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### Inter-Office Memorandum: World Conference of the International Women's Year, to David E. Bell, Executive Vice President, Ford Foundation, from Adrienne Germain, program officer, Ford Foundation

Adrienne Germain

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THE FORD FOUNDATION

*Inter-Office Memorandum*

TO: David E. Bell

DATE: August 6, 1975

VIA: Oscar Harkavy

COPY TO:

FROM: Adrienne Germain *AG*

SUBJECT: World Conference of the International Women's Year  
Mexico City, June 19-July 2, 1975.

To those who have any doubt, the Conference and its World Plan of Action (WPA) should demonstrate irrefutably that the demand for equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities for women and men transcends cultural, social, economic and political differences among countries. There was consensus on the basic issues (outlined below) despite political confrontations between countries. There was also recognition that specific problems and certainly solutions vary. Adoption of the WPA, as well as numerous strengthening resolutions, represents a significant political reaffirmation of principles embodied in the UN charter and various UN instruments. The Plan and the resolutions herald a shift in UN emphasis from legislative changes toward implementation of laws. They not only define the issues but also focus on action and implementing mechanisms, especially staff and budget. A dominant concern throughout debate and in the WPA is women's active participation in national development as agents not just beneficiaries. In this context, their economic and policy-making roles received considerable attention. Also, access to family planning information and services was consistently recognized as essential to broadening women's opportunities and options in society. Most important from a Foundation perspective, the Plan calls on international agencies (as well as governments and the UN) for assistance in its implementation.

This memo describes the governmental conference, the nongovernmental conference ("Tribune") and related activities, outlines the major themes and draws conclusions for International Division programming.



The Conference

Like the World Population Conference, this Conference consisted of a) an official meeting of government delegations to agree on a World Plan of Action and b) a parallel, unofficial "Tribune," sponsored by nongovernmental organizations. In the week preceding the Conference, the AAAS, UNITAR and the UNDP sponsored a three-day seminar on women in development and the UN sponsored an "Encounter for Journalists"; the National Council of Negro Women (with U.S. AID funds) sponsored a meeting from June 19 to July 13 for 30 women from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean on self-help in rural areas, small scale industry in developing areas and educational opportunities; immediately after the Conference, UNESCO held a two-day, expert workshop on the roles of mass media in achieving the objectives of International Women's Year.

The work of the governmental conference was conducted in plenary meetings and two committees, each of which set up working groups to consolidate over 80 draft resolutions and more than 2000 proposed amendments to the WPA, six or seven times the number of amendments proposed to the World Population Plan of Action. Agenda items were divided among the plenary and committees as follows:

Plenary - Objectives and goals of International Women's Year, involvement of women in strengthening international peace.

Committee I - World Plan of Action

Committee II - Current trends and changes in the status and roles of women and men; major obstacles to overcome in the achievement of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities; the integration of women in the development process as equal partners with men.

Officers of the Conference were Pedro Ojeda Paullada (Attorney General of Mexico), President; Helvi Sipila (Assistant Secretary-General of the UN for Social and Humanitarian Affairs), Secretary General; Jeanne Martin-Cissé (Guinea; first woman president of the UN Security Council), Chair of Committee I; Shapaur Rassekh (Iran), Chair of Committee II. There were 133 countries represented, along with 8 liberation movements and 13 nongovernmental organizations. The Conference received a significant amount of high level attention: three heads of state (Mexico, Sri Lanka, Sweden) addressed the Conference; nineteen more sent messages. (The bulk were heads of African and Latin American states and included, e.g., India, Argentina, Ecuador, Guinea, Panama, Somalia, Poland.) Several wives of Prime Ministers or Presidents also addressed the gathering or led their delegations (e.g., Egypt, Guyana, Israel, Jamaica, Pakistan, Philippines). Leaders of delegations also included many women cabinet officials (e.g., France), members of legislative bodies, judges (e.g., Ghana) and a cosmonaut (USSR). Although there were few young women among the delegates, delegations seemed to include a wide range of government employees, non-governmental program people, a few researchers. Women delegates outnumbered men by about four to one, unprecedented in UN meetings.



The World Plan of Action and Supporting Resolutions

The draft plan submitted to the Conference was originally produced by the UN secretariat and extensively amended by an international consultative committee in March. Because it was impossible to reproduce, let alone consider, the 2000 amendments proposed in Mexico, Chapters II-VI\* of the WPA were adopted as submitted to the Conference in draft form. Extensive amendments were, however, made to the Introduction and Chapter I. (See Appendix A for details.\*\*) The Plan finally adopted at the Conference is, thus, a mosaic of compromises cemented with the usual UN jargon. Nonetheless, it states that "basic similarities unite women," recognizes women's substantial actual and potential contributions to national life, and urges the UN to proclaim 1975-1985 the decade for women and development in order to achieve societies in which women participate broadly in economic, social and political life.

Considerable time was spent, as expected, on hot political issues (Zionism, resolution of Panama Canal control, etc.) and on whether and how to give prominence in the WPA to the "New International Economic Order" and the "Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States," discussed in detail in Appendix B. References to Zionism and other political issues appear in government resolutions but not in the Plan. Three of the 25 paragraphs in the WPA Introduction now deal with world economic relationships. The basic notion is that the current economic order must be changed to eliminate poverty in which equality of women and men can only mean shared degradation and misery.

There were a number of other important, strengthening amendments made to the Introduction and Chapter I ("National Action"), that had nothing to do with the international economic order. Of particular note are paragraphs on:

Staff, budget and machinery to implement the Plan (e.g., 34,35,36,42);\*\*\* the Plan now says governments should establish national machinery (e.g., a commission) with adequate staff and budget to investigate the situation

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\* Specific Areas for National Action (international cooperation, political participation, education and training, employment and related economic roles, health and nutrition, the family in modern society, population, housing and related facilities, other social questions); Research, Data Collection and Analysis; Mass Communication Media; International and Regional Action; Review and Appraisal.

\*\* The final draft WPA is 46 pages long and is therefore not attached. It can be xeroxed on request but will probably not be available from the UN for some time.

\*\*\* I was particularly pleased by the inclusion of these items as I discussed them at length before and during the Conference with UN Secretariat staff and the U.S., Australian and Indian delegations.



of women, make recommendations for action and monitor progress. It indicates that, although some measures can be carried out with minimal cost, implementation of the Plan "will require a redefinition of certain priorities and a change in the pattern of government expenditure." The voluntary Fund for IWY should be extended. Paragraph 187 states secretariats of international organizations "should take all necessary measures to insure that an equitable balance between men and women staff members is achieved before the end of the Second Development Decade" (1980).

General targets to be achieved by countries by 1980 (paragraphs 44, 46): The draft WPA had 7 recommended targets: increased literacy and civic education, extension of technical and vocational training, equal access to education, increased employment opportunities, increased infrastructure, enactment of legislation, greater participation in policy making. One of these was expanded and seven added: increased health and family planning services, recognition of the economic value of women's work not now measured, reevaluation of male/female roles, promotion of women's organizations, reduction in work load (especially for rural women) through improved technologies and child care facilities, establishment of national machinery. "These minimum objectives should," the Plan states, "be developed in more specific terms in regional plans of action" (paragraph 47).

Family Planning: A new paragraph (19) in the Introduction emphasizes that the right of individuals and couples to determine the number and spacing of their children is "basic to the attainment of any real equality between the sexes and without its achievement women are disadvantaged in their attempt to benefit from other reforms." (See Appendix C for details.)

Personhood: A paragraph was added that emphasizes the "development of the personality of the woman as a human being," and there is repeated reference throughout to the importance of the individual and self determination.

Priority attention to the most severely disadvantaged women (especially rural women and urban poor) is urged throughout.

Given the quality of these amendments it is regrettable that amendments to the rest of the WPA could not be considered.\* Fortunately, a number of excellent government resolutions were agreed on which strengthen the plan and emphasize implementation mechanisms. These will be submitted with the WPA to the Fall General Assembly. Several deserve particular mention here:

Provision of staff and financial resources by governments and the UN system to carry out the WPA. This is bolstered by a vote in favor of

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\* "Explanations of vote" and government resolutions deal with the unamended chapters and indicate that, by and large, amendments would have strengthened rather than detracted from the Plan.



maintaining the Commission on the Status of Women\* and by other resolutions\*\*.

Access of women to financial assistance to be facilitated by governments.

Increased provision of family planning (and health) information and services. The two resolutions reinforce separate paragraphs in the Introduction and body of the WPA that endorse the World Population Plan of Action.

Value and conditions of women's work (especially in rural areas).  
(See Appendix E.)

Research and dissemination of findings for the formulation of policies and programs integrating women in the development process.

Roles of the mass media in "helping remove prejudice and stereotypes, accelerating the acceptance of women's new and expanding roles in society, and promoting their integration into the development process as equal partners."

The "Declaration of Mexico," a resolution co-sponsored by 74 developing countries, was recognized even by the U.S. as one of the best documents of the Conference. It was expected to be a polemic on the international economic order, but instead is a concise, thoughtful and substantive statement (see Appendix E) that recognizes that all women "whatever differences exist between them, share the painful experience of ... unequal treatment." It emphasizes that "underutilization" of half the world's population is a "serious obstacle to social and economic development," but also that the present state of international economic relations "poses serious obstacles to a more efficient utilization of all human and material potential...." Surprisingly, the Declaration acknowledges that changes in the "social and economic structures of societies, even though they are among the necessary prerequisites, cannot of themselves insure an immediate improvement in the status of women and therefore urgent consideration has to be given..." and "specific measures taken..." to integrate women fully in national and international life.\*\*\*It highlights

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\* A recent expert group on the structure of the UN has recommended that such commissions be abolished.

\*\* Employment of women in the UN system, special (financial) resources for the integration of women in development, the establishment of national commissions, the adoption by the General Assembly of a general convention (legally binding) on the elimination of discrimination against women, an "impact statement" for all UN development projects, participation of women in delegations to UN bodies and in diplomatic careers.

\*\*\* See Appendix B for analysis.



"women's rights" to equal access to education and training, to equal opportunities for and conditions of work, and to participation in decision-making. It states that "every couple and every individual has the right to decide freely and responsibly whether or not to have children as well as to determine their number and spacing, and to have information, education, and means to do so"; it also says childrearing should be shared by men. Recognition is given to the "responsibility" of the media to "remove the attitudinal and cultural factors which still inhibit women's development." It calls on the entire international community to assist in achieving these objectives.

The vote on this declaration was overwhelmingly positive (89 in favor). Approximately 20 countries (mainly Western Europe) that abstained and the two that voted against the measure (the U.S. and Israel) would, I am told, have voted in favor had there not been several references to the need to eliminate Zionism. (See Appendix B for details.)

Ideally, the documents could have been more concise and could have included stronger statements on implementation, but overall the most important issues and strategies are covered. It remains for the General Assembly to adopt them; even so they will not be legally binding. It will be up to governments, international agencies and the UN system to make them an integral part of their policies and programs. They will be helped in this by extension of the Voluntary Fund, by a \$1 million contribution from the Iranian princess (\$500,000 for the Fund, \$500,000 for a women's research and policy unit to be established in ESCAP), by a \$460,000 per year for 3 years gift from the U.K. for poor Third World women. An international research and training institute has been proposed for approval by the General Assembly. If it is located in Tehran, the Princess will donate another \$1 million. The feasibility of establishing an International Women's Development Bank is being intensively explored. There are high hopes for more national contributions but also a good deal of skepticism. The U.S., for example, firmly avoided any discussion of monetary contributions, a reflection of our current stance toward the UN not the subject.

#### The Tribune

The Tribune (Grant No. 75 -224)\*, organized by non-governmental organizations and recognized by the UN as a parallel activity to the Conference, provided the only locale for statements by individuals free of political constraints, a forum for energetic debate on controversial issues, and an opportunity to share experiences. It was crucial not only in the airing of differences, but also, in the end, in developing coalescence around common concerns.

Over 6000 participants (mainly women) were registered including about

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\* \$50,000, Higher Education and Research OVP, International OVP, Population, National Affairs OVP, Communications.



1500 Mexicans and 1300 Americans. African and Asian women were represented but in smaller numbers than Latin Americans, Europeans and other Western women. The Eastern bloc countries were underrepresented, possibly because they are sponsoring their own conference in Berlin in the Fall. It was hard to determine the age and background of participants. Many had paid their own expenses, and were people with program interests so they tended to be older (but not old) rather than younger. There were few "grass roots" people there. Many of the Third World Tribune panelists as well as a number of participants were recommended by Foundation staff in New York and the field. Consistently, they made outstanding contributions and were actively involved in the proceedings. UN specialized agencies (including the UNFPA, FAO, UNDO, ILO, etc.) were, of course, represented and so were many donors (e.g., Rockefeller Foundation, JDR 3, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Carnegie, several other U.S. foundations concerned largely with national grants, U.S. AID, SIDA, ODM and probably others). The Population Council sent two observers; IPPF and many of its affiliates were represented. The program covered education, health, nutrition, agriculture and rural development, urbanization, family structures, population and family planning, handicrafts, law, work, professions and the arts, political participation, efforts for peace. Each topic was treated by a formal panel in the large auditorium in one half-day and then in a smaller group oriented toward case studies in the other half-day with the bulk of the time allotted to discussion from the floor.\* Two planned sessions always ran simultaneously along with locally organized sessions in the smaller rooms of the conference center. Attendance at all the sessions was unexpectedly high and the facilities strained to capacity. Bulletin boards were jammed with announcements of extra meetings. All rooms were in demand at all times even at night; it was necessary to reserve a room in advance for "spontaneous" discussion groups. There were several noisy and extensively publicized demonstrations, but the planned sessions and their audiovisual supplements occurred as planned with one exception. Frequently, question periods were used for personal statements rather than debate on the particular session topic. However, there was also extensive dialogue in and out of the sessions on particular issues (e.g., abortion), on broader basic issues (e.g., whether there is an international women's movement or feminism applicable to all), on international issues (e.g., the role of international economic relations in the oppression of women), on chauvinistic concerns (e.g., whether or not the U.S. delegation was representative of American women). Chaos seemed to prevail at times but it was indicative of the tremendous energy and interest of participants.

The most remarkable occurrence was the agreement by at least one third of the Tribune registrants on a series of amendments to the WPA that were presented to Mrs. Sipila and to individual government delegations. The effort involved many American women including Betty Friedan but also women from at least 12 other countries (mainly Third World countries) who worked in committees and then presented draft amendments for adoption by as many people as could enter the main hall (over 2300). The amendments were excellent, stronger in many cases than the official delegations developed (e.g., a woman's right to control her body), but reflecting the

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\* Tribune staff at Bucharest learned that participants want to talk at least as much as listen.



same basic concerns (i.e., the need for priority attention to especially disadvantaged women; the need for staff, budget and implementing machinery; the right of women to participate more fully in decision-making and so on). A number of official delegations including the Philippines, Tanzania, Swaziland and China felt the amendments should be presented on the floor of the conference. Unfortunately, in the end these amendments were set aside as were most of the amendments proposed by governments due to lack of time to consider them.

XILONEN, the daily bilingual (Spanish and English) 8 page newspaper of the Conference sponsored by the Tribune, was, as hoped, the major channel of communication within and between the Tribune and the government conference.\* (The road between the two meetings was long (30-45 minutes) and difficult even with buses provided by the Mexican government; entrance to the government conference was strictly limited to those with official badges effectively precluding most Tribune registrants from observing the government debates.)

The Tribune undoubtedly filled its major purposes of providing a forum for as wide an expression of opinion as possible, promoting exchange of technical and factual information, reminding the government conference of its constituencies. Perhaps its most important accomplishment is summed up by Victoria Mojekwo, Ministry of Public Health, Nigeria:

"...now I know that women all over the world have this same pain. If this is all I get out of the Tribune, then that's enough."

In addition to agreeing on a WPA, the Conference as a whole:

1. Exposed the conditions of women's lives, especially in the Third World, to a broader public.
2. Fostered new contacts among people or cemented existing ones.
3. Increased understanding that women's problems are not exclusive to them but integrally related to the position of men in society and to community and national goals.
4. Made clear that implementation of the plan is largely dependent on women's initiative and commitment.

#### Implications for Foundation Programming

A detailed memo is in process on this subject. Suffice to say there is a strong mandate for international assistance to enable women to define and act on their priorities and goals. I suggest the Foundation not only evaluate and modify its ongoing programs but also respond more fully through special program action.

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\* Briefings on the government meetings were also given every morning at the Tribune by government delegates and NGO representatives.



## APPENDIX A

### Selected themes and country positions

It is particularly difficult to pick out the "major" themes of a conference of this complexity and risky to separate countries into particular categories; what follows is subjective judgment, verified and tested, however, against others.

It seems there are certain motions countries must go through at any international meeting these days before they can get down to the assigned topic. The first is to congratulate themselves on what a fine job they have already done to solve the problem at issue; virtually the entire plenary, but also part of the committee sessions, was given over to this ritual.\* The second is to pay due service to current hot political topics that may or may not have anything to do with the topic of the conference (Zionism, apartheid, control of the Panama Canal) and to castigate your usual enemies (the most outstanding in Mexico was the frequent exchange of accusations between Russia and China).\*\* The third is to demand (or refuse as the case may be) a redistribution of the world's wealth and resources (see Appendix B).\*\*\*

When discussions got down to equality, a good deal of attention was paid to defining equality or "feminism" in international terms. No explicit conclusion was reached but Chart A indicates that a number of independent definitions coexist within the common framework of equal rights, opportunities, and responsibilities for women and men.

Chart A also gives the broad outlines of positions taken on major issues at the conference, positions which were undoubtedly constrained by politics and the level of development of the country. Third World countries were necessarily concerned with basics (eradication of illiteracy, more productive labor of all as opposed to well paid or satisfying jobs, development problems, assistance from wealthier countries). The West would have liked more attention

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\* Women at the Tribune painted a much different picture of the situations in their countries.

\*\* Women at the Tribune spent considerable time in such exchanges though the most notable tension there was between Latin American and U.S. women, the former accusing the latter (assumed all to be radical feminists) of trying to dominate the meeting with their concerns. In fact, just the reverse occurred and many U.S. feminists left Mexico feeling that their needs had not received enough attention.

\*\*\* This was not a major theme at the Tribune. Rather there was a great deal of concern that such political issues were preventing discussion of equality issues at the government meeting.



APPENDIX A

Chart A: Country positions

Subject	Africa	Third World Asia	Latin America	The west* including Japan and Australia	The Eastern bloc
feminism		complementarity of roles** harmony, unity, femininity		absolute equality militancy, competition	irrelevant*** irrelevant***
means		Special machinery/resources needed; rich countries and international agencies should help		Special resources and machinery should be allocated by each government	status quo (government implements)
conference posture		push for achieve- ment, especially Africa	filibuster	quiet (especially US) except Australia and Canada	dogmatic supportive of Third World but r initiative
Main concerns agreement:		- double role (mother and worker) - media's role - men's roles - family planning		- double role (mother and worker) - media's role - men's roles - family planning	important but taken care of by form of govern ment
contention:		- development crucial - not enough attention to rural women - family law  - work opportunities, training, access to credit, illiteracy  - efficient utilization of women for development - colonial heritage, male bias of development programs		- development not a cure - Too much emphasis on rural women - employment, abortion laws - professional jobs and conditions of work, <u>economic</u> value of house work - women as persons, not instruments	-development sec- ondary to elimi- nation of colo- nialism and achievement of disarmament (China against references to disarmament)

\* It should be noted that many minority US women expressed a position closer to that of the Third World than that of the West.

\*\* Martha Bulengo, Community Development Trust Fund, Tanzania, pointed out that most women in the Third World may never have questioned or even thought about relationships between men and women, accepting them as given. Their interests are defined in terms of survival and they need tools and training. Male-female discrimination in institutions, policies and programs concerns them, not personal relationships.

\*\*\* i.e., taken care of by form of government



APPENDIX A, p.2

to redefinition of protective legislation (pregnancy a temporary disability and childrearing leave for each parent), elimination of unequal conditions of and access to paid employment, especially professional employment; but in the end the WPA probably has more in it for Third World women (and possibly poor and minority U.S. women). The Eastern Bloc and the Chinese were mainly concerned about international politics, claiming that their forms of government automatically treat men and women equally.

Controversy over including reference to "sexism" along with all the other "isms" in the WPA (colonialism, Zionism, racism, etc.) encapsulates the three major positions: the U.S. proposed the term as a way to refer to discrimination based solely on sex; Third World countries said they didn't know what it meant; the USSR said it "was not concerned with sexism" and did not "want it in our vocabulary." The word does not appear.

The U.S. position (list of delegates in Appendix F):

The U.S. was unusually quiet and circumspect, a posture it has adopted at various recent UN meetings presumably because a position for the Fall special session of the General Assembly is still in preparation. They were also under a lot of public fire from U.S. minority women in the Tribune, who accused the delegation of not being representative of U.S. women (of 37 members there were 2 blacks, and 2 Spanish speaking), and from radical feminists who felt they were not represented. The U.S. had very good proposed amendments to the WPA (staff, budget, machinery, need to consider men as well as women, women's role in decision making) and sponsored several important resolutions (staffing of UN, review and appraisal including an impact statement, self help), but they did not fight for them in debate. Nor of course did they offer any funds. They were questioned about this in the Tribune; Daniel Parker, head of AID, and Senator Percy also underwent considerable grilling on U.S. Foreign Assistance programs.

Many American women in the Tribune and on the delegation learned for the first time something about what life is like for most women in the Third World and the impact that development programs can have on them, positive and negative. A number of these women have power to influence policy and this may be the beginning of a national constituency concerned about the impact of our foreign aid programs on women.



## APPENDIX B

### New World Economic Order

The Mexico meeting was the last major international public forum before the special session of the General Assembly this Fall on world economic issues; it came on the heels of a number of increasingly politicized meetings and development of a stronger and stronger Third World block within the UN. As was expected, Third World countries led by Mexico pushed very hard to have references to the New International Economic Order (NIEO) and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (CERDS) incorporated into the WPA and government resolutions. Developing countries are calling for a redistribution of the world's wealth, resources and productive capacity, while the industrialized West emphasizes increased production by all countries. The U.S. can agree on parts of NIEO and CERDS (cooperation, liberalization of trade including generalized tariff preferences for developing countries, stabilization of some primary commodity prices, etc.); other parts are unacceptable (sovereignty over natural resources, treatment of foreign investment, transnational corporations, expropriation, cartels, indexation, etc.).

At least three basic positions emerged in Mexico, but boundaries among them were considerably blurred in the course of discussion and in the final documents:

1. Drastic reordering of the world's wealth and resources is a necessary prerequisite to the solution of women's problems (e.g. Grenada, Jamaica, Sudan, Iraq, Cuba). President Echeverria of Mexico in a speech at the opening session of the conference put the position this way, "what good does it do to recognize solemnly that all women have an equal right to education and employment if these requirements cannot be satisfied in most parts of the world?"
2. Such reordering is a necessary concomitant of improvement in women's conditions (e.g. Sweden, Niger, USSR, Nigeria, Sri Lanka).
3. The subject is relevant to development which is relevant to solution of women's problems but there are other forums in which NIEO should be discussed (U.S., Western Europe, Australia).

Third World countries vacillated between 1 and 2, using the latter to soften the former when they were accused of ignoring "women's problems." The Eastern bloc, China, Australia and Sweden voted with the Third World, though the latter two tried to prevent NIEO issues from dominating debate. The West (Canada, Europe, U.S.) strenuously maintained position 3 but in vain. In the end an uneasy consensus was reached:

- WPA: There are now four or five references to NIEO in the Introduction and Chapter 1, some implying it is a necessary prerequisite, others a concomitant. A footnote was added saying the reference to CERDS should not be interpreted as a change in positions of



delegations at the 29th session of the General Assembly, Fall 1974. (The vote there was 120 in favor, 6 against, including the U.S., 10 abstentions.) In Chapter 1 there is also reference, however, to the need to change "fundamental relationships within a society," not just across societies.

- The "Declaration of Mexico": This is the key document on the subject and was expected to be much more specifically focussed on NIEO and CERDS. As mentioned in the body of this memo, the Declaration is, however, well balanced and focussed mainly on women's issues. It recognizes that solving development problems will not automatically improve women's situation. In the discussion process, the U.S., the U.K. and the Federal Republic of Germany drafted a "counter declaration" that was weaker and less comprehensive on women's issues but that was more responsive on economic issues than expected ("the discrimination from which women suffer is closely linked with the problem of underdevelopment which exists as a result not only of inadequate internal economic structures but also of a world economic system in need of change..."; "it is essential to make real progress towards a more balanced and equitable structure of international economic relations..."). Despite this movement on economic issues, the U.S. and Israel voted against the Declaration in the final plenary not so much because of its reference to NIEO but because of references to the elimination of "Zionism."

A reasonable (but politically unacceptable) formulation of the issue might have been recognition that NIEO and CERDS are relevant to women's issues insofar as they would alleviate the extreme poverty under which equality for men and women means equal access to degradation and misery. Alleviation of poverty does not, however, automatically solve women's issues though it may improve their standard of living.

Many women on delegations (and also at the Tribune) charged they were being manipulated by male governments to spend time on political issues not directly relevant to achievement of equality between men and women. A delegate from Canada was most eloquent on this point: "Women have always been told, 'Your problems can wait,' while 'more important' political issues are solved." The first several sessions of Committee I were spent discussing one amendment to the WPA introduced by Peru on NIEO; it is no wonder there was time to go through only the first 35 paragraphs of a 206 paragraph document. In the end, issues of equality were not written out of the WPA but the opportunity to strengthen the entire plan was lost.\* In addition, no one that I heard urged or even suggested that equality issues be explored when NIEO/CERDS are discussed at the Special Session this fall. It is unlikely there will be such discussion then or in bargaining sessions further down the line unless special effort is made.

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\* due to time spent on NIEO.



## APPENDIX C

### Family Planning

Both the Tribune and the government meeting strongly affirmed the need to provide family planning information education and services. There were only 5 or 6 delegations that opposed family planning (led by Argentina and Uruguay with an occasional word from the Holy See); Peru and Colombia consistently expressed reservations, emphasizing "responsible parenthood." This is a more positive stance than usual from Peru, a more negative one from Colombia. A surprising range of countries did not just acquiesce but spoke strongly in favor of family planning in plenary (e.g., Brazil, Guatemala, Lesotho, Tanzania) or sponsored resolutions (e.g., Ecuador, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, India, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela). References to family planning throughout the documents and discussion include both the right to decide and to have access to information and means. Amendments to the WPA included addition of a separate paragraph (19) on family planning (77 in favor, 14 against, 15 abstentions);\* there is an entire section of Chapter III on population\*\* that endorses the World Population Plan of Action; there is a government resolution on family planning and two others (on health - adopted without vote - and on the family - 84 in favor, none against, 16 abstentions) that refer to it; the Declaration of Mexico has a separate paragraph on the right of every couple and individual to decide their family size and to have information and means to do so.

The concern is humanitarian not demographic.\*\*\* Women have a right to family planning services as a health measure and as an essential tool to achieve broader roles in society and to contribute freely to development. Azziza Hussein, Cairo Family Planning Association, asserted in a Tribune panel that women's reproductive role is the root of a great deal of discrimination against women and a major factor in perpetuation of low status. Paradoxically, however, children are the only or the major source of status for many women in the world. There was widespread recognition that social, health, economic and political factors pressure women to have children and that

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\* Against: Ethiopia, Argentina, Uruguay, Holy See; abstentions included Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, Bahamas, Cuba, Madagascar, Bulgaria, USSR.

\*\* The WPA stipulates that while states have a sovereign right to determine their own population policies, individuals and couples should have access, "through an institutionalized system," to the information and means that will enable them to decide the number and spacing of their children. All legal and financial obstacles to the dissemination of family planning knowledge, means and services should be abolished. In the unamended sections of the WPA, governments are urged to include measures designed to improve the situation of women in their population policies and programs.

\*\*\* In the unamended section of the Plan mention is made of the reciprocal relationship between women's status/roles and demographic trends but this might well have been amended had the section been considered formally by the Conference.



attention needs to be paid modifying these factors.

In addition, many asserted that family planning services themselves must be modified to, for example, include childcare facilities, reduce waiting time, address both women and men, and so on. Attention was drawn several times to the fact that family planning programs are generally designed and run by men; many more women should be in policy positions. There was great emphasis on services integrated with health care (Tribune, government conference, an expert workshop convened by the AAAS and chaired by Cecile de Sweemer). There were also a number of suggestions that family planning services be integrated with other activities and programs. For example, Hamida Hossain ("Third World Crafts Women and Development: The Bangladesh Experience," mimeo, 1975) asserted that "women are more amenable to family planning techniques if they are also earning a regular income" and suggested combining family planning with training or income generating programs.

In the Tribune there were charges and counter-charges by Third World countries against the West and by American women against the American male establishment that women have been sterilized involuntarily and used as "guinea pigs" for the testing of unproven drugs including contraceptives. Rebuttals were frequent, impassioned and effective. Tribune women were also much more outspoken than government delegates on abortion. If it's fair to dichotomize participants, Third World women were mainly concerned about reducing it, Western women about legalizing it. The amendments drawn up in the Tribune contain a strong statement on the right of women to control their own bodies.

Implications for population programming are clear. Women see family planning services as essential and as their right. This is, I believe, more than merely an affirmation of KAP evidence that's been around for years. This demand is not expressed privately by interviewees who may want to please the survey taker with the "right" answer. It is expressed publicly by an articulate constituency with considerable political potential. Population programs would do well to seek the support of this constituency. The constituency may not, however, be easily won. Despite the fact that the UNFPA and IPPF contributed substantially to the Conference, money is not enough. Women want "good service" and they seem to be defining "good" not just as "attentive" but also as integrated with health and other services, combined, in some cases at least, with income generating activities or training, etc., and directed by women. Program people as yet know very little about how to design such programs, their cost effectiveness, etc. Will the possibility of a strong constituency impel them to pay more attention to these factors?



## APPENDIX D

### Women's Work

Women's work (both its burdens and its rewards - "a person with money is a person with power," Esther Ocloo, Ghana) was a recurrent focus in all segments of the conference. More effective integration of women in the work force at all levels can, the conference recognized, make a "vast contribution" to development especially but not exclusively in the Third World. Nonetheless background paper E/Conf/ 66/3 documents that women are concentrated in a limited number of occupations and at lower levels of skills, responsibility and remuneration; discrimination in pay, promotion and other conditions of work is evident. All conference participants were concerned about opportunities for and conditions of work though specific problems and solutions were defined differently. Equal pay and increased participation in the professions were major concerns of women from industrialized countries; the need to adopt development strategies that would provide opportunities for basic training and provide work - inside and outside the modern wage sector - was clearly a more important focus for Third World women. Women from all countries urged provision of child care facilities and family planning services to enable them to work.

Under the employment rubric (as generally understood - paid work in the modern sector), the WPA resolutions, and background document E/Conf 66/3 stress the rights to equal opportunities for employment and to equal pay for work of equal value, employers' provision for maternity leave, training for employment, etc. There are statements in the documents now that call for an economic value to be placed on housework, but this is more a reflection of Western and elite concerns than recognition of the varied and unmeasured labor of poor women.

Although important, the emphasis on "employment" leaves out most of women's work in the Third World which is unremunerated farm labor, work in the nonformal sector such as street vending, etc. It is only under the rubric of development, especially agricultural development, that the contributions, but also the burdens and low productivity, of much of Third World women's labor are discussed. It was widely agreed that teaching women technical skills and helping increase their productivity in their work not only would help achieve national development but also would help build their own self-respect. In a country like Bangladesh, Hamida Hossain asserts that by becoming a craftswoman, a woman not only improves her economic situation but also acquires a new set of attitudes (e.g. toward family planning, literacy).

Lack of data provides a major obstacle to assessing women's economic contributions, especially in the nonformal sector. Concerted work is needed to

- (a) develop more meaningful indicators to measure women's (and men's) work in the nonformal sector, and in the "household sector."\*

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\* Background paper E/Conf. 66/4 suggests this term include household maintenance (cooking, cleaning) and household enterprise (farming, rice milling) in addition to child rearing.



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- (b) document what women do, how, under what constraints and with what productivity (all relative to men), especially in agriculture and the nonformal sector in order to design development models, programs and policies that take the labor of women into account and plan for their full use.
- (c) examine the hypothesis that high unemployment necessarily precludes the employment of women or would be exacerbated by their entry into the labor force.\*\*

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\*\* These are just seminal ideas. There will be a separate memo on the research needs.





APPENDIX E

UNITED NATIONS



WORLD CONFERENCE  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR  
MEXICO CITY, 19 JUNE TO 2 JULY 1975

Distr.  
LIMITED

E/CONF.66/C.1/L.37/Rev.1  
1 July 1975

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

First Committee  
Agenda item 11

WORLD PLAN OF ACTION

Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Dahomey, Democratic Yemen, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of South Viet-Nam, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire and Zambia

Draft declaration of Mexico, 1975 on the equality of women and their contribution to development and peace

The World Conference of the International Women's Year,

Conscious that the problems of women, who constitute half of the world's population, are the problems of society as a whole, and that changes in their present economic, political and social situation must become an integral part of efforts to transform the structures and attitudes which hinder the genuine satisfaction of their needs,

Recognizing that international co-operation based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be developed and strengthened in order to find solutions to world problems and to build an international community based on equity and justice,

Recalling that in subscribing to the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations undertook specific commitments: "To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom",

Taking note that since the creation of the United Nations very important instruments have been adopted, among which the following constitute landmarks: the



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Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order based on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,

Taking into account that the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considers that: "discrimination against women is incompatible with human dignity and with the welfare of the family and of society, prevents their participation, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries and is an obstacle to the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity",

Recalling that the General Assembly proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year and that the Year should be devoted to intensified action with the view to: promote equality between men and women; ensure the integration of women in the total development effort; increase the contribution of women to the strengthening of world peace,

Recalling further that the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1849 (LVI) adopted the Programme for International Women's Year, and that the General Assembly in its resolution 3275 (XXIX) called for full implementation of the Programme,

Taking into account the role played by women in the history of humanity, especially in the struggle for national liberation, the strengthening of international peace, and the elimination of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, alien domination, racism, and apartheid,

Stressing that a greater and equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making shall decisively contribute to accelerating the pace of development and the maintenance of peace,

Stressing also that women and men of all countries should have equal rights and duties and that it is the task of all States to create the necessary conditions for their attainment and their exercise thereof,

Recognizing that women of the entire world, whatever differences exist between them, share the painful experience of receiving or having received unequal treatment, and that as their awareness of this phenomenon increases they will become natural allies of the struggle against any form of oppression, such as practised under colonialism, neo-colonialism, zionism, racial discrimination and apartheid, thereby constituting an enormous revolutionary potential for economic and social change in the world today,

Recognizing that changes in the social and economic structure of societies, even though they are among the necessary prerequisites, cannot of themselves ensure an immediate improvement in the status of a group who has long been disadvantaged, and therefore urgent consideration has to be given to women's full and immediate and early integration into national and international life,

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Emphasizing that under-development imposes upon women a double burden of exploitation which must be rapidly eliminated and that full implementation of national development policies to this objective is seriously hindered by the existing inequitable system of international economic relations.

Conscious that the role of women in child-bearing should not be the cause of inequality and discrimination, and that child-rearing demands shared responsibilities among women, men and society as a whole,

Recognizing also the urgency to advance the status of women and to find more effective methods and strategies which will enable them to have the same opportunities as men to participate actively in the development of their countries and to contribute to the attainment of world peace,

Convinced that women must play an important role in the promotion, achievement and maintenance of international peace, and that it is necessary to encourage their efforts towards peace, through their full participation in the national and international organizations that exist for this purpose,

Considering that it is necessary to promote national, regional and international action in which the implementation of the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of International Women's Year, should make a significant contribution, for the attainment of equality, development and peace,

Decides to promulgate the following principles:

1. Equality between women and men means equality in their dignity and worth as human beings as well as equality in their rights, opportunities and responsibilities;
2. All obstacles which stand in the way of enjoyment by women of equal status with men must be eliminated in order to ensure their full integration into national development and their participation in securing and in maintaining international peace;
3. It is the responsibility of the State to create the necessary facilities so that women may be integrated into society while their children receive adequate care;
4. National non-governmental organizations should contribute to the advancement of women by assisting women to take advantage of their opportunities, by promoting education and information about women's rights, and by co-operating with their respective Governments;
5. Women and men have equal rights and responsibilities in the family and in society. Equality between women and men should be guaranteed in the family which is the basic unit of society and where human relations are nurtured. Men should participate more actively, creatively and responsibly in family life for its sound development in order to enable women to be more intensively involved in the activities of their communities and with a view to combining effectively home and work possibilities of both partners;



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6. Women, like men, require opportunities for developing their intellectual potential to the maximum. National policies and programmes should therefore provide them with full and equal access to education and training at all levels, while ensuring that such programmes and policies consciously orient them towards new occupations and new roles consistent with their need for self-fulfilment and the needs of national development;

work  
7. The right of women to work, to receive equal pay for work of equal value, to be provided with equal conditions and opportunities for advancement in work, and all other women's rights to full and satisfying economic activity are strongly reaffirmed. Review of these principles for their effective implementation is now urgently needed, considering the necessity to restructure world economic relationships. This restructuring offers greater possibilities for women to be integrated into the stream of national economic, social, political and cultural life;

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8. All means of communication and information as well as all cultural media should regard as a high priority their responsibility for helping to remove the attitudinal and cultural factors which still inhibit women's development, and for projecting in positive terms the value to society of women's assumption of changing and expanding roles;

po  
9. Necessary resources should be made available in order that women can participate in the political life of their countries and of the international community since their active participation in national and world affairs at decision-making and other levels in the political field are prerequisites for women's full exercise of equal rights as well as for their further development, and for the national well-being;

10. Equality of rights carries with it corresponding responsibilities; it is therefore a duty of women to make full use of opportunities available to them and to perform their duties to the family, the country and humanity;

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11. It should be one of the principal aims of social education to teach respect for physical integrity and its rightful place in human life. The human body, whether that of woman or man is inviolable and respect for it is a fundamental element of human dignity and freedom;

12. Every couple and every individual has the right to decide freely and responsibly whether or not to have children as well as to determine their number and spacing, and to have information, education and means to do so;

13. Respect for human dignity encompasses the right of every woman to decide freely for herself whether or not to contract matrimony;

CO  
14. The issue of inequality, as it affects the vast majority of the women of the world, is closely linked with the problem of under-development, which exists as a result not only of unsuitable internal structures, but also of a profoundly unjust world economic system;

15. The full and complete development of any country requires the maximum participation of women as well as men in all fields: the under-utilization of the potential of approximately half of the world's population is a serious obstacle to social and economic development;

/...



16. The ultimate end of development is to achieve a better quality of life for all which means not only the development of economic and other material resources but also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the human person;

17. In order to integrate women into development, States should undertake the ~~necessary changes in their economic and social policies~~ because women have the right to participate and contribute to the total development effort; *need*

18. The present state of international economic relations poses serious obstacles to a more efficient utilization of all human and material potential for accelerated development and for the improvement of living standards in developing countries aimed at the elimination of hunger, child mortality, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness, which concerns all of humanity and women in particular. It is therefore essential to establish and implement with urgency the New International Economic Order of which the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States constitutes a basic element, founded on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest, co-operation among all States irrespective of their social and economic systems on the principles of peaceful co-existence and on the promotion by the entire international community of economic and social progress of all countries, especially developing countries; and on the progress of States comprising the international community; *EO*

19. The principle of full and permanent sovereignty of every State over its natural resources, wealth and all economic activities as well as its inalienable right of nationalization as an expression of this sovereignty, constitute fundamental prerequisites in the process of economic and social development; *EO*

20. The attainment of economic and social goals, so basic to the realization of the rights of women, do not, however, of themselves bring about the full integration of women in development on a basis of equality with men unless specific measures are undertaken aimed at the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them. It is therefore important to formulate and implement models of development that will promote the participation and advancement of women in all fields of work, provide them with equal educational opportunities, and such services as would facilitate housework;

*will*  
21. Modernization of the agricultural sector of vast areas of the world is an indispensable element for progress, particularly as it creates opportunities for millions of rural women to participate in development. Governments, the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other competent regional and international organizations should support projects designed to utilize the maximum potential and to develop the self-reliance of rural women;

22. It must be emphasized that, given the required economic, social and legal conditions as well as the appropriate attitudes conducive to the full and equal participation of women in society, efforts and measures aimed at a more intensified integration of women in development can only be successfully implemented if made an integral part of over-all social and economic growth. All full participation of women in the various economic, social, political and cultural sectors, is an important indication of the dynamic progress of peoples and their development. Individual human rights can only be realized within the framework of total development;



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23. The objectives considered in this Declaration can be achieved only in a world in which the relations between States are governed, inter alia, by the following principles: the sovereign equality of States, the free self-determination of peoples, the unacceptability of acquisition or attempted acquisition of territories by force and the prohibition of recognizing such an acquisition, territorial integrity, and the right to defend it, and non-interference in the domestic affairs of their States, in the same manner that relations between human beings should be governed by the supreme principle of the equality of rights of women and men;

24. International co-operation and peace require the achievement of national liberation and independence, the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, apartheid, racial discrimination in all its forms as well as the recognition of the dignity of peoples and their right to self-determination;

25. Women have a vital role in the promotion of peace in all spheres of life: in the family, the community, the nation and the world. As such, women must participate equally with men in the decision-making processes which help to promote peace at all levels;

26. Women as well as men together should eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, foreign domination and occupation, zionism, apartheid, racial discrimination, the acquisition of land by force and the recognition of such acquisition, since such practices inflict incalculable suffering on women, men and children;

27. The solidarity of women in all countries of the world should be supported in their protest against violations of human rights condemned by the United Nations. All forms of repression and inhuman treatment of women, men and children, including imprisonment, torture, massacres, collective punishment, destruction of homes, forced eviction and arbitrary restriction of movement shall be considered crimes against humanity and in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments;

28. Women all over the world should unite to eliminate violations of human rights committed against women and girls such as: rape, prostitution, physical assault, mental cruelty, child marriage, forced marriage and marriage as a commercial transaction;

29. Peace requires that women as well as men reject any type of intervention in the domestic affairs of the States, whether it be openly or covertly carried out by other States or by transnational corporations. Peace also requires that women as well as men also promote the respect for the sovereign right of a State to establish its own economic, social and political system without undergoing political and economic pressures or coercion of any type;

30. Women as well as men should promote a real, general and complete disarmament under effective international control, starting with nuclear disarmament. Until genuine disarmament is achieved, women and men throughout the world must maintain their vigilance and do their utmost to achieve and maintain international peace.

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THEREFORE,

The World Conference of the International Women's Year,

1. Affirms its faith in the objectives of the International Women's Year which are equality, development and peace;
2. Proclaims its commitment to the achievement of such objectives;
3. Strongly urges Governments, the entire United Nations System, regional and international inter-governmental organizations and the international community as a whole to dedicate themselves to the creation of a just society where women, men and children can live in dignity, freedom, justice and prosperity.

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APPENDIX F: U.S. Delegation

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Arvonne S. Fraser  
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