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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF GREAT  
BRITAIN.

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MEMORANDUM ON JURIES BILL.

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A Bill has been drafted by the National Council of Women, with the assistance of Sir John Withers, M.P., and it is hoped that it will be introduced next Session into the House of Commons as a Private Member's Bill. It is suggested that members of the N.C.W. during the next few months should arouse interest in the subject and obtain support for the Bill, by discussions, letters to the Press, and interviews locally with their Parliamentary representatives.

The following Memorandum has been prepared in order to assist in this work, by giving a short explanation of the principles involved.

**The Object of the Bill** is to amend the law as to service on Juries, contained in various Juries Acts and in the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, 1919, in order to increase the number of persons liable to serve, and to repeal those laws relating to women jurors which have been found by experience to be unnecessary and detrimental to their service.

**Section 1** adds to the existing qualifications, for both Common and Special Juries, the condition of being the wife or husband of a qualified person. At present those qualified are, roughly, owners of property above a certain value and householders above a certain rental. This leaves out the great majority of married women and the wives (or husbands) of the large number of exempted persons.

**Section 2** provides that a husband and wife shall not both be summoned to serve on the same occasion.

**Section 3** amends the law as regards challenge by providing that a member of the jury who is challenged must be replaced by another member of the same sex. This provision is introduced in order to stop those who endeavour to prevent the service of women on the jury by taking advantage of the right to challenge.

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**Section 4** repeals the law allowing Judge, Recorder or Chairman to limit the Jury to one sex only, and to excuse women jurors from service on account of the nature of the evidence. It has been found that the effect of the latter provision is to cause perplexity and indecision on the part of women jurors, who feel it their duty to serve in such cases, but do not wish to appear unwilling to comply with the suggestion of the Judge, Recorder or Chairman.

**Section 5** amends the provisions as regards the making of Rules of Court. It is considered unnecessary and embarrassing to emphasize female ailments, since sufficient protection is provided by the right of appeal granted to both sexes on grounds of health. A right to exemption for other than medical reasons is added, to include such circumstances as the one-man or one-woman business, and the case of the woman with young children whom she cannot leave.

Price  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or 1d. by post.

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A leaflet giving much information on the subject of Jury Service can be obtained from the National Council of Women, Murray House, Vandon Street, Westminster (Price 2d.), but the proposals for amending legislation considered therein have been modified in the drafting of the present Bill.

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