orientation, through a common action requested by the government to recruit girls in poorer areas to enable them to acquire formal skills. Women, nationally and locally, had come together on the issue of poverty. She also referred to the active participation of Roman Catholic women in the World Day of Prayer celebrations.

Madame Kafui Nomenyo, as an Observer representing the women of Togo, reported that up till now the World Day of Prayer was essentially attended by the Protestant women, but they hoped for Roman Catholic participation in the future. Youth and mixed groups were more inclined than others to be ecumenical.

Miss Maria Vendrik, reporting on developments in the Netherlands, stated there had been a marked evolution there, both as regarded ecumenical relations and the more active participation of women in church and society. The Ecumenical Council of Churches in the Netherlands now included Roman Catholic representation on the same footing as the other Churches. A special ecumenical centre had been set up to encourage progressive elements on the local level; there was close collaboration with Protestant lay centres; active ecumenical work was being achieved, both on the liturgical level and on that of the role of the Church 'in the world'. Good work was also being done regarding the cooperation of men and women in church and society, which was inspired by the example of the World Council of Churches.

Dr. Marga Bührig stated that an attempt at a common Roman Catholic/Protestant women's publication was now being made in Switzerland. There was already good collaboration for the World Day of Prayer. The question of inter-communion was very much in people's minds. She described an experience of a common service of communion, which had led many to think that solidarity should take precedence even over loyalty to one's own Church.



Miss Pilar Bellosillo gave a report on the recently held WUCWO congress and Council meetings in Belgium, where emphasis had been laid mainly on the question of EDUCATION and on the role and responsibility of women in general, and of WUCWO in particular, in this field. Effects of "liberating" education (proposed by Dr. Paulo Freire), designed to help man (and woman) to transform the world, as opposed to "subjecting" or traditional education. Main conclusion of congress and Council meeting: necessity to transform existing mentalities and systems of education. Much enthusiasm shown by delegates from all over the world, and particularly the third world; only Europeans rather reticent, because they did not feel the need for change. A four-year plan was adopted; many regional projects; all of which they were convinced should be carried out in an ecumenical perspective, as far as possible.

Several members who had participated in the above meetings added their comments on the various aspects of the discussion in the working groups.

IV. Report of Father J. Hamer, Secretary General of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity

Father Hamer reviewed the situation in the ecumenical movement as a whole and the viewpoint of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity in particular. He analysed the present developments and the questions they posed. Was there a slowing down of the ecumenical movement? Or was the movement seeking another, a new, aim? Description of tendencies manifested in recent years. Was the Roman Catholic Church contemplating joining the WCC? This posed all kinds of problems. On what particular points was it concentrating? Reference to relations with other movements. He felt there was a great need to learn to re-define the objective centered on Christ, the glorification of God in the world. Effort to seek the meaning of the mission of the Church in the world.

The report was followed by a number of questions and a discussion on various points.

V. Conference on "THE IMAGE OF WOMAN IN THE MASS MEDIA", Vienna, June 14-19, 1971.

Dr. Madeleine Barot presented the latest plans made by the Group of Four regarding the above conference. She indicated that contact had been made with the Rev. K. van Drimmelen, Vienna, who had special facilities to contact people in Eastern Europe. Contact had also been made regarding material arrangements for the conference with the Roman Catholic correspondent, Countess H. Esterhazy. Both were very interested in the conference and prepared to help all they could with regard to practical arrangements and with trying to find participants from countries beyond the Iron Curtain.

Three stages were proposed for the study of the theme, namely:

1. A survey, for which women would be asked to criticize and analyze the mass media, in order to determine the kind of image of woman they reflect.
2. The setting-up of small study groups to follow up the information thus received, and to try and define what is, or should be, the Christian viewpoint concerning the image of woman in the mass media.
3. Having discovered what we want to say as Christians, have we not a specific responsibility to try and convey what we mean to the responsible sectors of the mass media? and if so, how do we do this?

There is an evident need for a plan of action, a strategy to be worked out for the women's groups and movements, thought Dr. Barot, and indicated that it was hoped to make a deeper study of the question before the conference, so as to ensure a fruitful discussion with the participants.

A list of invitations for the conference had now to be drawn up, as well as a number of practical arrangements to be discussed.

In the discussion and referring to the second stage mentioned, Miss de Lourdes Pintasilgo expressed a preference for a study of the important problems of the day. Asked if the Vienna conference would be based solely on the French experience, Dr. Barot explained that the survey was being conducted beforehand because not many women's groups, whatever the country, had much experience in this field. The French women were encouraged to take this up rather seriously, with the help of experts. If the particular questionnaire appealed, the French group was prepared to go ahead and carry out the survey, for which the whole timing had already been scheduled.

It was thought that it might be interesting to use the same questionnaire as a test in other countries as well, but it was realized that this would raise some technical questions, and that there would certainly have to be variations in the questions to suit each country.

With regard to possible conclusions, Mrs. Dirks stressed the necessity of a real dialogue with the women who were engaged professionally in the mass media and of an enquiry into the possibilities of such women. Dr. Barot pointed out that the survey they had in mind was meant as an enquiry into, and not first and foremost as a critique of the mass media.

The draft of a proposed programme for the conference was then presented, and a lengthy discussion ensued on different points of this; suggestions were made regarding both content and possibilities of speakers.

The question was raised as to what the conference was meant to achieve. It was suggested there might be two main aims: (1) Sensitize church women on the importance of the mass media and the possibilities they offered of expressing ideas; (2) Discover through study the answer to a certain number of great problems in present-day society. These represented two poles in tension, so a decision would have to be taken as to their respective importance, but the tension could prove a fruitful one.

It was also asked whether it would not be good to invite also non Christian specialists and thus enable the participants at the conference to be exposed to more varied points of view.

Several members emphasized the importance of sensitization, as, seen from that aspect, the main problems might appear more clearly. This also seemed a reason for giving an important place to the presentation by a specialist of the mass media, and not to the question of the status of women in general.

Dr. Barot thought that the final aim of the conference ought to be for the women's movements to offer their collaboration to the mass media, at the national level, that they should see their responsibility in this field. One or more broadcasts might be available for direct contact with the general public; it would be up to each country to see how they could do this. A wide influence could thus be brought to bear on the radio, the TV, and in the magazines. The need to remember that Christians were not alone but lived in a pluralistic world, was stressed by Mrs. Dirks, but could surely exert some influence after sufficient thought and reflection on the needs of others in a secularized world. Miss Bellosillo saw as an aim a further perspective: the encouragement of the critical faculty in women, to render them capable of reacting by themselves and as Christians to what was presented to them in the mass media.

Passing to practical questions, the items requiring a decision were presented as follows:

1. The final content of programme
2. The invitations and allocations of delegates. Particular problem of WCC: delegates only on national level, but need to have the right one to carry out action on this level. For Eastern Europe, was there a possibility of inviting also Roman Catholics?
3. Budget. Hope of obtaining, on WCC side, a budget of \$2,500 for expenses of conference (interpreters, secretariat, etc), but there were also the travel expenses of the speakers and of some delegates, plus miscellaneous expenses.
4. Secretariat of conference: Countess Esterhazy, WUCWO correspondent in Vienna, and the Rev. K. van Drimmelen would handle local problems. Sole secretariat for preparation of conference: in Geneva (to coordinate invitations, despatch preparatory documents, etc.)

With regard to the question of invitations, Miss Bellosillo reminded the group that the Vienna Conference was considered as a follow-up of the Taizé Conference of 1967, at which Roman Catholic representation had been on the international level. In an ecumenical meeting there were always problems of equal balance of representation. She asked the RC members of the group to review this question and decide on the method of preparation of the delegates to be chosen. She also thought it might be advisable for the Group of Four (European Group) to meet in order to "balance up" the invitations.

There was an enquiry from Miss Bam whether a special category could be made for the YWCA. There was some discussion on this point, but no conclusion was reached.

Finally, IT WAS AGREED:

1. That a European conference in Vienna be held.
2. That observers from all parts of the world be invited, in principle, without consequences for the budget of the conference as such, the number to be limited.

3. That invitations be sent separately by the Roman Catholics and the WCC, because of different 'constituencies'.
4. That the secretariat for the preparation of the conference be located in Geneva, and that it have the help of the local secretariat in Vienna.
5. That the programme be sent for information to members of WELG, and that they be informed also of the main papers going to the participants. If the members have strong suggestions to make, these should be sent to Geneva.

With regard to plans after the Vienna Conference, although it was certainly stated in the progress report presented that a follow-up was one of its goals, Miss Vendrik thought that no promises should be made as had been done at Taizé to the women's movements, and she hoped that in future any plans would be regarded as the responsibility of the WELG as a whole.

## VI. Case-Studies

Mrs. Strong and Miss Meersman presented a draft questionnaire which they proposed be sent out with the case-studies submitted. The draft was well received; some amendments were suggested. It seemed to Mrs. Strong that WELG was posed the following basic questions regarding the case-studies:

- (a) Did WELG, as a group, want to produce a piece of material to stimulate local groups to start an ecumenical encounter? Was this case-study technique a fruitful one? If so, how did WELG want to publish the material? with guide-lines?
- (b) Did the discussion of the case-studies raise any questions relevant to the WELG, i.e.:
  - i. Questions relating to the clarification of the nature, task, function and potentiality of the group?
  - ii. Questions relating to particular problems of ecumenical encounter, which WELG ought to take up and study further as a group?

Three discussion-groups, to review and discuss the case-studies. They were asked to:

1. Evaluate each case-study, whether a valid one or not, according to what criteria? Could it stimulate local groups? Questions to put or suggestions to give.
2. What general principles could be circulated to local groups regarding case-studies?
3. Was it better to start with action, or other means?
4. Determine the starting point or question of principle important for the WELG, either for now or later (depth of ecumenical relations, etc.).

After the review and discussion, the groups made the following recommendations:

1. To enable other women to benefit from the study of the cases, together with leading questions.
2. To stimulate the need to study more deeply the doctrinal element.
3. To encourage the dialogue to be taken up, starting from reality and concrete facts.
4. To realise that principal ecumenical encounter is not only church commitment, but also political commitment in the widest sense.
5. In a changing situation, an ideal response is to do things together. For this, a machinery is necessary to keep the group together.
6. Need to be securely mature about one's own faith and convictions before engaging in ecumenical activity (although sometimes mature security of one's convictions can be gained through ecumenical activity).

Possible questions suggested for study by WELG were:

- When there is general discussion on ecumenism, should it be limited to Christianity only?
- Is it necessary to remove oneself from one's own church structures in order to be involved in ecumenical encounter?  
(There was some discussion on this question, and it was finally noted that in any case a sense of freedom was needed in order to have real ecumenical interchange).

A question put to WELG was: Is WELG a self-contained study group, or should it try to stimulate women's groups on the local level?

In conclusion, it was thought that the work done on the case-studies must be used and pursued further, so that the result might be used by groups, as well as serve as material for an article; it was also material to reflect on, to enrich, to improve, to criticize, etc.

It was therefore AGREED THAT:

Miss Meersman and Mrs. Strong be asked to continue work on the cases and use the conclusions of the three discussion groups. That the material be reproduced and sent out to the members of the WELG, who would indicate what they wanted done with it. That it be translated and made available in French, Spanish and German as well as English. Members should send in to Geneva their orders for the number of copies desired. That the document include a foreword and guide-lines for study, so that it might be used on the local level.

VII. Women, Development and Peace

Miss Bam gave a summary of the origin of the proposal to hold a women's conference on Peace and of results attained so far. The motion had come up at the last meeting of WELG at Cartigny, presented by Dr. Margaret Shannon. It was through her that a well-known sociologist of USA, Mrs. E. Boulding, had come into the picture, because she was to be a participant at the SODEPAX Conference at Baden, Austria, in the spring of 1970. Mainly through Mrs. Boulding's efforts, a strong recommendation was made at this conference and the whole question was raised at the SODEPAX Committee at Nemi, Italy, at which quite positive reactions were registered. Since then Miss Bam had discussed the matter with SODEPAX and a letter had come from Father Dunne. There was a difficult question of budget. A paper had been prepared by Mrs. Boulding, submitted to SODEPAX. Reference was made to the minutes of the Baden Conference.

Brother Christophe, representing SODEPAX, fully agreed with Miss Bam's remarks and stated that SODEPAX was quite open to a discussion with WELG on the subject of holding a conference.

Mgr. Grémillon intervened and said he thought one should be very relaxed in discussing the whole matter, but any recommendations made by WELG would be quite open to SODEPAX. It was as well to realise that SODEPAX had made many recommendations through its various groups at the Baden Conference. The SODEPAX Officers' Group would be meeting in Geneva very soon and would have to give an order of priority to these recommendations. It was also a question of budget and staff. He would like a positive approach to the whole matter; one should forget about the past. If WELG decided that it was interested in sponsoring some sort of session concerning the role of women and peace in the community, then SODEPAX would also be interested, and would probably be prepared to help financially, too. He thought it would be best, however, if WELG could take the main responsibility for the actual venture.

Dr. Bührig thought that it was a fact to be accepted that there were very few women in the decision-making bodies for Peace, and she concurred with Mrs. Boulding when she stated: "There is always a gap between the valuable experience of women in the family and their role in society". Women were not able to bring their own very good personal experience into the actual field of political action. She felt there was much potential interest in the idea of holding a women's conference on Peace, but it seemed unclear how it was to be worked out. After her conversation with Mrs. Boulding in the spring, she had begun to see that there might be a responsibility of WELG in this field.

Dr. Barot suggested that one of the questions to ask ourselves was in what measure the large Christian women's organisations which members of WELG represented were interested, or could be interested, in the question of Peace. Was it a subject in which they ought to start being interested? A peace conference might also have an educational aim. Was this a subject which had real priority? If aid was going to be requested of SODEPAX and WELG gave its time to it, the movements represented by members were being deliberately engaged into specific efforts in favour of Peace. This ought to stem from a real conviction that the question was an urgent one, to which priority ought to be given.

Miss Meersman declared that she felt extremely interested in the question, not only for herself, but for all the women of the movement of which she was Secretary. But the question was: what kind of peace were we talking about? This ought to be clearer in our minds.

Mrs. Strong emphasized that this subject was one which interested the YWCA particularly in the wider context mentioned by Mgr. Grémillon. There was to be a conference on women in society soon, so the participation of the YWCA would be rather limited if the peace conference were to be held in the near future.

Miss Bellosillo declared that this question fully entered into the aims and recommendations of the recent WUCWO Assembly; she felt equally in agreement with comments made so far. All the long-term plans made up till now were finally concerned with peace, but it was something that took time to mature. She felt that the question would be readily acceptable to WUCWO, but they were already engaged in a long-term action.

Brother de la Chapelle explained the point of view of the Baden Conference. The subject had been the responsibility of women in the life of society. The problem of Peace was the problem of Justice in civic life. It was a problem of immediate and direct education, as well as one of long-term education, i.e. the influence of mothers on their children, etc. Women were instinctively and naturally against war, but they were not sufficiently interested in international affairs. This was a contradiction.

Brother Christophe did not think it was necessary to define Peace exactly. (There was a definition of Peace on page 9 of the Baden Report). He inclined to follow the lines mentioned by Dr. Barot, namely to come to a consensus on the basic agreement where WELG wanted to make this project a priority. Secondly, to act through the groups represented here. The main issues should be worked out by a sub-committee of WELG. Perhaps the group would decide that an international conference was not the thing to do for the present.

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Miss Bam wondered if they were not now discussing two things: whether WELG was interested or committed, or whether there were other commitments, such as for example WUCWO felt they had. It might be difficult for WELG at the moment to decide on what was the priority for the whole world. For some people, and she was speaking as an African and a member of the Third World, the question of Peace, whether from hunger, discrimination or war was a priority; for others it was not such a priority. In the USA and Canada people were interested in this. If the WELG could not undertake it, she was sure some other groups could and would. For the WCC this was impossible for the year 1971. She wondered if they could decide whether this was something WELG could do, or not?

Miss Pintasilgo underlined the importance of holding an international conference under the auspices of SODEPAX. She felt Peace was closely linked with Development. There was truly a paradox with regard to women and peace. On the local level, women experienced the anguish of this problem. In many societies women were caught up in the very life of international politics in spite of themselves, and even though they were practically absent at the level of decision-making bodies and had no voice there.

Miss Vendrik (Chairman) asked the meeting whether they felt sure that an international conference on Peace, studying especially the aspects of education and the training of women to fit them to contribute to peace, would be useful and might be realised? Secondly did they agree with Brother Christophe that such a conference ought to be supported by the women's movements? Thirdly, if the preceding questions were answered in the affirmative, would the group designate a special sub-committee? There was a question of principle to decide: among its priorities, did WELG decide that a women's peace conference was to be considered? If so, when should such a conference be held? End 1971 or beginning 1972?

Mrs. Athanassiou thought that they found themselves a little unprepared in front of these questions; but they had to see that it was necessary to take this step. Otherwise all the talk about the need for women to get into politics was so much thin air. As far as the women's groups or movements were concerned, she did not know how they would react with regard to an international meeting, into which they would be drawn without due preparation: this was a difficulty. It would be good for a smaller group to work on this. She was definitely against holding such a meeting in 1971, because most people's programme was already too full. But she did feel that WELG was challenged, both as a group and individually, as women at the international level and as a liaison group, such as it was. So, WELG should go ahead with the idea that it wants this and appoint a small group for it. Things should start from this group, otherwise they would all just be offering lip-service to what had been said in previous meetings on the international level. She stressed that she was in no position to engage Orthodox groups in the action, although she was quite prepared to approach them to see if they would be willing to participate.

Miss Bellosillo declared that her thoughts were not yet altogether clear on the question, although she felt ready to follow along the line indicated by Mrs. Athanassiou. She found the idea extremely interesting and important, but she felt also very strongly that good preparation was essential. She would agree to WELG supporting the proposal, to engage in action towards concrete and positive results, and she would plead for great freedom of action in the planning and carrying out of the whole project.

Mrs. Strong enquired about the kind of preliminary approach to be made to their respective organisations, as the project would have to be okayed by them.

Mgr. Grémillon said that he welcomed very much the direction in which the discussion was going. He would also welcome the appointment of a small group with which SODEPAX could have some discussion about the whole question. He suggested that the exploration of a possible programme be undertaken; this might have several aspects, of which a conference might be one item. He thought it advisable to think more in terms of a programme on the role of women with respect to peace.

Miss Meersman felt it was necessary to envisage a real confrontation on the world level. One could imagine that the Third world might be more interested than the Western world.

Mrs. Rodrigues remarked that an international conference implied participants from the six continents. Each continent should define Peace, and then a programme ought to be worked out.

Miss Goldie agreed with the suggestion made by Mgr. Grémillon and thought this was more in line with what the WELG really could do. She questioned whether WELG should organise a conference on education for peace. Surely the women's organisations were better equipped and already dealt with such questions. She felt it would be important for the small group, or sub-committee, to try and see what the rôle of WELG should be in the whole matter. Would it be good to bring together some of those responsible for the education of women and experts on peace? It could see in which ways women were already doing something for peace.

Dr. Bührig also supported the suggestion made by Mgr. Grémillon. An appointed group could review the ongoing thinking and try to draw up a programme with SODEPAX. She pointed out that the original idea of holding a world conference was not to MAKE DECLARATIONS, but a real specialized group of 30-40 persons.



Miss Bam supported the idea of a long-term plan, but reminded her hearers that in 1972 WELG was supposed to pack up. So, if they did not do so, it would be difficult for a new group to carry out their present ideas. They must also see what WELG's position was in terms of their own committee. Even if WELG was not sure of its task, however, she did wish that it could inspire those who had not yet thought of this idea.

Sister Lydia Lascano agreed with this and thought that, whatever definition was given of peace, it was a problem belonging to the whole world. But the world was becoming gradually one community. She appreciated very much the concern the group had for the education of women for peace, this was most necessary. She felt it was a personal responsibility and hoped that WELG would go through with their plan of exploration and would engage Asia in it.

Brother Christophe declared that he hoped a proposal might be brought to SODEPAX by November 15th, for the Officers' meeting.

It was finally AGREED:

1. That WELG should manifest its interest in the question of Peace and take up the discussion with SODEPAX.
2. That a special committee be appointed to draw up a programme according to Mgr. Grémillon's suggestions, and that the committee have a number of SODEPAX members in it, to ensure proper liaison.

The sub-committee on Peace was nominated as follows:

Mrs. A. ATHANASSIOU  
 Dr. Madeleine BAROT  
 Dr. Marga BUHRIG  
 Miss Margaret MEALEY  
 Miss M. de Lourdes PINTASILGO  
 Dr. Margaret SHANNON (it was hoped she would accept)  
 Miss Maria VENDRIK  
 Ex officio:  
 Miss Brigalia BAM  
 Miss Rosemary GOLDIE

Dr. Barot indicated that the SODEPAX meeting on 15th November being the Officers' meeting, it would be advisable to have a plan ready to submit to them, and even a budget. As SODEPAX would be making plans for the next three years, she thought one should ask for support for the project for 1972, as SODEPAX would be terminating in 1973.

Miss Bellosillo was convinced that this would be an important work for the group, which would go down to the grass-roots in the various regions; so the whole of the WELG members should be able to offer their help, and this ought to be the only important project to adopt until 1972, when WELG would review its activities.

Miss Bam stated that WELG could communicate its interest in the question to the Officers' meeting of SODEPAX on November 15th. The first preparatory meeting of the sub-committee could take place in February, and meet with SODEPAX. Communication with some of the regions might be taken up early in the new year.

One could get in touch with groups in the United States, Asia and Africa, and maybe with some of the World Day of Prayer groups. Regarding finance, one might consider where funds could be found, but details would have to be worked out first. The second meeting of the sub-committee might take place in Vienna (together with other members of WELG), at the conference in June, 1971. In the meantime, a first letter would have to be drafted to SODEPAX (Miss Bam and Dr. Barot accepted the assignment to do this).

#### VIII. Study on "LIVING IN A CHANGING WORLD"

Miss Bam indicated that, although Mr. Ernst Lange had left the WCC, the study was being continued and the content had not changed. There was the new Humanum Study, of which this could be a part, but no definite plan had yet been made. Some people hoped that a consultation on the subject might be organised. The present document had been sent for study to several groups in different parts of the world. Three members of WELG had reacted to the study. There were many groups all over the world asking the WCC what kind of changes it wanted; the question was to adopt the study as it was or to change it. One criticism made was that the study did not take much notice of the developing world. But changes could be made. Fifteen major regions in the world had now been chosen, where Dr. Ian Fraser hoped to find co-ordinators. The aim would be, once these have met, that they bring the material and use it on a world level. The future of the study is open. It might be helpful for members of WELG to keep in touch and find groups in their countries to study it.

Miss Goldie thought that the word "study" was misleading at this stage, because now it had become an "Action-Reflection Programme". Although there were basic things the same as in the original, there was a great change of accent.

Mrs. Athanassiou was struck by the value the study had as a plan of work; but she did not find in the present document any of the ingredients of the original paper by Ernst Lange.

In conclusion, Miss Vendrik suggested that members put the paper in their files and read it at home and see how they could introduce it to some group or groups.

#### IX. Documentation Project: Trends on "THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY"

Miss Goldie reported on the documents she had already received, which were very few. There was less spectacular material available on studies going on at the present time. This meeting should discuss the following suggestion: whether to make a real assessment of the ministry and the role and status of women in the Churches (cf. questions on page 2 of paper she submitted).

There was a lengthy discussion on the question of what should be done with the documentation collected. In Geneva, quite an amount of varied material on the subject had been collected through the years, but this was not classified and, therefore, could not be used quickly. All depended on what WELG wanted to do with this subject of "Women in the Church". What aspects were envisaged? Did WELG want to make a study, or plan a special action in this field? Did WELG want to establish a documentation concerning women in the Church? This would require to be done scientifically, to be really useful. There was certainly a need for members of WELG to be generally informed on the question, but they were essentially interested in current trends. Could some arrangement be worked out

whereby every time some member read an article or item of news, she would note it down with a brief paragraph on the contents, then send it in to the secretariat responsible, which would distribute it at the next meeting? The material thus collected might also be picked up by the news bulletins or magazines members received, so that national organisations became aware of documentation outside their country. Possibly the YWCA and other similar channels could send out such documentation. There was a plea, however, for information to be sent out on very new developments.

Miss Goldie thought it might be possible, from time to time, to send out some information concerning the various aspects of developments on women in the Church. Miss Goldie and Miss Bam were asked to present the group with a project, bearing in mind that the members of WELG have an aim and a mission. Miss M. de L. Pintasilgo thought that members needed a documentation which would give them "flashes" on women in the Church.

The project presented was the following: The idea was that the work should be done in two stages. One wanted to avoid piling up useless information. All the members of WELG had access to various sources, but all wanted to know what were the really significant new things, in order to get an overall view of women's role and status in the world. Therefore, members were asked, until next Easter time (or end of April?), to feel responsible for noting down, with date, any significant news regarding the participation of women in the Church, and about the experience of women. In the Easter letter she would send out, Miss Goldie would remind members of this and ask them to send in to her what they had collected within a month. If they had a mimeographed report, would they please send this? Afterwards, all the information obtained would be circulated to the members of WELG. Miss Goldie stated that if something very important came in, she could give a first indication of things received in her Easter letter. It would then have to be decided when to have a meeting to have a thorough study. The aim was to arrive at an overall and balanced picture of the subject in all parts of the world. All members present were asked to contribute all that they could. She hoped there could be a full report for the next official meeting of WELG.

Mrs. Strong suggested that a slight addition to this might be, if - when note was being made about the document - a quotable paragraph might be drafted, which would then be circulated. Sister L. Lascano thought it might be useful to write to publishers for recent lists of books.

Miss Vendrik indicated that they had in Holland a rather lively group on Cooperation of Men and Women, which had already edited a bibliography. She would ask them if they might take up the possibility of some kind of "service" along the lines described by Miss Goldie.

Dr. Bührig pointed out that the information collected could be sent to the group together with any other material. It would be stimulating if one saw that other members had sent in something.

#### IT WAS AGREED:

To accept the proposal made by Miss Goldie, as well as that of Miss Vendrik, and that a serious attempt must be made to produce a good document by 1972.

## X. Women's Liberation Movement

Miss Mealey stated that there was not a newspaper or magazine in the USA that did not at the present time carry an article, picture or some quotes from women regarding their position in the Liberation Movement. She thought one could not characterize a movement, but that there were many movements in the country with varying degrees of what they were about. The Christian women's organisations and others with a religious heritage (e.g. YWCA, Jewish, Negro, etc.) had long fought for the rights of women; there were some things being done of which they did not approve. It was a fact, however, that women were discriminated against in several fields. With women becoming more educated, they felt these discriminations and wanted to do something about it. There were some large groups, one of which was a national organisations for women whose membership reflected Catholic and Protestant women, professional women, and many men who were interested in setting forth positive areas where women were being discriminated against. Some of the liberation movements had underlined the right to Abortion. The Catholic women were against capitalizing on this particular area. Another catalyst had been the consideration by the US Parliament of the Equal Rights Amendment. Many Catholic women had opposed the passage of such an amendment simply on an equal rights basis. All of this had brought the various liberation groups to the floor of Congress, in view of the fact that the amendment would either pass or be turned down.

The Catholic women felt that it was essential at this point for Christian women to take the leadership of the Liberation Movement and to see that a Christian concept of the dignity of women was protrayed, so that women be given equal opportunity. If Christian women did not make their voice heard, then others would have all in their hands and in the end it might well work out to the detriment of women's goals. Miss Mealey thought that the movement had brought attention to the inequalities that existed and, in the long run if properly motivated, the movement would be to the benefit of women. The movement had stimulated the leaders of the Church, whether they liked it or not. She gave the information that the Catholic women's organisation had made a survey of the participation of women in the liturgy and it brought evidence of a shocking lack of participation because women were not allowed truly to take part.

To Miss Meersmann's enquiry as to what she meant when she said that Christian women should take the leadership in this liberation movement, Miss Mealey replied that she was speaking of organised Christian women, who must not back from this opportunity of bringing women to the forefront. Women were often their own greatest obstacles to their advancement. She advocated an education programme to stimulate women to be women and not be afraid of being in policy and legislating groups. There was an evident reluctance on the part of the grass-roots in face of this responsibility.

As Miss Bam remarked that church women were embarrassed by the methods used by the liberation movements, Miss Mealey said she thought it was a question of a process of education to be made. Many women were not aware of the discrimination women were subject to, because they themselves did not suffer from them.

Mrs. Rodrigues wondered whether some reluctance was not due to the "mixed" platform of the liberation movements (abortion, etc.), which also made the Church authorities very reluctant. Miss Mealey stated that the Catholic press had not taken seriously some of the other aspects of discrimination against women.

Information given by Mrs. Athanassious and Mrs. Strong indicated that, due

to the presentation of a report at the Convention of the U.S. National YWCA on the aim of the Women's Liberation Movement, a very concrete project had been set up in the shape of a Resource Centre, with specially qualified staff, to service the movement.

In Switzerland, stated Dr. Bührig, there were small groups following the line of the movement in the U.S., and she was struck by Miss Mealey's remark, "We have to change our women and it's a long-term programme". This made her feel anxious, because the same thing had already been said many years ago. Now came this fresh movement, but one did not seem to get really into contact with it: women were too slow, just as the previous generation had been. Time was being lost, and she wondered if action should not be planned in some way. She felt rather guilty in reading the reports from USA, because women in Switzerland nowadays were saying exactly the same thing as had been said formerly by their predecessors. Surely, there was something to learn from the American women.

In Belgium, Miss Meersman said, her movement was composed of working-class women, and they had tried to get them aware of their political duties. Last October there had been elections for the local authorities. The leaders of the movement organised a special in May and were astonished at the number of women who came. The result was an ultimatum to the political parties, and finally there were many more women on the lists and who were elected.

Most of the women in the liberation movements, mentioned Miss Mealey, had had organisational experience, chiefly in the professional organisations, but not in her type of organisation. Only the top leadership in the Christian women's organisations were concerned about the question, because these women were more sophisticated. With regard to the age groups affected, Miss Mealey stated that they included women of anything from 16 to 60 years.

Women students in Germany, indicated Mrs. Dirks, complained that their fellow men students did not treat them as equals and generally left the odd and menial jobs to them, while the men carried on doing what interested them more.

Miss Pintasilgo wondered in how far Christian women could learn something from these movements, and what impact that would make in the world. In Portugal, contestation among the young people took two forms: a) sexual anarchy and rejection of any kind of norms; b) the expression of a new political left, completed by a new structure of society, together with the strong rejection of religion. She asked herself: what could one learn from all this and what questions did such events raise for Christian women?

In conclusion, Miss Bam thought that WELG might discuss how and what it wanted to do in this area, for it was no use saying WELG was not concerned.

## XI. Women Religious and WELG

Mother St. Charles Henaff emitted the hope that, if WELG continued after 1972, she or the one to replace her would not be expected to go on being the only representative of the religious orders, but that there might be sisters from other denominations. This, she thought, would be mutually enriching to the whole group, and particularly to the different religious orders.

She was in touch with some Contemplative Orders and had visited them. She found them literally "avid" for information about everything being done from the

ecumenical point of view in the Churches, and they expressed a great desire to carry in their prayers all that WELG was concerned about and its ecumenical activities.

Regarding the Apostolic Order, they saw things from the educational aspect, wanting to bring to their students and even former students all they could. The mass media, the new education were very important subjects which it was necessary to study with the youth. Even with them, one could pass to the level of action, which would all the same be serious training for the future.

The women religious themselves needed very much to be better informed on all kinds of developments.

## XII. Press Release - Publicity and WELG

Miss Goldie read the proposed text for a press release. There were a number of comments from members of the group, and the amendments requested were noted. When these were incorporated, the press release would be sent out. (Cf. Annex I).

Speaking on a general plane, Miss Goldie pointed out that WELG had sent out a press release after each of its meetings, that is why she had prepared one for this session too, mentioning the different questions that had been discussed. The releases had always been circulated.

As regarded the future, it was very difficult to talk about. WELG was set up on the recommendation of the Joint Working Group, which was also a temporary committee. Another reason for a fluid situation was the fact of the possibility of the Roman Catholic Church entering into the WCC. However, if the group could do good work with SODEPAX on the Peace issue, this might give other possibilities. There was evolution and change on every side.

Miss Meersman expressed uneasiness at the changes foreseen, because it implied changes with regard to WELG. Miss Vendrik enquired whether the vision was the same on the WCC side, and thought that if WELG had a good programme, even if the group were to disappear as it existed at present, something worthwhile would already have been accomplished.

Miss Goldie felt that it was the nature of the Joint Working Group that was involved. It had started mainly as a group to enquire into theological aspects, due to the structures of the Roman Catholic Church. She hoped that, in reviewing the work of WELG in 1972, the Joint Working Group would invite at least the two chairmen and even perhaps some other members to sit with them. On the other hand, she wondered whether the re-structuring of the WCC might not affect the WELG in some way.

Referring to the composition of the group, Mrs. Athanassiou pointed out the danger of being too closely linked with one area or continent, and stressed the necessity for WELG to be a truly representative group on the world level. To this Dr. Bührig said that, to be really international, WELG would need a budget for travel expenses contributed from both sides, which it had not. This question would have to be discussed, as the work suffered from such a situation; it was also the cause of difficulty in having representation from other parts of the world. A future group, if there was one, should be composed in a different way.

XIII. Finance and administration

- a) Budget: Dr. Bührig enquired if in this connection things were to be left as they were, the Roman Catholic and the WCC sections of the group dealing with finance separately? She was not sure what had happened during the last year. Was the matter to remain a mystery?

Miss Bam stated that, as far as the WCC was concerned, WELG was in a mess, as the proposed \$5000 had not been set aside for it, some of the expenses even being taken out of the Department on Cooperation of Men and Women's budget. This was a domestic affair and the handling of the whole question was not systematic.

Miss Goldie indicated that on the RC side they seemed to be in a similar situation, that is for ongoing expenses; for a particularly important project, matters would have to be reconsidered.

The Chairman stated she hoped that, in spite of difficulties, things would be able to proceed as they had up till now.

- b) Continuing Committee and Secretariat: As the present Chairmen (Dr. M. Bührig and Miss M. Vendrik) both signified their willingness to carry on another year, they were gladly asked to do so, and a vote of thanks was expressed for the services they had rendered during the past year.

With regard to the Secretariat, Miss Goldie stated that responsibility had been allowed for specific items, but she thought it would be unrealistic for Rome to take over the arrangements for the next official meeting, which would be in Geneva. Miss Bam thought it did not make much difference, but felt that it would be good to have the Secretariat in Rome this year.

Miss Vendrik wondered if, as work had been apportioned during the last days and the different projects seemed to have their own working-party and secretariat, if there was so much work to be done by the Secretariat. She therefore asked Miss Goldie whether she could not be the central point for the coming year, knowing that quite a lot of the work would not be on her shoulders; this would be a great help to the group. Miss Goldie replied that if it did mean being just a point of reference, outside the main projects already settled, then she thought it could be in Rome. Miss Meersman stressed that it was necessary to make certain that all documents were sent to all the members of the group. Miss Goldie accepted the responsibility of making sure that proper circulation took place.

Thanks were expressed to Miss Bam for all she had done for WELG during the past year, and to Miss Goldie for the assistance she was prepared to give during the next twelve months.

XIV. Date of Next Meeting

A proposal was made for the next meeting to be held during the last week in October, 1971. Pending a definite reply from Miss Goldie on the possibility of her attendance, members of the group agreed to reserve both the last week in October and that of November 15th-19th.

(over)

NOTE: MEMBERS HAVE SINCE BEEN NOTIFIED THAT THE FINAL DATES ARE THE FOLLOWING:

OCTOBER 25th - 29th, 1971

and that the meeting will be held at the Centre de Rencontres, Cartigny, near Geneva.

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As the session closed, the Observers who had taken part in the meeting expressed their thanks for having been invited to participate.

The Chairman expressed the formal thanks of WELG to the authorities who had given of their help and generosity in allowing the meeting to be held on their premises.

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Fundação Cuidar o Futuro



A N N E X I

Press Release prepared and adopted by WELG in Rome.

October 30th, 1970

ECUMENICAL WOMEN'S GROUP MEETS IN ROME

The Women's Ecumenical Liaison Group (WELG) held its third meeting in Rome, October 26th-30th, at the headquarters of the Council on the Laity of the Roman Catholic Church. The Group is composed of ten women appointed in 1968 by the World Council of Churches and, for the R.C.C., by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in consultation with the Laity Council.

Present at the meeting were: WCC members, Mrs Athena Athanassiou-Tsouderos (Greek Orthodox Church), Dr. Marga Bührig (Swiss Protestant Church Federation), Miss Ruth Walker (Council for Women's Ministry, Church of England), and WCC staff, Miss Brigalia Bam and Dr Madeleine Barot; RCC members, Miss Pilar Bellosillo (President, World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations), Mrs Marianne Dirks (Germany), Mother M. St. Charles Hénaff, o.s.u., Miss Maria Meersman (World Movement of Christian Workers), Miss Maria de L. Pintasilgo (International Grail Movement), and for the Council on the Laity: Miss Maria Vendrik (Netherlands) and Miss Rosemary Goldie. Invited as Observers were Miss Marie-Ange Besson (Pontifical Commission "Justice and Peace"), Sister Lydia Lascano, ICM (Philippines), Mrs Kafui Nomenyo (Evangelical Church, Togo), Mrs Dulcinea Rodrigues (President, National Council of Catholic Women, India), Mrs. Katherine S. Strong (World YWCA), and Miss Margaret Mealey (Executive Director, National Council of Catholic Women, USA). Apologies had been received from Mrs Liselotte Nold (Lutheran World Federation) and Dr Margaret Shannon (Executive Director, Church Women United, USA).

The Group pursued its exploration of the multiple fields of ecumenical collaboration between women and women's groups from the grass-roots to world level. Communications were received and discussed on the evolving roles of women in worship, ministry and mission of the Churches. Further communications concerned current movements for "women's liberation", especially in the United States of America, and their impact on other parts of the world.

A sub-committee presented "case-studies of ecumenical encounter" gathered during the past year from a wide range of situations. The Group deliberated on ways of making the experience gained available to other groups as stimulus and orientation.

Another committee submitted detailed plans for a project adopted at the second meeting of the Group (Cartigny, December 1969) on "The Image of Woman in the Mass Media" and the responsibilities implied for Christian women. The project includes a European Conference to be held in Vienna in June 1971, after a pilot enquiry launched among women's groups in France and other countries of Europe.

Tentative plans were discussed for a programme on women's contribution to peace through education and active participation in social and civic life. Mgr Joseph Gremillion, Secretary of the Pontifical Commission "Justice and Peace" and Co-Chairman of SODEPAX (Joint Committee on Society, Development and Peace) and the Associate Secretary of SODEPAX, Br. Christophe von Wachter, were consultants at this discussion.

Under the general heading of the education of women in a changing world, the Group took up issues raised within the WCC Division of Ecumenical Action and also at the Conference on Education organized at Torhout (Belgium), October 12th-14th, by the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

The Secretary of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, Father Jerome Hamer, o.p., attended the opening session. Guests from other Departments of the Roman Curia were invited to an information meeting, together with representatives of ecumenical and women's groups in Rome.

During the General Audience of Wednesday, October 28th, Pope Paul VI greeted personally the two Co-Chairmen, Dr Marga Bührig and Miss Maria Vendrik. Addressing the Group, he underlined the importance of women's influence, not only in the home but in society generally and in the Church, and the many situations, he said, which "require your joint study, situations in which you are committed as women and where you must bring your specific witness".

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Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

Release in the WCC "Ecumenical Press Service"Bulletin No. 32 of the 12th November, 1970, pages 8-9.

"JOINT CONSULTATION SET ON  
HOW MASS MEDIA VIEW WOMEN

Geneva (EPS) - The image of woman projected by the mass media in Europe will be the subject of a consultation of Christian women to be held in Vienna next June. In preparation, women's groups in France will be asked to monitor all of the media during the month of January and report their findings.

Plans for the consultation were finalized at a recent meeting in Rome of the Ecumenical Women's Group composed of 10 women appointed in 1968 by the World Council of Churches and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in consultation with the Laity Council. Co-chairmen of the session were Dr Marga Bührig of the Swiss Protestant Federation, and Miss Maria Vendrik of the Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands.

Main purpose of the forthcoming consultation will be to sensitize women to the picture being painted in radio/TV, women's magazines and advertisements. Consideration will also be given of how the media may be used to change the prevailing image. Participants will include specialists on the various media and church women, not only from Europe but other continents as well.

In other actions the Ecumenical Women's Group has announced plans to publish by year's end some 10 case studies on Protestant/Roman Catholic encounter at the local level. These were gathered during the past year from a wide range of situations. In this way it hopes to stimulate and orient groups in many parts of the world for greater collaboration.

The possibility of holding a world consultation on women's contribution to peace in 1972 was discussed. Present were Mgr. Joseph Gremillion, co-chairman of the Committee for Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX), and Brother Christophe von Wachter, its associate secretary.

The ecumenical group attended a general papal audience and Pope Paul greeted the co-chairmen personally. He underlined the importance of women, not only in the

home but in society generally and in the Church, and noted that many situations "require your joint study, situations in which you are committed as women and where you must bring your specific witness".

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