

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN
OF GREAT BRITAIN

REPORT
OF THE
COUNCIL MEETING
AND CONFERENCE,
LONDON

October 14th—16th, 1938

Price 2s. 6d.

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Please Note

It is impossible without seriously delaying the publication of this Report, to submit proofs of what the reporter has credited them with saying to all the speakers in the discussions. Every effort is made to avoid mistakes but we ask their forgiveness—and those of all our readers—for any errors that may have crept in.

INTRODUCTION

THE 47th Representative Council Meeting and Conference was in the nature of an experiment. It was agreed last year at Bournemouth that at some time a week-end conference should be held to enable more professional women, especially teachers to attend, but it was not then decided when this meeting should take place. However, since this was the year of the I.C.W. Golden Jubilee Conference at Edinburgh (that successful meeting of women from 31 countries) it was early realised that the resources of the branches, and in particular the Scottish branches, and individual members as well as Headquarters, would be taxed very heavily to make this Jubilee Conference the great success it was. It was therefore decided that this was the obvious time to hold the shorter conference necessitated by a week-end, and that if held in London there would be no necessity to arrange social functions, as members would be willing and possibly glad, to make their own arrangements in regard to amusement.

Perhaps it was just as well the Conference was in London at that particular time, as the political crisis through which the country has just passed would undoubtedly have made it even more difficult for a branch to carry on with its arrangements as hostess, than it was for Headquarters.

The crisis itself, and the anxieties and conflicting opinions which both led up to it and remained in our minds afterwards, left its mark on the Conference, both in the wording of the urgency resolutions, and in the individual speeches of delegates. It was impossible to capture the usual cheerful atmosphere of N.C.W. conferences. Many of those present remembered the delegation of 20 members of the Czech National Council of Women led by their President, Senateur Plaminkova, who played such an important part at the Edinburgh Conference.

Although there were no official parties this year, the Hon. Mrs. Franklin and Mrs. Karslake both gave delightful luncheons and other members invited delegates to their clubs.

The Household Service League Luncheon was a great attraction to those who could stay till the Monday, because Miss Beatrice Bezzant, organiser of the newest Trade Union, the National Union of Domestic Workers, had been asked to speak. Miss Bezzant talked of the new union most provocatively, and left her audience very much intrigued about the Domestic Worker's Charter. (Readers of the next issue of *Women in Council* will see Miss Bezzant's own exposition of the Charter written specially for them.)

There was only one Public Meeting, but the two speakers, Mr. Harold Nicolson, C.M.G., M.P., and Mr. Maxwell Fyfe, K.C., M.P., speaking on foreign affairs, provided a very interesting discussion. As Dame Elizabeth Cadbury said in her vote of thanks to the speakers, it was most exciting, and better than a debate in the House of Commons, for the audience could ask questions.

SERVICE IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Foundations of Peace

A sermon preached by CANON F. R. BARRY at Westminster Abbey on October 15th. Delegates to the Representative Council Meeting and Conference attended this service officially.

We have heard much about saving civilisation. Now we must ask ourselves what we mean and what it is we desire to save. Do we mean its outward apparatus—its technical achievement, its wealth and power—or the inner soul that inspires it and the quality of life that gives it worth? If the latter, how can it be saved? It is time to re-examine the foundations on which western civilisation rests. In the last few weeks we have seen what we have seen, and what the Bible has always insisted is proved now in experience to be true. Any civilisation that rests on mere material power must destroy itself. If nothing in history succeeds like failure, nothing fails so fatally as success. No civilisation that is not built on spiritual foundations can endure. Now that the structure of our post-War policies and much else besides lies in ruin, we must look again to the foundations and try to build on that which is eternal. We must dig deep if we would build securely—deeper than ever Europe has tried. For the floods are out and the storm is rising and we do not yet know whether the house will stand.

It is only two or three weeks ago since we were all telling one another that we were about to open a new chapter, to sit back and think and make a fresh start. Now we seem to be openly admitting that we can expect nothing more constructive than an insincere and panic-stricken armistice, piling up yet more colossal armaments and waiting hopelessly until the crash comes. Is the world so morally bankrupt as all that? Has the Christian Church nothing more to say than the echoes of political opinion? Whatever may be the duty of the Government in the way of strengthening national defences it does not need the Church of Christ to tell it so. Where can we lay the foundations of peace? We have tried the shifting sands of self-interest, we have tried to build on a precarious foothold of *status quo* in an ever-changing world, and all those structures have come tumbling down. Surely at long last we must understand that this is a moral and spiritual problem—not merely one of political sagacity.

All the leader writers are saying that the one and only real question before this country now is foreign policy. On the political level that is true, and amid this babel of acrimonious argument it will be well for England when it finds one; for we shall not do much for the peace of Europe if we start a faction fight among ourselves. But there are deeper questions behind that. If anything is certain it is this, that we can build no secure future by political

and moral opportunism. What we call vital national interests are neither ultimate nor self-evident. The nations stand before a higher judgment—whether or not they acknowledge its authority—and we shall not even serve our own interests if we forget the Sovereignty of God. What the Church has got to say surely, is that no policy can help us unless it is built on these eternal principles of God's righteousness and truth and charity, by which alone nations can be saved. If ever the Gospel shouted in the ears of leaderless humanity, it is now; and it is found, as the Church has always claimed, to be in fact the only true realism. The future of the world is with those who are ready to stake their lives on its principles. Those who have cared only for their own interests have almost always in the course of history destroyed others in their own destruction. If we are not blind to all the lessons of all that has happened during the last ten years, we must move out into a new field of thinking and look at all our problems from a new angle, with the will of God at the centre of our vision and His law as the standard of our policies. In a perilous world the one sure truth is this—there is no security but in the will of God and in obedience to the laws of life.

And in fact no other way out is practicable. We are faced now with a situation where policies alone cannot help us. We have lately heard a signal affirmation by the common peoples of the world, of which not the least striking evidence was the welcome of Germany to Mr. Chamberlain, declaring how intensely they desire to live together as members of one family and banish the infamy of war for ever. The peoples have seen more clearly than their governments. Henceforth it is the criterion of statesmanship to interpret and implement that will, and to think in terms other than those of war. But how can those deep desires be realised? Politics seem to be self-defeating. Governments, in their efforts to approach, seem only to estrange one another. The very machinery of peace betrays it, and not all the resources of statesmanship seem able to break through the vicious circle. If the new vision is not to be stultified, something new must come in from outside. What if religion has the real answer? "We must pass the ball to the Church now"—as a Member of Parliament said to me last week. Perhaps the real thing that we are looking for is far more simple and more elemental than all the calculations of diplomacy. "The folly of God is wiser than men"—may not that be the sheer truth for today? It may be that we are caught in a dilemma that cannot be solved by the methods of politics and must look for an answer on those deeper levels of moral reality and religious faith, where alone there is hope of a solution. It is on those levels that we must think now; not in terms of politics, but of men and women, their common need for God and His purpose for them.

We fell to prayer in the hour of danger. Many learnt then for the first time what the power of prayer and faith can do to

redeem the bankruptcy of human effort. Surely we shall not now forget those lessons. We need now even more urgently in these days of moral and spiritual crisis to open channels to the grace of God, to release the powers of healing and renewal and give His purpose for the world a chance.

We have been content for the last ten years or so merely with trying to avoid war and have almost fallen into the abyss of it. Now it is time to begin to make peace—not in the negative and barren sense of not being involved in actual fighting, but in its positive and creative meaning—the substitution of goodwill for hatred and of trust and co-operation for antagonism. That is the fruit of spiritual conviction. The foundations of peace are in the souls of men.

What the world today needs more than it needs anything, is the release of spiritual forces—faith and prayer, conviction and sincerity, from which creative peace can be born. There is nobody in this country who believes now that militarism can be cured by fighting it. "Satan cannot cast out Satan." The only power that can exorcise the demons of savagery and fear that haunt mankind is the rebirth of Christian conviction that the world belongs to the God of truth and love; that the lives of men are precious in His sight; that spiritual values are real; that righteousness and peace are attainable because they are rooted in the Eternal Will. It is the task of Christians to bear witness to it, not in word alone but in life and deed. This can rally the forces of goodwill and overleap the barriers of antagonism, and reconstruct the world in that charity which is the victory of the living Christ over the powers of hell and of death.

During the service Blake's "Jerusalem" was sung.

OPENING MEETING

OCTOBER 14TH

The opening meeting was held under the chairmanship of the President, the Lady Ruth Balfour, M.B., B.S.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have first to welcome Mrs. Herbert Brookes of Australia, Miss Isabel Mackay, Canada, and Miss Stohr, South Africa.

MRS. BROOKES (Australia): It is a great delight for me to be here today, especially having met so many of you in Edinburgh at the big Golden Jubilee Conference of the I.C.W.

I bring from Australia greetings today to you all and best wishes for a very successful Annual Conference. I also have a letter from our Australian President, who asked me to let you know that at the Annual Meeting of the Australian National Council of Women, held recently, they decided unanimously that the conference of the international body, which we hope will be held in Australia in 1942, if world events allow, will be held in South Australia at Adelaide, the capital, and they will give you the very warmest of welcomes.

It is there that our Australian Board of Officers are at present, and they have been elected for a further four years in order that they may carry out the continuity of the work necessary for such a big conference. So now we look forward to your coming to Australia. We can assure you that you will be making a very great gesture to a far-flung Dominion when you come to see us, and we in our turn will do our very best to give you the very warmest hospitality and make the greatest success possible of such a conference.

So from Australia and from the President I just wish to thank you for giving me this opportunity and to say, Welcome to Australia, as many of you as can come in 1942. The more the better for us, and I think the more the better for the work of the International Council, because you will learn something of what we try and do in that far distant land.

MISS STOHR (South Africa): I have great pleasure in conveying to you the fraternal greetings of the members in South Africa; for though we live six thousand miles away—perhaps because of that—it is a source of great joy and inspiration to know that we are members of a much larger body all working in the same cause.

It is very pleasant for me to be here today among this great crowd, and I have great pleasure in giving you the greetings of South Africa.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY read a list of other visitors in the hall from Australia and S. Africa.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

THE LADY RUTH BALFOUR, M.B., B.S. : Fellow members and friends. During my year of office our hearts and minds have been stirred more deeply than for many years.

Our own organisation has been quickened and revived by the meeting of the International Council in Edinburgh. Let us not forget the inspiration we derived from that meeting in the international events that have profoundly moved us since.

I should like in the short time at my disposal to review the work of our Council, to pass from that to the work of the International Council, and finally to suggest to you some points for reflection on the international situation and how it affects us as a women's organisation pledged to uphold certain ideals.

You will all have read our Annual Report. Recognition of the value of our Council as a co-ordinating body is growing. We sent representatives by request to the conferences of twenty-eight different national organisations, both technical and social. We have now 140 national organisations affiliated to us ; though three have withdrawn this year, nine have joined us.

The Work of the Sectional Committees

Through our Sectional Committees much useful work has been done. It may interest a wider public and show how varied are our contacts if I refer to some of this work.

There has been a happy co-operation between the Cinema Committee and the British Film Institute, and through our branches the establishment in many areas of children's film matinées is a further successful endeavour to raise the standard of films shown. I will not follow the Committee further into the maze of "quota quickies," sub-standard films and other technicalities in which it loves to indulge—I was going to say wallow.

Our Household Service Committee has produced, to my mind, a most helpful report on household employment — mistresses and maids please note! This Committee also collaborated with other European National Councils of Women to enable foreign girls seeking work in this country to apply only through the most reliable agencies.

Our Moral Welfare Committee has formed an expert sub-committee of social workers to act in liaison with Scotland Yard. Social workers will realise the human value of this and the increased chance of prevention and rehabilitation.

And here I may conveniently speak of our perennial demand for more women police. We had good news for this movement in the recognition by the Home Secretary of the Birmingham and Metropolitan police forces as training schools for women police. He has circulated all chief constables to that effect. Our Police Committee therefore now keeps a register of suitable candidates for

training. Let all chief constables please note. They will do so more readily since the Home Secretary at our request has asked H.M. Inspectors to include in their annual reports a paragraph on the work of women police.

The register of candidates is made possible through the collaboration of the branches, and I should like here to thank the branches for their invaluable help in giving answers to questionnaires. A very great deal of trouble was taken by individual members belonging to many branches, and it is owing to their splendid work that our reports have been of real use both to ourselves, to the I.C.W., and to two Government Committees.

The Departmental Committee on Inflammable Toys not only requested our help but, on receiving a report, asked for more.

The Inter-Departmental Committee on the Nursing Services is probably now engaged in studying the report prepared for it by the industrious sub-committee of our Public Health and Child Welfare Committee. This report on nursing is drawn up from a questionnaire issued to our members and affiliated societies from the point of view of patients, parents and friends of nurses.

The Edinburgh Conference

And now let me speak of that inspiring Conference in Edinburgh. To it came more than one thousand women from thirty-three nations from every continent in the world. You will read something of its achievements in a most excellent article by Miss Cowan in our own magazine. We all felt the sense of unity that she describes, the common aim and purpose to raise standards of life and of morals by interchange of thought and practice.

The I.C.W. Cinema Committee has set itself the task of raising the standard of film production, that films shown and recommended may be a true expression of the national life and so promote international understanding.

The discussion in the Broadcasting Committee showed how women are asked to give "on the air" their ways of life and their ideals in other countries to a greater extent than has hitherto been done in our own. A representative of the B.B.C. attended this committee and, I think, had his eyes opened.

The Equal Moral Standard and Traffic in Women Committee urged two resolutions, the first demanding systematic propaganda to make known the work of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on Social Questions, and the second upholding the voluntary treatment of venereal disease with adequate social services. These resolutions will inspire the work of our own Moral Welfare Committee.

In the sphere of public health, the International Council continues the study of nutrition, and all co-operating countries are asked to collect standard diets and promote their use, thus carrying out the work of the League of Nations Nutrition Committee.

An International Council resolution on physical fitness, emphasising the mental and spiritual aspects, will be implemented by a resolution before our own Conference this week-end.

The International Council maintained its view, in another resolution, on the equality of the rights between men and women.

I have not further time here to say more about the Edinburgh Conference, except to refer to the work of the Peace and Arbitration Committee: It had a resolution urging the abolition of bombing; and another very long one, which stated clearly the dangers of the present world policy, and, considering all these dangers, urged that action be taken to restore confidence in the League and to support the Governments in efforts to maintain peace by settlement, and finally appealed to women not to lose their vision and faith. The title of this Committee gives the key to its aims—peace and arbitration.

Our Watchword—Arbitration

Arbitration—that has been our watchword. Arbitration involves consultation; conference rather than conflict. And during the last few days we have been brought face to face with a real attempt to carry that principle into effect. Conflict has been avoided; millions have been saved from death; and one small country has suffered mutilation.

The results have produced much searching of heart.

Was our principle wrong? Conference did produce peace, but was it a just peace? Should we have resorted to war, and in defending justice have allowed not only millions of our own fellow-countrymen, but also that same small country to suffer not mutilation but destruction? And what was justice?

You must answer these questions for yourselves, but in doing so, I beg you to study the White Paper most carefully, and I would draw your attention in particular to the letter of that impartial observer, Lord Runciman. On his findings and his recommendations Great Britain and France had to base their stand. They had therefore to accept the necessity of territorial cession, that is, mutilation. They had to take note also of the danger of delay from within.

But the leader of a great and powerful nation from without was demanding with menaces to reduce that delay to vanishing point and to take over the territory in one day as a conqueror demanding all the spoils of victory and with no option for the populations in the disputed territories.

Negotiations broke down; and then, unbelievably, they were reopened, and for nine hours the believers in consultation struggled in conference with a frenzied adversary, till we are told Herr Hitler turned to M. Daladier regarding one point and said, "You are so earnest, M. Daladier, I must give way."

Out of those nine hours came an agreement, still harsh, still entailing much suffering, but involving a regulated and controlled

entry over a definite period, ten days instead of one; a delimitation not by one country but by four; the option of the populations to transfer over a period of six months, and the possibility of taking movable goods with them. These concessions may seem small at first sight, but if kept they are fundamental. You will be asked to vote on a resolution on this subject.

The Encirclement Complex

Can we then say that arbitration in the face of naked force has been entirely a failure? May we not say that those who have hitherto preached force and proved that by force alone could they obtain their demands, have been shown a better way? That their eyes have been opened to the desire of their own peoples for peace, and that if they are handled with understanding as well as with firmness, they may be released from their complex of encirclement?

That complex permeates all the Führer's actions; but it was shared by the pre-war German Government. Fear and distrust brought about that encirclement. Fear and distrust remain, and while they do, we must guard against their being justified. But just as we uphold the arm of the law, may we not also institute penal reform and the psychological study of the delinquent?

I appeal to you all to offer your services for the future safeguarding of your country and for the maintaining of that law, but at the same time to demand a policy from your rulers of revision of injustices; and let that revision include the insistence on a just delimitation of the new Czechoslovakian frontier.

Let us further demand of our rulers the determination to face and understand the difficulties of other nations, and I appeal to you all to realise that if justice and law are to be maintained, sacrifices may be needed from all.

Last year your President ended her address with an appeal to the word "courage." I add to that the words "faith" and "charity."

MRS. WATTS, the General Secretary, then spoke on the Annual Report, which had already been circulated, and read out the election results, and in reply to a question, the number of votes obtained by each candidate.

FINANCIAL REPORT

THE HON. TREASURER, LADY HORT, J.P., then read the Financial Report.

You have already seen the Financial Report which I have the honour to present to you, and this year once more I have to record that there is a deficit on the year's working and our debit balance in the Balance Sheet is now £466 3s. 8d.

The account is for eleven months only, as you will remember that it was settled last year that the Council's financial year should

end in July instead of in August. The deficit on the year's working at the end of August was £163, which compares with a deficit last year of £135 9s. 5d.

A Fall in Subscriptions

On the receipts side of the account I want to point out that our subscription list has fallen by £70—this is in spite of the fact that the subscriptions from affiliated societies show a slight rise—but Headquarters subscribers and branch subscriptions and £5 fees from branches have all fallen. This is due, no doubt, largely to the fact that members and branches have contributed so generously to the two funds which were raised in connection with the I.C.W. Conference at Edinburgh, the Lady Aberdeen Fund and the Edinburgh Fund for the expenses of the Conference. I hope in the coming year, when there should be no distractions of this sort, that subscriptions from members and branches will show a marked increase.

We have had a very delightful donation of £125 sent to us by the Bournemouth branch after the Conference last year, and another of £28 collected by Mrs. Angelo Raine at the Imaginary Stall at the same Conference. We offer our grateful thanks for these gifts and for other donations.

Proposed Economies in Working

You will remember that last year a half-time Press Secretary was appointed, and £150 of her salary was an addition to our liabilities; that is the explanation of the rise in the salaries account, which would have amounted to £1,017 for a full twelve months, and of the larger part of the deficit. The Finance Committee has been considering, not only the question of salaries, in which by the reduction of staff, partly owing to the purchase of a wonderful machine, the Addressograph, and partly to the absence of an I.C.W. Conference, we hope next year to effect considerable economies; but also the whole question of economy in the working of the Council's financial activities.

One of the first steps in our finance programme is the inclusion of the price of the Conference Report in the ticket for the Conference, which will ensure not only that everyone who attends the Conference receives a copy of the Report, but also that the Report itself will pay its way; and this principle might be extended in many directions which would aim at making the Council self-supporting.

New Offices Fund Capital

This year we have had to draw upon the New Offices Fund for £200 worth of stock besides the interest on our capital which amounted to £85, and I feel that this ought not to be necessary.

But economies will not be enough to prevent it entirely; we want more Headquarters subscribers, more branches, more affiliated societies, and it lies in your hands largely to find them.

In the General Balance Sheet you will see an item of £101, the balance of the Travelling Pool account; for this we are much indebted to those branches who had not claimed their fares before July 31st, and who can therefore no longer do so.

I have already mentioned the I.C.W. account, and you all know that the sum of £580 was handed to Lady Aberdeen at Edinburgh by our President for the Endowment Fund of the I.C.W. Besides that, owing to the further generosity of members and branches, a sum of £590 was raised for the Edinburgh Fund; this was partly in donations, partly in guarantees. It became necessary at the beginning of July to call up the guarantee. The final accounts have not yet reached us.

In conclusion I wish to thank the Assistant Treasurer, Miss McCulloch, for her able services. This has been a very heavy year for her, and she has worked unremittingly.

THE CHAIRMAN put the adoption of the Report to the meeting.
Financial Report **Adopted.**

REGIONAL COMMITTEES REPORT

The General Secretary then presented the Report of the Regional Committees.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: You have also received the Report of the Regional Committees. I do not know whether anybody wants to make any remarks about it. It has been done in a different form the last two or three years.

THE CHAIRMAN put the adoption of the Annual Report and of the Report of the Regional Committees and of the work of the Branches.
Carried.

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

October 14th—2 p.m.

October 15th—10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

October 16th—2 p.m.

The International Council of Women

DAME MARIA OGILVIE GORDON, D.B.E., LL.D., J.P. : I think everyone who took part in the Golden Jubilee sessions of the International Council of Women, held last July in Edinburgh, will agree that they were an unqualified success. In point of organisation and effect produced, they reached a very high standard and gave fresh impulse and encouragement to the National Councils in their international work.

I shall briefly indicate some of the features that struck me as marking its success. First of all there was the attendance. Of the 35 affiliated National Councils no fewer than 31 sent delegations to the Conference. Altogether over 1,000 delegates and members were in attendance, of whom 524 were British. Thus, about 400 came from the other countries. Various points of attraction had combined to draw together this large company from far and near. They came not only in order to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Council but also because it was to be made the occasion of doing honour to their past President, Lady Aberdeen, and showing their deep sense of gratitude for her 36 years of guidance and work as their leader and President of the International Council of Women.

Moreover, the city of Edinburgh was an attraction in itself, and an added interest was the Glasgow Exhibition within easy reach. I should also say how greatly the visitors appreciated the invitations sent to them from our branches and from many private individuals, to pay visits to their homes or take part in selected tours at one place or another in England and Wales, and in Scotland.

A second important feature was that a full programme had been arranged for all comers. The business sessions of Committees and the Plenary Council were held from July 12th to July 20th. Naturally those who were attending committees and council sessions had a full day's programme all the time, but there were many members who were not attending the committee meetings and were free during the first three days of committee work. For these a series of three morning meetings was provided in the large Hall, open to all members and to the general public. This gave an opportunity of hearing some of the most interesting personalities speak on their special subjects. The majority of the speakers were chosen from foreign countries and a few from our own country,

and the Dominions. Mme. Thibert spoke as the delegate of the International Labour Office and Miss McGeachy as the delegate of the League of Nations. These morning meetings became quite popular and were largely attended.

With regard to the evening meetings, probably the most brilliant was the meeting of welcome on Tuesday. The Lady Ruth Balfour, as President of the National Council of Women of Great Britain, was in the chair at the outset to bid welcome to our guests of the International Council, and then representatives of the Scottish Office and the Municipality also welcomed the delegates. Afterwards Baroness Boël, President of the International Council of Women, presided over the meeting, and speeches were delivered by her, by Lady Aberdeen, by Mme. Avril de Ste. Croix and others.

The next evening meeting had a certain piquancy. There were twelve speakers drawn from ten different countries, and the subject was "New Careers of Women." Each speaker represented work in a new career, as interpreted in her particular country. The chairwoman was a well known American, Miss Madison Phillips. The platform presented a really wonderful galaxy of talent and initiative, and each address gave new information and new directions of thought.

On July 18th we had another evening meeting, on "Public Health and Nutrition," with Lady Aberdeen in the chair and one of the leading authorities on this subject, Sir John Boyd Orr, D.S.O., F.R.S. among the speakers.

The discussions that took place in the Council sessions were of a high order. Realising the numbers that might wish to take part, the speakers as a rule spoke briefly and to the point, while the President, Baroness Boël, proved herself a most adequate and capable chairman.

Looking at the subjects of propagandist character in the discussions, what impressed itself on me, as the week passed on, was the community of thought that showed itself among the women of the different countries on certain definite lines of social reform. We know them well in this country—the raising of moral standards by means of both national and international action; the raising of standards of living, improved housing, nutrition, mental and physical welfare; the training of youth in sports and various methods of developing their strength.

The basis of all these lines of reform is the larger question of women's claim for equal status with men. If that were granted, women's influence on these special aspects of social progress would be much greater than it now is. Thus the Council again pressed forward this claim, and the meeting was reminded that the Secretary of the Council had circulated the request for certain information on the status of women to be collected by the National Councils and sent forward from the head office in Brussels to the committee of

experts who had been appointed under the auspices of the League to carry out full research into the subject.

The Monday of the second week, July 18th, was Lady Aberdeen's day, when homage was paid her by all the delegations.

First of all, the Baroness Boël made an eloquent speech expressing the Council's deep gratitude and appreciation, and presented various gifts from the officers and the Council. Amongst these was a series of historical records of each National Council from its beginning to the present time. Then the leader of each delegation made a speech and presented some gift, usually specially chosen as characteristic of the particular country represented. The ties of affection between Lady Aberdeen and the women in many lands who have worked with her are very strong.

Lady Aberdeen's reply was mindful of many occasions and interests and paid tribute to the work of officers and others who have died, and of those now in office.

In the afternoon of that same day we had the Royal garden party at Holyrood House, with H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent as hostess. I must tell you that our President, Lady Ruth Balfour, who accompanied the Duchess and presented the officers, leading delegates and others to her, was absolutely wonderful in the rapidity with which, during the few preceding days, she had come to know and recognise the leading women of the Committees and delegations and also their particular interests and activities.

We had a great many entertainments. The hospitality was most generous, from the Lord Provost's municipal reception to the simplest personal invitation. Many institutions were visited and drives arranged to places of interest in the neighbourhood.

A special service for those attending the Conference was held in St. Giles' Cathedral on Sunday morning, July 17th, conducted by the Very Rev. Charles Warr, C.V.O., D.D., and a special service for Roman Catholic members was held at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral.

It is one of the primary aims of the International Council of Women to bring women together from different nations so that they may get to know one another, have opportunities of interchange of thought and opinions, and be in a position to promote friendly relations and a better understanding among the nations. Assuredly the Conference in Edinburgh with all its amenities fulfilled this particular aim with truly remarkable success. Everyone who took part will look back on it as an unforgettable experience and will associate with its success the whole of the National Council of Women of Great Britain, and pre-eminently the extraordinary energy of the Scottish section of the Conference Organising Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Dame Maria. I would like to mention here that one of the American delegates to the I.C.W. Conference, Dr. Louise Ball, presented a silver

trophy to the Council obtaining the largest number of triennial contributors during the triennial period since Dubrovnik. Great Britain won, and we shall keep this till the next International Conference, when it will be again presented to whichever Council has the largest number.

Consideration of Urgency Resolutions

Before we take our first resolution there are several emergency resolutions resulting from the present situation to be put before you.

The first resolution reads as follows:—

The National Council of Women, in Conference assembled, desires to place on record its profound agreement with the pronouncement made by President Roosevelt in his message to Herr Hitler on September 26th:—

"That no problem is so difficult nor so pressing for solution that it cannot be justly solved by resort to reason, rather than by resort to force"

and its recognition of the great personal efforts of the Prime Minister to this end.

Further, it fervently hopes that H.M. Government will endorse President Roosevelt's plea that a wide International Conference should be called to consider all outstanding problems endangering the peace of the world.

I ask you to grant urgency to bring forward this and other resolutions. **Urgency granted.**

DAME ELIZABETH CADBURY, M.A., J.P. : I have often had to bring before you as an urgency resolution one that was controversial. As a rule our peace resolutions stir up strife, but on this particular occasion I think you will agree that it may be passed unanimously and that it requires very few words from myself to recommend it.

The words of the President of the United States during those days of crisis came like a beacon light and a vision of hope to us. When we discussed what resolution we could bring forward on this subject, I felt that it was wise to avoid any kind of controversy or too much discussion on policies, and that we should put forward a resolution that everyone could accept.

One of my friends said it was distinctly mild: well, I think that we require a certain amount of mildness and sanity, peace and quiet after all that we have passed through.

I think we will agree, as our President has reminded us, that after all arbitration has been successful up to a point in the past, and it is arbitration for which President Roosevelt pleads and for which we all hope and long.

We also join with many other societies and groups of people who call for a world conference, so that not only a few nations may get together to discuss the points at variance, but that all may have

a Round Table Conference and decide what should be the future of the world.

I put this resolution to you with confidence that you will accept it.

MRS. FORBES-ROBERTSON HALE: I do not think that anything really needs to be added to what Dame Elizabeth has said with regard to this resolution. I think the first part of it must be accepted by everybody, "that no problem," in the words of Roosevelt himself, "is so difficult nor so pressing for solution that it cannot be justly solved by resort to reason, rather than by resort to force." No woman could disagree with that.

Then the second point, our recognition of the great personal efforts of the Prime Minister to this end. I think there would be very few indeed who would disagree.

"Further, it fervently hopes that H.M. Government will endorse President Roosevelt's pleas, 'That a wide international conference should be called to consider all outstanding problems endangering the peace of the world'."

I read that again because I think perhaps one or two of you might have a little doubt about the word "wide." It is President Roosevelt's own word, and the reason for it is, I suspect, that he felt, remote as he is from these sad scenes, it was not for him to dictate to Europe whether such a conference should be world-wide, whether it should be universal, or as nearly universal as we could make it.

I would like to suggest this to you, ladies. It is not easy, as I happen to know, for a President of the United States to put forward any kind of movement or suggestion in regard to international affairs, especially at this time. It has been less and less easy for him ever since the war.

Further I should like most heartily to endorse what Dame Elizabeth said about the feeling of relief, of happiness and gain that we achieved when we obtained this message from a man infinitely more tied by his Constitution in making any pronouncement than a Prime Minister is tied in this country. It was a courageous and Christian message, and none can doubt that it had its value and effect.

The wording of this resolution is to endorse President Roosevelt's suggestion, and I think perhaps by implication to suggest that it would be a good thing for our country to take the initiative, now that the President of the United States has made this stand, in calling such a wide conference, which would examine the possible causes of future war, and try to put them right, not in one day, as the recent ultimatum suggested, nor in eight or ten days, as was finally arranged, but solely so that what shall be done shall be done well instead of ill. It is obvious that no revision of world affairs can be handled wisely and with justice in Europe or in any other part of the world in a few days only.

I therefore have great pleasure in seconding this resolution, hoping that it may assist our Government to take the initiative in the direction of a world conference, or a very wide conference to examine the causes that may lead to future strife.

MRS. WHITE: I wish to move an amendment, to omit lines 9 and 10. That is to say, to leave the resolution referring solely to the proposal made by the President of the United States and the hope that H.M. Government will act on those lines, i.e. the first part and the last part, and to omit the two lines which say that we recognise the great personal efforts of the Prime Minister to this end.

This resolution refers to the message of the President, which was that no problem was so pressing for solution that it could not be justly solved by resort to reason rather than by resort to force. I do not think we can really say that the efforts were made to solve the thing by justice. Justice alone was vanquished, was it not, and "everyone was right," as Mr. Punch said.

I think we should be better advised to keep this resolution on the lines of a hearty support to the proposal made by the President—a constructive proposal which certainly embodies the vast need of the world today—and to leave out of our resolution any reference which even by implication suggests that we are congratulating ourselves or the Prime Minister on the appalling situation in which he has allowed himself to be manoeuvred and this country to be placed.

Our danger today, as compared with where we stood a month ago, is almost incalculable, and if you will study the thing carefully you will agree with me that it is not a matter for congratulation.

I think it would be much better if we could only keep this on the lines of agreeing with the President and hoping most heartily that his proposal for a world conference may be carried through. The observations we have heard were very *ex parte*.

MME. LORSIGNOL seconded the amendment formally.

A DELEGATE: On a point of order, may I ask a question? Is this not a political question, and we are a non-political body?

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to make an explanation from the chair of the intention of those words. It was not intended to express any opinion as to whether the efforts of the Prime Minister were successful or not, but to make a recognition of those efforts, a recognition which, I may say in passing, was given to him by every single member of every party.

MISS MARGARET GARDINER supported the amendment formally. Amendment lost.

MISS WARD: Would you accept another amendment?

THE CHAIRMAN: We must have the amendments in writing.

Amendment II.

MISS WARD: I must apologise to the President and the audience for my delay, but I did not wish to speak unless necessary.

I warmly voted in favour of retaining the words that were proposed to be omitted, but I should be very deeply grateful if this audience could pass a slight modification, thus :

"and its recognition that, though partially successful only, the Prime Minister made great personal efforts . . ."

I think his efforts have marked an epoch. I believe, looking back on history, we shall realise that his visits in person, reaching the peoples and not only the rulers, marked a new departure entirely. But I think many of us feel that those efforts were not wholly successful, to put it mildly, and if we could possibly have a few words recognising that, I believe that many schools of opinion in this audience might agree to support them.

THE CHAIRMAN : Will anyone second the amendment, which will read as follows :

"and its recognition of the great personal efforts, partially successful only, of the Prime Minister to this end."

A MEMBER seconded the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN : I put this amendment to the meeting.

MRS. WHITE : I would like to speak.

THE CHAIRMAN : No, you cannot speak again.

MRS. WHITE : I have spoken once on one amendment and that was defeated. This is another amendment, and I am entitled to speak again.

Since my amendment has been defeated, I think it is better to leave the thing as it is and not suggest that it has been even partially successful. In the view of some of us it has been a shocking, shocking disgrace and failure.

THE CHAIRMAN : The amendment is before the house.

DAME ELIZABETH CADBURY : I should think that Miss Ward would perhaps be satisfied if she realised the meaning of the word "efforts." It does not suggest that those efforts were entirely successful. We do think everyone here must surely feel the greatest gratitude to Mr. Chamberlain. I am of an entirely different party from our Prime Minister, but I think everybody must feel it. I thought the words were put in the most moderate way possible. I could not imagine that anyone would really object to them, however great their sympathy with Czechoslovakia. We can take a vote on the amendment, but I should have thought that Miss Ward's words in it were safeguarded by the formation of the sentence.

THE CHAIRMAN : Another amendment has been put forward suggesting that the resolution be split in two. This is proposed by Miss Patterson, of Glasgow. Is there a seconder?

MRS. WHITE : What would be the two parts? I might second it.

MISS PATTERSON : Just as it stands, but to divide it at "force."

THE CHAIRMAN : As there is no seconder we cannot discuss it.
A MEMBER seconded.

THE CHAIRMAN : I will put Miss Ward's amendment to the vote. Amendment **lost**.

THE CHAIRMAN : Now there is the question of dividing the resolution into two. Miss Patterson must be quite clear how she wishes it done.

MISS PATTERSON : I suggest that the resolution regarding President Roosevelt be made one resolution omitting the words about the Prime Minister. These words might make a separate resolution, recognising the great personal efforts of the Prime Minister. My reason is that I think we should get a unanimous vote with regard to President Roosevelt. We do feel that Mr. Chamberlain made marvellous efforts, but a great many people feel that those efforts would never have been necessary with a little more foresight.

MISS KEEBLE seconded the amendment formally.

THE CHAIRMAN put the amendment to the meeting.

Amendment **lost**.

It was moved, seconded and carried "That the question be now put."

THE CHAIRMAN : I put the resolution to you in the original form. **Carried**, six dissentients.

A DELEGATE : May I ask a question on a point of order? I would like to say this. I have not voted for or against any of these resolutions. Ought we not, as the British branch of the I.C.W., to have one urgency resolution praising Czechoslovakia for its courage and self-sacrifice?

THE CHAIRMAN : Everyone will sympathise with Czechoslovakia. As a matter of fact a resolution dealing with that very point has been sent to us by the Women's Advisory Council of the League of Nations Union. It was put before the Executive today and we agreed to sign the letter.

This is the letter :—

"We, the undersigned, representing millions* of women of Great Britain, desire to express to you, women of Czechoslovakia, our appreciation of the sacrifices which you and your country have made to avert a European War ; our respect for the fortitude you have shown in the face of overwhelming misfortune ; our admiration for the example you have set us by your dignity and courage in affliction ; our unshaken faith in the democratic principles which have hitherto animated our two countries and our sorrow at the sufferings of your people and the assurance of our desire to help in any way open to us."

We have already taken action on this letter in the Executive as a matter of urgency. We have also put in a recommendation that the word "hitherto" should be omitted on the ground that we have

*A number of organisations have signed this letter.—ED.

unshaken faith in democratic principles; the word "hitherto" suggests that we have lost that faith. But whether it is omitted or not, we are still prepared to sign this as an expression of our gratitude to Czechoslovakia. I hope that meets the wishes of everybody.

You have before you a second resolution.

In response to an appeal made to this Council by the women of Czechoslovakia, the National Council of Women urges His Majesty's Government to instruct their representative on the International Commission to do everything possible to ensure the fair and safe transfer of populations.

May I ask your permission to add a phrase to this resolution? After the words "everything possible" insert "obtain a just frontier delimitation and to ensure the fair and safe transfer of populations."

I move this resolution from the chair and therefore we do not require a seconder.

The resolution is put forward in order that we may ask that everything possible that can now be done may be done. We cannot retrace the past beyond a certain point. We can ask that the delimitation, carrying out the principle of predominant German population, shall be carried out in as fair a way as possible. We know that it is still under discussion by the International Commission. We know that the Germans and the Czechs are considering it together, and that their proposals will come before the International Commission for ratification. We hope that no undue pressure will be put on Czechoslovakia to bring about any delimitation which does not carry out the principles of the majority population. We also ask that the option of six months, that was allowed under the Munich Agreement, shall be carried out in fact, and that a fair and safe transfer of populations shall be concluded.

I move this resolution, but I ask you whether I have your permission to include the additional words I have just read? Have I your permission?

MRS. WHITE: No. Let us leave out those words. You cannot obtain a *just* frontier now.

LADY EMMOTT: I think it is better as it stands.

DAME MARIA OGILVIE GORDON: I second the inclusion of those words.

THE CHAIRMAN: I suggest that in addition to asking for a fair and safe transfer, we ask also for a just frontier delimitation. It has been objected that the word "just" should not be used.

A DELEGATE: The frontier has already been settled.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, the frontiers have not been absolutely settled. They have finally to be passed by the International Commission. What has been settled is that there should be no plebiscite. But if there is any discussion about this, I am prepared to drop it; I think that would be best.

A DELEGATE: I think many of us would be very grateful if you could drop it.

THE CHAIRMAN: My seconder agrees that I should drop it in order that there should not be any controversy over this. Therefore I now put the resolution as it stands on your papers.

Carried.

A DELEGATE: May I ask what is going to be done with this resolution and how speedily, because I happen to have been lunching with the Czech people and they say the matter is extremely urgent? Already there is a great deal of suffering, and I want to know whether this resolution can be acted on at once.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, it will be sent by hand today to the Prime Minister and to Lord Halifax.

Urgency Resolution 3 is as follows:—

While recognising that the immediate danger of war has been averted, the National Council of Women considers that the States Members should take steps towards the revision and reconstruction of the League of Nations, in the light of its successes and failures during the last twenty years.

Further, the N.C.W. urges that in this reconstruction the Covenant should be separated from the Treaty of Versailles.

THE HON. MRS. HOME PEEL: The late crisis has made us realise the necessity for clear thinking, and for a full understanding of the means which exist for the prevention of war, before the situation becomes too acute. The question of revision and reconstruction of the League of Nations has often been raised, and the object of revision is to make the machinery workable and to bring the League into line with the intentions of the founders.

In regard to the second part of the resolution, the reason for asking that the Covenant be separated from the Treaties is that by doing so it might still be possible for those who object to what they consider the punitive clauses of the Treaties to give their support to a reconstructed League of Nations.

The N.C.W. has always supported the League of Nations. Our first resolution today was pressing for a world conference to consider problems endangering the peace of the world. Surely the League, functioning properly, would be the body to institute such a conference?

MRS. T. JOHNSTON: In seconding this resolution, I feel that international stability can only be built up on foundations of goodwill and friendly co-operation amongst the nations of the world. No world problem, social, economic or political, can be solved without international undertaking and collaboration. The Covenant of the League of Nations provides the machinery. No one has yet been able to devise anything better or to suggest an alternative, and we do urge our Government, as one of the States Members, to take steps for the revision and reconstruction of the League so that it may be universally recognised as a meeting place for all nations.

I do not think after what Mrs. Home Peel has said, I need add anything. I would simply now say that with much pleasure I second this resolution, and I hope that you will pass it unanimously.

THE CHAIRMAN : I have a note here suggesting that it would be better to put "the Peace Treaties" instead of "the Treaty of Versailles." Would you agree to that amendment?

Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN : I will put the resolution to the vote.

Carried unanimously.

I. Office Regulations

MISS AMICIA CARROLL (Y.W.C.A.) : I beg to move :—

The National Council of Women calls the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that the Public Health Acts fail to secure suitable conditions for those working in offices; and urges that the regulation of hours and conditions of work in offices, particularly with regard to the sanitary accommodation, cleanliness, light and ventilation should be administered by the Home Office, and that legislation for this purpose should be introduced.

You have had this resolution at previous Councils, and therefore I am going to be very quick.

To all pleas for office regulations, Governments have told us that the Public Health Acts are enough. In 1936 the evidence to the contrary was so overpowering that the Government said that the new Public Health Act should make it really clear that the term "work place" included offices and that local authorities have the right and duty of inspection.

After a year's working we repeat that the Public Health Acts are *not* enough.

(1) They only touch sanitary conditions, and even here there is a crying need for a clear standard of temperature, ventilation, lighting, cleanliness and space per worker as in factories, instead of an injunction to "detect statutory nuisances, "which means, "is there a bad smell?"

Authorities are vague as to their powers. Asked by the Y.W.C.A. about rest rooms in offices, three different medical officers of health seemed in doubt as to their powers, two of them giving exactly opposite opinions as to what they could do.

(2) Local authorities have the right and duty to inspect, but this is one among a thousand jobs, and they lack specialised staff to do it. Therefore it comes down to inspection on complaint. That this is so is proved by the fact that at six Y.W.C.A. centres, not one girl recollected any inspection of her office ever being made.

FAWCETT COLLECTION

(3) The workers are not even aware of the slight sanitary protection the Public Health Act gives. They do not know where to complain, and are too nervous to do so even if they knew. Routine inspection without waiting for a complaint is essential. My own experience in the last three days confirms this. When, after some difficulty, I tracked down the right department of a borough council, and asked if they inspected offices they said, "Yes, if we get a complaint." They also demanded my name and address, which any nervous girl, afraid of losing her job, would never dare give.

(4) Hours, overtime, meal times, holidays—these are not covered in any way. Regulation is increasingly necessary with mechanisation and speeding up. Office work needs concentration, and working amid noise is appallingly tiring. I can give you cases from all over the country testifying to the urgent need for reform. I will give you some illustrations of my points. We know of basement offices with artificial light only; partition offices with no direct light or air; clerks working beside machines in a Welsh steel works, where the noise of the breaking steel pieces means headaches and nervousness and, in addition, there is eye-strain from artificial light. We know, again in Wales, of an office beside a "cooling pond" with steam coming in at the windows all day making it very damp. We know of an office with a temperature normally below 55 degrees on winter mornings. We know of lavatories with no light; of one lavatory used by 43 men. We know of an office 10 by 12 by 15 feet used by two women typists and two office boys. It has five doors opening into it, and only on the brightest days is it possible to work without electric light.

The hours are constantly long and irregular. Girls in an office attached to a big store, starting at 9 a.m. or earlier, were kept till 9 p.m. at busy seasons. A girl, of whom we know, applying at a stockbroker's office in London, was told she would frequently have to work till 8 p.m. and sometimes till 11 p.m. A West Riding mill office expects girls to stay for overtime without warning, and overtime is not paid. Long hours, late hours, unexpected hours, destroy all plans for home life and outside activities.

To ensure decent conditions and reasonable hours in offices we need standards laid down by law, and the law enforced by a service free from local bias and not already over-burdened by a thousand other tasks. So we ask, like the factories, for administration by the Home Office.

A DELEGATE : Has the Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries been in touch with you about this?

MISS CARROLL : Yes.

A DELEGATE : Are they supporting the idea?

MISS CARROLL : They certainly want an Office Regulation Bill.

MRS. BAKER: On behalf of the National Council of Girls' Clubs, I very gladly second the resolution which so closely concerns the working life of many of our club members. For their sake and for the sake of clerical workers in general the National Council of Girls' Clubs warmly supports this effort to regularise and improve conditions in offices.

Definite regulations are laid down for working hours and conditions in factories, and provision is made to ensure that those regulations are kept. Yet for offices there is still no standard and, as Miss Carroll states, no regular supervision.

The good employer, of course, considers the well-being of his staff, but the employer whose office is dirty, dark and ill-ventilated can still, like Chesterton's Wicked Grocer, "keep a lady in a cage until she fades away."

I trust that this state of affairs will not be allowed to continue, and that H.M. Government will take steps to deal with the matter by introducing regulations which would be administered by the Home Office.

I have pleasure in seconding the resolution.

MRS. HARTREE: I was hoping that Miss Carroll would stress more the difference between Home Office, or national inspection, and local inspection. One realises that it is very difficult for the local inspector to bring up before his local council or bench sometimes the very people who are his employers. A solicitor, or anybody else who might have an office in a very bad condition, might very well be on the Town Council and one of his employers. It is a very difficult position, and therefore the value of putting such inspection into national hands rather than local hands ought to be stressed.

THE CHAIRMAN put the resolution to the meeting.

Carried, one dissentient.

2. Clubs

THE CHAIRMAN: You will notice that this resolution as printed in your handbook does not represent the facts now. The clause, "It notes that the Home Secretary has recently given assurances that the Bill will be introduced this Session and urges . . ." is out of date. The Session is nearly at an end and the Bill will not be presented this Session. Therefore, to make the resolution read correctly the wording has been altered as follows:—

That the National Council of Women shares the concern of responsible authorities throughout the country regarding the continued delay in the introduction of the promised Government Bill to deal with the Club problem, and regrets that the Government could not after all introduce the Bill during this Session.

The Council, though aware of the extreme pressure of business, now urges H.M. Government to give an immediate assurance that

the Clubs Bill will have a prominent position in the programme for the next session of Parliament. It further urges the necessity of ensuring that the provision of the Bill conforms to the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission on Licensing.

Have I your permission to alter the wording so as to bring it up to date? **Agreed.**

MRS. GOODYEAR: On behalf of the Executive Committee I beg to move the resolution as it has just been read by our Chairman. It is a re-statement of one on clubs discussed and passed at the Leicester Conference in 1935, which expressed the policy of this Council regarding the club problem. It was sent to the then Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and to the party leaders in the House of Commons. It was also brought to the notice of magistrates through the Magistrates' Association.

In 1937 your Executive Committee passed a resolution on the same lines, urging the Government to introduce legislation at the earliest opportunity.

In the few moments at my disposal I will bring to your notice some of the salient facts about clubs.

- (1) During 31 years, 1905-1936, they increased by 143 per cent.
- (2) They pay very little in taxation.
- (3) They require no Justices' licence.
- (4) They cannot be opposed by the public.

Any person wishing to form a club with drinking facilities, has only to present to the Clerk of the Justices a list of 25 members with a copy of club rules and pay an annual registration fee of five shillings. Intoxicants can then be supplied, during limited hours, to members, their guests and for consumption off the premises. The actual hours of sale may be chosen by the club.

(5) Premises may be used by both sexes and are often known to be most unsuitable. They are not open to inspection as are public houses. Police have no right of entry except on issue of a warrant. It is therefore extremely difficult to prove a charge of misconduct.

(6) A public house that has been closed for misconduct or redundancy, can be, and often has been, re-opened as a club within a few days or even hours.

(7) Members of the retail trade feel—and justly—that they are placed in an altogether unfair position.

The amendments to the law recommended by the Royal Commission of 1932 received the considered approval of this Council at Leicester in 1935. I therefore earnestly hope that the policy embodied in this resolution may be unanimously reaffirmed.

LADY HORT: I wish formally to second this resolution. Mrs. Goodyear has covered all the ground. We passed a resolution on these lines last year, and I hope that this year it will be re-affirmed.

I beg to second the resolution.

MRS. BRUCE: I hold my seat on the Scottish Standing Committee as the representative of the British Women's Temperance Association. I have been asked by the Executive of our Scottish Standing Committee to assure you of the wholehearted support of the Scottish Temperance Women in your efforts to get your Clubs Bill put on the Statute Book.

As most of you know licensing legislation in the two countries is different on very many points, and for this reason we must have a separate Scottish Clubs Bill. One great difference is that we have already got a Local Option Act and that cannot be put into operation fully in our no-license areas, because of the ease with which clubs can be set up.

We are not disinterested in wishing for facilities for the English Bill, because as soon as it is made law our Scottish Bill, having secured its first reading and now lying in abeyance until this particular Bill becomes law, will be further debated.

MRS. CARRUTHERS: I have been asked to bring forward one small point about this resolution. It is not until the last line that it is made clear that this question does not refer to the social club but to the club with drinking facilities. Could the resolution not therefore be made clearer, and thereby very much stronger, by putting in a few words earlier in the resolution, so making it quite explicit that this problem is not of the ordinary social club but of the club with drinking facilities?

THE CHAIRMAN said the club problem was a well known one, and she considered the resolution quite clear. She then put the resolution to the vote.

Carried, nem. con.

The Conference then adjourned until Saturday morning.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15
Morning Session, 10 p.m.

THE CHAIRMAN: This morning we have to welcome Mme. de Grez from Chile, who will say a few words to you.

MADAME DE GREZ (Chile): It is a very great pleasure to me to have been given this opportunity to greet the National Council of Great Britain on behalf of the sister organisation of Chile. We are all working in Chile, as in England, along the same lines and for the same ends. We hope that in this way we can contribute something to the peace and happiness of the world.

Thank you all very much for allowing me to come and express my regret that, as I have to return to France tomorrow I cannot be present at the whole Conference. I hope I may have the opportunity in the near future of greeting members of the British branch in Chile.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mme. de Grez. It is a great honour to have you here.

3. Mental Health and Local Authorities

DR. DORIS ODLUM: On behalf of the National Council for Mental Hygiene I beg to move:—

That the National Council of Women considers that local authorities should be strongly urged under the provisions of the Mental Treatment Act, 1930, to appoint a mental health committee to co-ordinate all the mental health services in their areas in order to prevent gaps and overlapping, and especially to extend the facilities for:—

(1) *Child guidance, in association with the local education committee, and (2) the early and preventive treatment of nervous breakdown and incipient mental disorder.*

In proposing this motion I would like to remind you that in 1930 the Mental Treatment Act was passed, which for the first time envisaged the early and preventive treatment of mental disorder. Up till that time, the only functions of local authorities had been to take care of those who were severely mentally ill in institutions (known in the old days as "asylums"), and the patients in them had all to be certified insane or of unsound mind before they could receive treatment.

This, of course, meant that all early cases were without any hope of treatment. It also meant that no treatment could be given to children showing evidence of mental or nervous instability. So it was definitely a case of locking the stable door after the horse was stolen, and it is not surprising in view of this that the figures of recovery have been comparatively poor, certainly not above 30 per cent. Probably it would be truer to say that the figures of recovery without subsequent relapses approximate to about 11 or 12 per cent. only, as is shown by the current reports of the London County Council.

This therefore was a very unsatisfactory position, but now fortunately we have quite a different one, because under the Act the local authorities have power to provide facilities for out-patient treatment of those who show signs of early nervous breakdown, as it is popularly called, or of mental breakdown.

They also have the power to provide for the after-care of people who have been mentally ill and have recovered. This is a great boon, because it is very important, in order to prevent relapses, that people who have recovered from mental illness should be cared for so as to get them on to their feet again in the community. Local authorities have also power now to give money to voluntary organisations, which are formed for the early and preventive treatment of patients. Moreover, they can provide money for research into the causes of mental illness and breakdown. So you see that now their powers are very wide.

There is still the old, administrative machinery of the local authorities, which, as you will remember, consists of two committees. First, what is known as the "Visiting Committee." That

committee, which is solely concerned with a local mental institution, has to visit that institution. It has a large measure of control in its administration, and is responsible for the welfare of the patients there. But there its functions end.

The other committee of the local authority which is concerned with mental health is known as the "Mental Deficiency Committee." That deals with mental defectives only. I may remind you perhaps that a mental defective is quite a different type of case from a person suffering from mental illness. A mental defective is a person whose mental development has been arrested from childhood or an early age, or from birth, and these people can never become normal. So they are not in a sense ill people, but people who are all their lives going to need care and, to some extent, be a charge upon the community.

But their problem, as I say, is entirely different from that of the mentally ill. What we want to advocate is that every local authority should establish a co-ordinating committee to be known as the "Mental Health Committee," which would comprise the visiting committee, the mental deficiency committee and representatives from the education committee, because the teaching of the young mental defective is at present in the hands of the Education Committee. Also any attempt to deal preventively with nervous or mental disorder in children should certainly be partially under the control of the education authorities. So this new, co-ordinating committee, the mental health committee, would be able to take a view over the whole field of mental health.

That this idea is not impossible is shown by the fact that one or two local authorities have already mental health committees. The local authority of the County Borough of Bournemouth have such a committee, and it is already showing signs of bearing valuable fruit. Recently a conference of all the medical services in the borough was held, and the question of the provision of in-patient facilities for early cases of mental breakdown, and of extending facilities for child guidance and out-patient treatment and after-care, is being put into the hands of this co-ordinating mental health committee.

So at this moment, when mental health is definitely on the map, when so much is being done to bring it to the fore, I feel that you have a great opportunity to use your influence with the local authorities to try and get such co-ordinating committees formed in order to extend the facilities, especially for child guidance (about which the seconder of this proposal is going to talk to you) and for early and preventive treatment.

DR. R. G. GORDON (Child Guidance Council): I am very anxious to second Dr. Odlum's proposal, because I believe with her that it is high time that the health authorities in this country turned their attention to the prevention of mental illness with as much diligence as they have in the past pursued the ideal of physical

health. Indeed the two are inseparable, as has been recognised ever since the Romans laid down as their health programme *mens sana in corpore sano*. Nowadays, it is being more and more recognised that while many so-called mental diseases are the direct result of physical illness, many physical ailments are very predominantly due to mental disturbances. Therefore, if you are going to have a health service for the country, you must pay as much attention to one side as to the other.

No really effective drive can be made on any objective unless the efforts are co-ordinated and free from mutual interference and overlapping. We see in this country all too much of enormous enthusiasm, a great deal of hard work and a great deal of intelligent effort spoilt because of want of co-ordination and overlapping. It is necessary therefore that there should be one committee in any local authority area, which shall not only supervise all existing efforts to promote and preserve mental health, but also ensure that all possible effort is being made to cover the whole ground.

In the recent crisis this want of co-ordination was brought home to us. We must admire the extraordinary excellence of many of the arrangements made, but at the same time we were made aware of rather serious gaps, although, fortunately we are given an opportunity to fill them now. In the same way there are gaps in the health campaign, and we have to see to it that we are not let down through not filling these gaps.

I am speaking here particularly of child guidance, both in my capacity as Medical Director of the Child Guidance Council and also as having directed a small clinic of my own for some twelve years. I must impress upon you that child guidance work is an essential part of the whole mental health campaign. To show you how much I believe that this is so, I have persuaded my own local authority to recognise the child guidance clinic not as a separate entity, but simply as the children's department of their mental health scheme. So the child guidance clinic is simply the children's clinic, comparable to the adult clinic set up for the early treatment of mental illness.

Of course, it would be quite presumptuous to suppose that, although the child guidance work is an essential part of any mental health programme, it is going to prevent all mental illness, all unhappiness, all crime and delinquency; it is not. But at the same time, I do think that it can help, at any rate in lessening these things. It tends to straighten out problems, to remove fears and anxieties and to afford encouragement to the child itself. Secondly, it guides parents in the management of their children, so that mistakes of up-bringing and well meant errors are reduced to a minimum. Thirdly, it helps to remove frictions at school and to indicate how difficulties in learning may be overcome. Fourthly, it seeks to investigate and regulate the general social background of the child

and his family so that any evil influences may be removed and good influences substituted.

It is not sufficient, therefore, that there should just be a child guidance clinic. The Child Guidance Council believes that these clinics should be staffed by a team of highly trained and skilled workers. This team should consist of a psychiatrist, that is, a doctor who is specially versed in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, especially in relation to children; a psychologist, a person who has had experience in teaching and can investigate the general and special capacities of the child and give advice on the special ways any educational difficulties may be met; thirdly a psychiatric social worker, a person who has been trained to give advice to parents on the management of their children, and to investigate the patient's special social background and help to remedy it, with special reference to mental disturbances and difficulties. With such a team I am convinced that much can be done to enable the child to develop his capacities to the full, to avoid many of the pitfalls of childhood and adolescence, which are so apt to have crippled the character by the time the adult state is reached, and at least in some measure to prevent much juvenile crime and subsequent nervous breakdown, and even insanity.

I hope therefore that you will realise the importance and necessity of this work and use your influence all over the country to persuade the authorities to set up this committee and so see that there are no gaps in their mental service.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are fortunate in having had two such expert speakers.

DR. ELIZABETH CASSON (Bristol): I wish very strongly to support this resolution. We do need these mental health committees everywhere, and I hope everybody will go home and do their best to urge that one of these should be formed in their own town.

I am speaking now from the experience of ten years of mental out-patients. I know that child guidance clinics help enormously with any child that comes along. I only have to refer that child to an excellent child guidance clinic in my town. But the problem of the out-patient is extraordinarily difficult in a place where preparations are not made for the treatment of these people. Luckily, we have a place for women, but no such provision is made for men, and I could tell you of cases showing the difficulty where these are unavailable. A man may come in who is thoroughly depressed, but not depressed enough to be certified. I try to persuade him to go to the local mental hospital as a voluntary patient, but he knows that he would lose his own clothes and have to do many other things which are quite unnecessary for him; he is perfectly sane except for his depression. The next week you see in the paper that he has committed suicide because he has not taken the advice. If there were an early treatment hospital, such as we have for the women,

we could save that man and many others. It is very exceptional to have a little hospital for women such as we have.

MRS. THOMAS (Portsmouth): I have been asked by the Portsmouth branch warmly to support this resolution, and whilst so doing to give you a very brief summary of the work which our local mental health committee is doing.

Our voluntary association, complete with staff, was transferred in 1934 to our local authority. It runs an out-patient clinic for nervous and early mental disorders at our voluntary general hospital. The mental superintendent of the City Mental Hospital, assisted by other medical officers, conducts this clinic, and all the social work connected with it is done by the trained staff of the mental treatment committee. The school medical officer sends a monthly list of children examined at the school clinic to this committee, and after-care of defectives leaving school is carried out. We also run an occupation centre from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. daily. There is a junior mixed school for low-grade defectives, and physical training classes for higher grade young adults.

Some of the children from our mental hospital attend this school daily, and young adults from the hospital attend the centre and are instructed in separate classes. Meals at fourpence a head are provided for all the people who come daily. We also have a child guidance clinic, rather in its early days, being held at the moment in the school clinic.

DR. MARGARET LOEWENTHAL: I would like to speak most warmly in favour of the appointment of a mental health committee, such as has been suggested from two other points of view.

Speaking for the Institute of Child Psychology, we would like to bring before you the advantage that it would give to the whole of the children's services in any given centre to have such a co-ordinating body on the mental health side. It is clear to all who work with children that there are many disorders such as Dr. Gordon has referred to, which contain both physical and emotional or mental elements. At present, while the existence of the mental and emotional factor in children's disorders of physical health is coming more and more to be recognised by the physicians in charge of school children, there is no simple means by which advice and help from trained physicans on the mental side can be gained.

Children's physicans working in the out-patient departments of children's hospitals, or in the out-patient children's departments of general hospitals are very busy people. The lady almoner is also a very busy person. There is at present no simple means of co-ordinating the work that is being done for the physical health of children with that which we are growingly coming to recognise as equally essential for mental and emotional health.

I would like also to put before you the importance of such centres for co-ordinating the knowledge that there is in the community with regard to conditions affecting mental and physical wel-

fare, and the far-reaching possibilities of such a committee for research and co-ordination. Such a committee could stimulate work on problems such as child delinquency and the difficulty of the backward child, and could bring together in a neighbourhood all the workers who were interested in these matters.

MRS. WHITE: Has anything been done in any of these areas in the way of observation centres, not only of delinquent cases but of delinquent cases which seem to be a little abnormal?

DR. ODLUM: In reply to the question, at the moment there are no facilities, but the Home Office authorities are taking the matter into serious consideration, and I think it is pretty certain that in the very near future provision will be made in observation homes for psychological investigation and probably treatment of delinquents showing signs of mental or emotional instability.

MISS PATTERSON: I want to bring forward two points from my personal experience. One is that there are benches in this country where there is no one who has any knowledge at all of mental work. I think it is very important that there should be on all juvenile benches someone who will keep an eye on the people who come before them to see whether it is not much better that they should have mental treatment.

Another point is that the work the clinics are doing is simply splendid, but I find one great gap in my work. It is that very often we have cases who are of the restless type, who have been perfectly well, have never seen a doctor for either physical or mental health. It is very difficult—in fact quite impossible—to persuade them to go to the clinics. This is often because of lack of money. I have often begged the medical superintendent of our mental hospital to come and see cases, but he has always said the doctors have no time and they would have to have another doctor altogether to do that work. I think this is an important point.

THE CHAIRMAN put the resolution to the vote.

Carried unanimously.

4. Women Police Surgeons

THE CHAIRMAN: The Manchester branch asks leave of the Council to move the resolution in the following amended form:—

The National Council of Women urges the Home Secretary to issue a circular to all police authorities in England and Wales recommending the appointment of a woman police surgeon for the examination of women and children, especially having regard to the numerous cases of sexual assault which occur.

Do you give leave for that?

Agreed.

MRS. TURNER (Hampstead branch): I beg to move the resolution, which has just been read to you by our Chairman, on behalf of the Manchester, Salford and District branch.

In proposing this resolution, perhaps I should say that for over twelve years I have been dealing with girls under the age of seventeen who have been involved in sexual assaults.

Everyone realises that an assault of this kind is a horrible shock to the victim, but what is not so generally understood is the shock to the child's faith and trust in male humanity. The type of medical examination with which this resolution is concerned follows as soon as possible after offence has been reported to the police, and very often the girl is still in a state of fear and apprehension and there is no doubt that in the circumstances, and to some types of girl, the examination by a male doctor is little short of a repetition of the offence itself. I know that is putting it strongly, but it should not require much imagination for the truth of my contention to be realised.

I know a case where the police surgeon—a thoroughly nice family man, terribly sorry for the little girl concerned—gave her sixpence when the examination was over, thereby repeating exactly the technique of the offender.

It may be asked, "Why not just employ women doctors without requiring the appointment of women police surgeons?" The reply to that is that the same doctor or doctors should be used for these examinations, not just any woman doctor, because of the time involved in attending the police court and Central Criminal Court or Assizes, and the value of experience in such cases.

Further, it is unusual to examine children in this way, and a doctor doing it fairly frequently can diagnose more easily and give clearer evidence.

Police court proceedings can be and often are, through no fault of the police, a nightmare to the girls concerned, and many parents have said to me that, had they known what prosecution in such cases involved, they would never have consented to their girls giving evidence. I am sure you will agree that anything that can be done to lessen the horror of the whole thing ought to be done, and you will realise too the need for this important reform. I believe that if effect is given to this resolution, something worth while will have been accomplished.

I propose the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN: May I remind the Conference that Manchester is the only town in Great Britain where there is already a woman police surgeon.

MRS. EASTWOOD: On behalf of the Manchester, Salford and District branch, I beg to second the resolution.

I believe, as the chairman says, that Manchester possesses the only woman police surgeon in the country. It may be some advantage for us to know what she has done. The appointment was first made in July, 1927; it is a part-time appointment. In the first ten years she examined 570 cases, upon which she was able to give a full

report. Of these 277 were children under 11, 169 were children between the ages of 11 and 15, and 124 were 16 years old or over.

Without the appointment of a woman police surgeon it is unlikely that all these cases would have been examined by one doctor; and in the ordinary course of her work a woman in general practice does not get a very large experience of examination made necessary by sexual assault. Such an examination is not an easy matter, and diagnosis may often have to depend on very slight indications. In Manchester, for 11 years all the cases have gone through the hands of one woman police surgeon. Consider what valuable experience she has thus gained, experience of which all her future cases will have the benefit.

Another point which should be emphasised is the necessity for saving time in these cases. Where the child is very young or mentally backward, her capacity to tell accurately what has happened may fail rapidly. Since the child's tale can be of great assistance to the police surgeon and since the physical signs of assault may have passed away after a few hours, she should be seen by the examining doctor at the earliest possible moment. With the appointment of a woman police surgeon all unnecessary delay is avoided. For instance, there is less likelihood of objection by the parents when they know that a woman will see their daughter. The police know where to take the child without any preliminary enquiries. In Manchester the woman police surgeon sees the cases at her own rooms, where all the necessary paraphernalia is at hand. (Incidentally, how much less alarming this is than examination at a police station.) She is prepared to see the cases at any hour, and most of them come to her after 9 p.m., because the majority of the offences are committed in the later part of the day.

There is then available to all local authorities this very simple system, which can have such profoundly valuable results—in its influence on the victim's outlook; on the willingness of the parents to report cases; and in the aid to the correct detection of the offence which experience brings.

All this can be obtained for a very small outlay. Manchester gives a retaining fee of £50 per annum, with an additional payment of 10s. 6d. for each case seen, an average of two per week. The woman police surgeon undertakes the treatment of the five police women, examines new recruits, and treats any of the police clerical staff whom she may be asked to see: all this for £100 a year. This is not a very large item compared with the enormous increases in the police forces for traffic control. What has been done in one place can be done all over the country, if the will to do it and the vision are there.

I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution.

MISS TANCRED: I agree with every word that has been said by the proposer and seconder of this resolution. We asked the Manchester branch if they would present the resolution in this

form because we have such a circular in Scotland. The point about a circular is that it can be done by administrative action. There is no need to ask the Government to introduce legislation or anything of that sort, because it is distinctly stated on the Scottish circular: "Recommendations to which effect can be given by administrative action and which do not require legislation."

But the point is this. The Scottish circular begins with police women, and I would like to point out to you that it is no use having a woman police surgeon if you have not got police women. The first contact of the victim of a sexual assault is with the police. The police women then take the child to its medical examination. So that in a sense, if we ask for women police surgeons, we imply that we want women to deal with the case right through.

The Scottish circular, therefore, begins with a long paragraph recommending the use of policewomen by the Scottish police authorities. It then goes on to say that women doctors should be employed to make medical examinations of the victims, and their mothers should be given the option of having a woman doctor when this is practicable. Of course, the resolution goes further and is far better; it is infinitely better that it should be compulsory that a woman doctor should see the child, and that she should be a woman police surgeon.

We also in our circular have a recommendation that suitable accommodation should be provided for medical examination. This circular, falling far short of the resolution, has been of great value in Scotland to the cause of police women.

I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before I put the resolution to the vote, the Cheltenham branch asks leave to withdraw an amendment which they had put forward. Have they your leave to delete that amendment?
Agreed.

MRS. WHITE: I want to ask the seconder, who made that very able speech and said that the woman police surgeon should have the same status as the man, whether a man is offered a retaining fee of £50 for this job? It seems to me grossly inadequate.

MRS. EASTWOOD: At the present time the woman police surgeon in Manchester, the only one who is part-time, receives a retaining fee. I think it is right that Manchester now has either one or two full time men, and when those appointments were made the original suggestion was that the woman should be done away with altogether. However, there was such an outcry that it was decided to retain her in addition for this special work. I do not think there is any man at present receiving a retaining fee at all. I think the woman police surgeon feels the retaining fee is adequate. The work does not take a great deal of her time, and she finds, because she has the official status, that the police are very helpful when she has to go to court, and they see that she is put on as soon as possible.

THE CHAIRMAN: Another question has come up from the hall: "Is it possible to appoint a woman police surgeon to cover scattered areas of population?"

MISS TANCRED: The whole practical difficulty in this question is that mercifully these cases are not numerous compared to the ordinary run of crime. In scattered country areas I think you could have an arrangement such as they have in Manchester. The whole question is dealt with very fully in the report on Sexual Offences against Children in Scotland. That report deals with the point of the scattered areas and the difficulty of the small number of cases, but it does say that if a doctor were appointed, children could be taken even from a distance to that woman.

Carried unanimously.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. Lloyd, the mover of resolution No. 5 is not here. Therefore we will, with your permission, go on to resolution No. 6. and then come back to No. 5.

Agreed.

6. Community Care of Epileptics

MISS MARGARET E. CULLEN: On behalf of the Central Association for Mental Welfare I beg to move:—

That the National Council of Women, recognising that no organisation exists for the after-care of the epileptic, is of opinion that such service should be provided, which should have as its chief concern the welfare of the adolescent boy and girl discharged from residential special schools and colonies and epileptics;

and further that, as epileptics are not included in the categories of physically and mentally handicapped persons entitled to the assistance of local authorities, this conference considers that the Government be urged to recognise that, in view of the difficulty of finding and retaining work for epileptics, their community care is as essential a duty of local authorities as are their maintenance and education in residential special schools and colonies.

We have at this morning's conference heard a lot about the problem of mental health. It is a very big problem, and it is concerning everybody at this time. But I do not think it is properly recognised that the problem of which I am speaking this morning, the general welfare and the place in the community of the epileptic, is a very definite part of the whole problem of mental health.

The epileptic is a small group comparatively, but to our view—and the Central Association for Mental Welfare has studied this question for the last three years rather intensively—a very severely handicapped group; so severely handicapped that, in our opinion, it is one of the most tragic groups in the community. We feel that

all through the history of social legislation this small but tragic group has been consistently neglected both by the State and by the community.

Before proceeding further I want to point out that we have no concern at the moment with the mentally deficient epileptic. It is rather important to stress this fact, because I think there is such a widespread and general misapprehension about the relation between epilepsy and mental defect. I am continually surprised, talking to small groups of people who perhaps have not studied the subject very much, to find that so many people think that an epileptic must in some degree be mentally defective. I heard it expressed only the other day by somebody who certainly ought to have known better.

We are not concerned with the mentally defective epileptic; he or she is protected already to a very great extent. But we are very concerned to point out that there is a very large group of people, suffering from one of the very varied forms of epilepsy, who are in no way mentally defective; who are not educationally sub-normal, and may be considered as perfectly sane and perfectly able to take their place in the community. I do want to get that point across, because I think it is a very important one. The fact of this widely held misapprehension is responsible for a great many of the tragic lives lived by adolescent epileptics.

Let us consider now why we so strongly urge this system of after-care. I want to tell you just a little of what is done for the epileptic, and then I think you will agree that there is a very definite lack that we are hoping to remedy.

The State is, of course, compelled to provide State education for the epileptic whose illness is so bad that he is not able to be taken by the normal schools without either damage to himself or disturbance to the rest of the class. Therefore, when a boy or girl has a fit in school, after a time—in our view much too long a time—they are given a place at one of the epileptic colonies, where they receive education along the ordinary school lines, and in addition a certain amount of manual and craft training with emphasis upon outdoor activities, which are the best kind of employment for an epileptic later on.

The child remains at the colony perhaps until he is sixteen. Then what happens? His parents, of course, can then demand his discharge, and he very often goes back—after a period of perhaps five, six or eight years in a specially organised little community, where he has been trained to make little of his physical defect and to live an ordinary life, playing cricket and football, joining the Girl Guides or Boy Scouts and living a natural, simple life among his fellow boys and girls—into an area to which he is a comparative stranger. Perhaps he has even lost touch with his own family, and certainly with the boys and girls of his own age in the district; he is of no particular interest to anybody. His family thinks of him

as a poor specimen, who has these nasty fits now and then, and he goes back into an artificial situation where he is either over-protected or else very much neglected.

At the same time he is expected, if possible, to find work and to play his part as a self-supporting member of the community. He is given no protection. No one comes to visit him or to advise the parents as to the best kind of employment for him; nobody comes to try and make that passing over from the community life in the colony to the wider community life easier for him.

He goes to the Labour Exchange and tries to find a job in the same way as other boys and girls who are strong and robust. For somebody who has this defect it is almost impossible to find a job. What happens? The boy or girl with slight epilepsy finds that job after job has to be given up. He is afraid to tell the employer that he might possibly have a fit, however slight. Therefore he does not tell the employer. Perhaps he may hold that job quite happily for some time. Then worry at home, or some extra strain, a financial difficulty, an emotional upset, a love affair that does not go well, brings on a crisis and that precipitates the tendency to the fit. The young person may have a fit at work, and, of course, gets the sack at once. So the vicious circle goes on. By the age of twenty, it is tragically often the case that this boy or girl, who set out so happily at sixteen, gives it up, and there is nothing left but to drift into the Public Assistance institution.

If there had only been some after-care association, which could have linked up the work of the colony with the wider world of the community and given a helping hand, that wastage would have been saved. And that wastage is expensive for the State. After-care costs very little indeed in comparison with maintenance in an epileptic colony. We are asking that the same help, which is the right of every other physically defective child, the cripple, the blind, the deaf and dumb, should also be extended to the epileptic adolescent boy or girl.

We want at least two years' after-care for epileptics, to be carried out by the proper body in each town. We have only just started this work. We know it is not a very hopeful time to press for more social welfare work, but we welcome this opportunity of placing our aim before such a representative body of women.

I hope that you will take this resolution back to your groups and find out what is being done for the epileptic boy and girl in your district, and do your best to further all activities on their behalf.

MRS. O. PRICE (National Society for Epileptics): I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution on the community care of epileptics which has been proposed by Miss Cullen.

I think I should start by pointing out that the whole motive of colony treatment of epileptics is to reproduce as nearly as possible the natural feeling of independence and of duty to the community.

This is an instinct which is too often stifled in an epileptic who spends his or her life at home.

Colony treatment of epilepsy is to a large extent occupational—occupational in the first place as part of the treatment of the disease, and occupational in the second place as providing useful training in a trade. That is to say that an effort is made to prepare patients, in the event of a cure, to take their part in the world as wage earners.

And a certain number do every year become cured, but we can never be sure that a cure is permanent. That is the whole crux of the question. Instances are known of a recurrence of fits after so long as seventeen years' immunity. Still, a certain number do leave the colony every year fit to take up work in the outside world.

It is important to be careful in the choice of employment for these people after they leave a colony, or after they leave their homes. The choice is rather limited. For men, gardening, carpentry, work on concrete and cement should be suitable and safe; for women the choice is even more restricted, but we do our best to produce useful gardeners, needle-workers, cooks and so on, and to find jobs for discharged cases.

The epileptic has a marked tendency to introspection. Brooding leads to worrying, and worrying may bring on a recurrence of epilepsy. This tendency is one that needs watching when they take up work in the world after colony life.

If you have seen an epileptic trying to qualify for discharge from a colony by freedom from fits, and meeting, over a period of *years*, one disappointment after another owing to the odd fit recurring after many months' immunity and putting them back in their hopes of getting out into the world on their own—if you have seen this happen, you will realise the frightful anxiety that they feel during the first few months after they eventually get their discharge.

It is here that the need for after-care work is so urgent. The National Society for Epileptics and other institutions are getting invaluable help from the Central Association for Mental Welfare in keeping an eye on men, women and adolescents who are leaving the shelter of epileptic colonies and trying to make their way on their own. Miss Cullen has told you something of the methods which are being followed.

This after-care costs money. But the cost of after-care is insignificant in comparison with the cost of maintaining a patient at a colony. That, of course, is obvious. Miss Cullen has given you an idea of the substantial difference in the cost of maintaining an epileptic at a colony and of keeping an eye on him in his home. The trouble is with regard to State-aided colonists—who are much more numerous than colonists paid for by their relatives—that local authorities are not specifically empowered to make grants for after-care of epileptics, although Parliament long ago empowered them to maintain or help to maintain, or educate, epileptics at colonies.

Many years ago the same sort of difficulty had to be encountered with regard to the care of epileptic children. When Chalfont Colony was started years ago there was no legislation for the maintenance by the State of children at epileptic colonies. Pressure was brought to bear on the Government, and a Committee of the Education Department reported in 1898. Legislation followed in 1899.

What we want now is the logical sequel to this colony maintenance legislation—both for children and for adults. We want the State to recognise that it is in the interests of the community that the epileptic should be given not only the chance of a cure from this curse by proper treatment and occupation in residential institutions ; but that after patients leave such institutions, with the will and with a fair chance of making their own way in the world, it is in everyone's interest that they should have the benefit of unobtrusive care by experienced people for a reasonable time, by people who will keep a friendly eye on them in their new home, sustain them with advice, and generally tide them over their first efforts to settle down in the outside world. The alternative is a risk of the recurrence of epilepsy—and back they have to go to the institution, hopeless and unemployable, to become a permanent charge on the State.

MRS. LILIAN LINDSAY (British Dental Association): I am entirely in favour of this resolution, and I agree with the proposer that these epileptics are not mentally defective but would be better described as mentally unstable.

The condition of the cells of the brain is rendered worse by the state of the mouths of these children. Dental sepsis is at the bottom of most of their trouble, and I would ask that the representatives here should press in their various localities for the dental treatment of the pre-school child so that his mouth is clean and free from all sepsis, which is at the bottom of most of the trouble of the epileptic who is not mentally defective.

In the after-care communities it should be seen that patients' mouths receive sufficient attention, so that fits do not recur. I think you could definitely say that a child who is epileptic could be cured by attention to its mouth ; children should all enter school dentally fit.

I have much pleasure in supporting this resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN : There are no other speakers and I will now put this resolution to the vote. **Carried**, one delegate not voting.

5. Abortion Laws

THE CHAIRMAN : We will now take resolution No. 5.

I should explain to the assembly that I am a member of the official committee now considering this subject. As chairman here I have the casting vote, and obviously I cannot vote either way

on a subject which is still *sub judice*. I therefore propose to vacate the chair in favour of Mrs. Cadbury.

Before I do so, I should like to read out the resolution regarding birth control passed in 1929 at Manchester :—

That this Annual Meeting of the National Council of Women calls upon the Ministry of Health and upon the local authorities to allow information with respect to methods of birth control to be given by medical officers at maternity and child welfare clinics in respect of Government grants, in cases in which either a married mother asks for such information, or in which, in the opinion of the medical officer, the health of the parents renders it desirable.

[The following societies dissociated themselves from the resolution :—The Catholic Women's League, St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, Mothers' Union, Girls' Friendly Society, Great Britain, and Girls' Friendly Society, Scotland.]

MRS. CADBURY took the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN : Before asking Dr. Lloyd to propose this resolution, the Birmingham branch asks leave of the Council to omit Section 3, "the need for better economic provision for the family by the community." **Agreed.**

MRS. BERTRAM LLOYD, F.R.C.S. : On behalf of the Birmingham branch I beg to move :—

The National Council of Women welcomes the action of the Government in setting up an Inter-Departmental Committee to enquire into the prevalence of abortion, and the law dealing with criminal abortion.

In view of the fact that the present wide disregard of this law causes incalculable harm to women who resort to illegal and dangerous methods of abortion, this Council begs to draw the attention of the Minister of Health to :—

1. *The need for the legalisation of abortion under adequate safeguards.*

2. *The need for the provision by public health authorities of contraceptive information to all married women who desire it.*

It has been suggested that, in view of the fact that the Inter-Departmental Committee set up under the chairmanship of Norman Birkett is still sitting and has not yet published its report, that this resolution should be deferred, but the Birmingham executive felt that such an important matter should not be shelved, as it has been their policy for some time to bring this whole question to the notice of the public and to the attention of Parliament—hence the reason for bringing it up today.

What we really want is that the law should be revised, and that if necessary the law should even be tightened. So I do not want to be misunderstood, and I do not want people to think that I myself am in favour of making abortions easy.

No one knows better than members of the medical profession how serious and dangerous the introduction of abortion can be. An abortion is not by any means an easy operation, and as a matter of fact, when ten to twelve weeks of pregnancy have passed, it becomes quite definitely a dangerous operation. Not only is it dangerous at the time of the abortion, but it very often leaves behind it a train of far-reaching, very serious sequelae. Therefore it is not an operation that should be undertaken lightly or without due consideration.

It might be well at the outset to state the present position of the law as regards abortion.

The first Act of Parliament, passed in 1837, made it a criminal offence, in practically the same terms as the law which exists today, for any person other than the woman herself to use any means, poison, noxious drugs, or any instrument, for the purpose of procuring a miscarriage. The law in those days was confined to persons who did it other than the woman herself.

In 1861 the law was altered in the sense that in that year the criminal statutes were consolidated, and the law read as follows:—"Every woman, being with child, who with intent to procure her own miscarriage shall unlawfully administer to herself any poison or other noxious thing, or shall unlawfully use any instrument or other means whatsoever with like intent," and then goes on to repeat what had been the law since 1837. The crime was made a felony and punishable with penal servitude for life.

Lastly an Act was passed in 1929 called the Infant Life Preservation Act and brought into existence a new crime called child destruction. It provides that any person, who with intent to destroy the life of a child capable of being born alive, by a wilful act causes the child to die before it has an existence independent of its mother, shall be guilty of child destruction. This was also made a felony with penal servitude for life.

I think in discussing abortions we must distinguish between so-called therapeutic abortions and non-therapeutic abortions.

By the former is meant an abortion that is produced because of some indication endangering the life of the patient. Some of these indications are generally acceptable by the public and the medical profession at large; others, I think, are more flippant. But the majority involve not the health but the life of the women concerned. As matters stand today all such operations are illegal, and there is no doubt that the number of abortions is on the increase.

There is no doubt that such abortions as these are being performed regularly by members of the medical profession, and no one demurs; but surely it is a bad thing when a law is so against public opinion that it is by common consent allowed to become a dead letter. Therefore it is generally accepted that the abortion laws need revision—that is, that therapeutic abortion should be legalised. At present the medical profession is under an obligation

to the English law. By that I mean that if a doctor on perfectly good medical indications induces an abortion because the patient's life or health is in danger, that doctor is definitely breaking a law, and therefore the profession at the present time is under an obligation to the English law. Surely this obligation should be removed.

What the medical profession would like to see is the law so amended that when the genuine indication arises, we may say to ourselves and to our patients irrespective of life and death, "This operation is both justifiable and legal."

The recent Bourne case brought out the importance of the point of the danger to health as well as danger to life—but apart from that point served very little purpose and left us very much as we were. *The Times* summed the case up well on July 20 last, with the remark that the state of the law as ascertained by this case is very much what common sense would at any time have supposed it to be—so much so in fact that it remains something of a mystery why this case should have been necessary to establish it.

As regards the non-therapeutic abortion we are on much more delicate ground, and it is in these cases that criminal abortions are much more common. There is no protection whatsoever for the practitioner who ventures to interfere in these cases.

It is for these particular abortions that we are hoping for great things from the Inter-Departmental Committee which is now sitting. Various methods for legalising these cases have been suggested, but none of them very satisfactory at present.

(1) *The notification of abortions.* At first sight this appears quite attractive; but if you are going to notify, to whom are you going to notify them? If a patient comes along and wants an abortion produced, and you say, "I will have to call in another opinion about this, and this abortion will have to be notified," to whom will you notify it?

It is just possible that might lead us to a worse state even than we are in at present, because if patients knew they had to report to a medical person that they were pregnant and wished an abortion produced, surely it would drive them still more to the criminal abortionist?

(2) *A panel of at least two or possibly three medical practitioners in each case, and their decision to be taken as final.* Possibly this would be the best method, because it does follow that if two, and possibly three, independent medical practitioners decided that a given patient should on medical, moral, economic or any grounds have an abortion produced, it should make it absolutely fool-proof. At the present day that is the method followed by members of the profession. It is practically unheard of for a doctor to terminate a pregnancy without getting another opinion, and this possibly will be the best method to use eventually.

Lastly, we come to the practice of conception control clinics run on sound lines and available to all classes of the community.

You might say that is evading the point, that that is not dealing with the law on abortion. It is in a way, but if we can find some preventive methods, it is better than entirely depending on altering the law for abortion. If the conception control clinics were made more universal and open to all classes of the community, the necessity for the call on the profession for the induction of abortions would diminish tremendously.

MRS. EMANUEL : In seconding this resolution I should like to emphasise the fact that a very large number of married women do endeavour to induce abortion on themselves by methods that, whether successful or not, often permanently impair their health and sometimes result in sterility.

If there were a more general use of medically supervised conception control, enabling families to be adequately spaced, there would be a marked decrease in self-induced abortion. Ten years' experience at a conception control centre has convinced me that the large majority of women do desire to have children, but the better type of mother feels responsibility for the children she brings into the world and wishes to space out and limit her family according to her circumstances.

I do not for a moment wish to advocate the legislation of birth control for frivolous reasons, but I submit that in cases of hereditary taint, of intermittent insanity, and of tuberculosis, abortion should be legalised. These unfortunate people should be allowed to live as normal a life as possible without penalising the community.

Finally, will you consider whether in cases of child assault, now so greatly on the increase, when all endeavours are directed to obliterating the memory of the horror to which these children have been subjected, abortion is not justifiable?

I have pleasure in seconding the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN : A question has been asked, "What proof is there that assaults are on the increase?"

MRS. NEVILLE ROLFE : With regard to the increase in child assaults I understand that the number *known* is definitely rising, but what we do not know is whether that is due to better knowledge and a change in public opinion bringing more of these cases into the open, or whether it is an actual increase.

MRS. WIGNALL (National Council for Equal Citizenship) : I have pleasure in supporting the whole of the resolution. When collecting information for a memorandum to present to the Birkett Commission on Abortion, it was my duty to make enquiries amongst the women themselves, and I was amazed, shocked, and saddened too, at the evidence that I was able to obtain of the practices they indulged in to bring about an early abortion, and the consequent effect upon their health. These women, when they were faced with

a large family, a small income and sometimes unemployment, or if they had had a preceding difficult confinement, were brought to very desperate straits when they found they were again pregnant. We felt that it was a sad reflection on our English justice that these poor women were reduced to these straits, because it was not legal for them to go into a hospital and have that abortion produced on them in the ordinary way, while some of their sisters could have an abortion produced in nursing homes.

We appeal to you to pass this resolution as it stands and to turn away all the amendments, as we feel that you will be doing justice to all women ; also, you will be protecting the doctor as a citizen and taking this matter from the quack to the qualified doctor. I have pleasure in supporting the resolution.

MRS. POTTS : I have the figures now which I had not a moment ago. The figures I have were given in the *British Medical Journal* of April 3, 1938. They refer to sexual offences as a whole, not only rape and that sort of thing. The number of sexual offences known to the police in 1936 was 3,835 ; in 1937, 4,358—a very serious increase. It is well known that a very large number of these offences are committed which are not reported to the police at all.

LADY RUTH BALFOUR : Could I ask what the ages were?

MRS. POTTS : I can refer you to the *British Medical Journal* of April 3, 1938, as the source of my information.

THE CHAIRMAN : We are taking the figures for and against the resolution first and the amendments later. Mrs. Reed wishes to speak against the resolution on behalf of the Mothers' Union.

MRS. REED : I speak on behalf of the Mothers' Union, who would urge that no legal support should be given to those who would deliberately take steps to destroy innocent life. If an abortion results in the death of an unborn child, the purpose of that abortion must be the saving of the life of the mother. If finance is allowed to be sufficient motive, what is the difference between legalising abortion and legalising infanticide?

We stand for the Christian education of our girls and boys and for the self-control that that Christian education can give. That may seem a very slow method and you may be in a hurry, but I think we should be very wary of short cuts ; they may inflict deep and lasting wounds. One of the speakers lately referred to the sad reflection on English justice ; surely we ought to think rather that the sad injustice is the continuation of economic and social conditions which make abortion attractive, or to some of these poor women almost a necessity.

MRS. RAMSDEN (Halifax) : None of the speakers so far has raised the question of the children. Surely the fate of the children is very closely bound up with the question of giving adequate advice on wise methods of contraception to all married women who desire

it. That a child should be unwanted is surely a tragedy for that child if it is born alive.

Therefore I would urge you to support this resolution as it stands because of the increasing use of methods of abortion which can be used by women themselves without reference to or without the help of any outside person.

It happens that I have a certain amount of experience in a voluntary birth control clinic, and we have been appalled during the last eighteen months at the frequency with which patients voluntarily tell us that they, before they came to us, made efforts—some of them only too successful—to get rid of children who were already on the way to being born. That seems to me a most terrible thing, and the only way to combat it at all is to make easily available to these women a good sound centre for advice on proper contraceptive methods which will not bring them into the dangers which the use of drugs and herbs brings them without their knowing it.

I hope that you will give your support to the resolution as it stands.

MRS. CHANCE (Andover): As a worker in the birth control movement for many years, I am very glad to give my support to this resolution. I am sure you all know the extent of the evil which this resolution aims to remedy. It is impossible when a subject has been driven underground to get statistics, but it has been roughly estimated that 90,000 women in England every year take the law—and the medicine—into their own unhappy hands.

For a moment I would like to pause, and, in answer to the speaker before the last one, to suggest who are these 90,000 women. Are they people without a sense of responsibility? Or are they women very like ourselves, many of them married, working mothers, bringing up families on £3, £4 or £5 a week?

The great merit of this resolution is that many of these women would be brought into the consulting room of the doctor, and I can think of nothing more likely to end the secret abortion than that women should have the advice of the medical men. I could give from my own experience examples of both patients and doctors who had not got or given what is legal today, because of their terror of the law.

Amendments

THE CHAIRMAN: I have no more speakers on the resolution as a whole, but we come to the first amendment, sent in by the York branch, to delete Section 1.

DR. REWCASTLE: Owing to the illness of the member of the York branch who had intended to move this amendment, that Section 1 be deleted, I have been asked to do so.

The mover of the resolution—which up to the end of the word “abortion” at the beginning of the third line is in my view an excellent resolution—has said what I believe to be true, that there may be a feeling that the subsequent section is redundant in view of the fact that an Inter-Departmental Committee of Enquiry is at this moment investigating the subject. The mover suggested that in spite of that, her branch was so anxious to bring this matter before the public, that they were moving the resolution. I do not think her branch need worry about that, because apart from the international situation, I know of no subject which has been more before the minds of the public recently.

I feel that it is redundant that we should at this moment pass a resolution calling for the legalisation of abortion, because the only result that would follow such a request would be that the Government would set up a Committee of Enquiry.

The Committee of Enquiry has been set up; it is a very able one, and it will in due course report to H.M. Government. I recommend that this Council leave the responsibility to H.M. Government and to the Government Committee of Enquiry.

I also suggest that it is not the time for this Council to send a resolution. The Committee of Enquiry took evidence from every public body that agreed to offer it earlier this year. A sub-committee of this Council was appointed, of which I was a member. After very careful thought we came to the conclusion that we could not usefully offer any further evidence beyond sending a copy of the 1936 memorandum. At that point the N.C.W. took what steps it was fitting it should take.

I have observed that there is a great tendency among women to be led aside if their hearts are touched. All our hearts are touched by the pain, grief and suffering that arise out of these great evils: but I do ask you to think and wait, and to leave to others more competent than we are to make a proper and a fitting enquiry.

The mover of the resolution made one point. She said that, if it were permitted, the doctors could agree that a case ought to be aborted for physical, economic or any grounds you like. There is the danger. Once every deterrent is removed, it becomes increasingly easy to suggest abortion upon any ground you like. If abortion is legalised, there will still be a shortage of hospital beds. Women will still resort to the criminal aborter or to their own devices, and the second evil will be worse than the first.

MRS. HAWTHORNE: I beg to second the resolution. I heartily endorse everything that Dr. Rewcastle has said.

THE CHAIRMAN: Another amendment has been sent up, but we cannot take it because it is out of order. We can only take amendments which arise out of the discussion this is an amendment which could have been sent in before. The amendment is to insert “therapeutic” before the word “abortion.”

MME. LORSIGNOL : I wish to speak against Amendment (a), which asks you to delete Section 1. Fellow members, do not delete Section 1. If you do, you take away the bony framework of the whole resolution. That resolution has been drafted, voted on, proposed and seconded with a great deal of wisdom, of vision and of courage.

The last speaker said we did not know enough. But, ladies, these discussions open the way to our knowing more. I think some of you will remember that for many years I have striven to wake your sympathy for the young girl victim of criminal assaults. Now, if you pass the amendment, you repudiate the work of Dr. Alec Bourne. That work was twofold. He performed an illegal operation, and he gave himself up, not to justice but to the law. In doing so, although the proposer of the resolution did not give him a measure of praise, so he gave enormous publicity to this question. He made it for a time the question of the day ; but that old law, that inhuman law of 1861, seventy-seven years ago, still stands. It has been re-interpreted, and it may be re-interpreted again in a very unpleasant way, but it has not been re-enacted.

Now, ladies, what you want to do is to throw out that amendment and support the resolution, so that you may open the way to the passing of a law that will help equally the unfortunate woman or child-woman and the merciful practitioner.

THE CHAIRMAN : Here is a question, "Does the Mothers' Union represent England only or Scotland as well?" I think the Mothers' Union represents only England ; I think Scotland broke away.

MRS. REED : The Scottish Mothers' Union is affiliated, and I represent 600,000 women all over the world.

THE CHAIRMAN put Amendment (a) to the meeting.

Amendment **lost**.

THE CHAIRMAN : We now come to the second amendment, delete Section 2.

MISS TINDALL (Harrogate branch) : I am here to ask you to delete Clause 2 from Resolution 5, which is :—

The need for the provision by public health authorities of contraceptive information to all married women who desire it.

The use of contraceptives is an abuse of a natural faculty. It is against the law of nature, and hence against the law of God, the author of nature. This practice is leading us to race suicide. Must Great Britain, with all the hope that she holds for humanity, and all the good she can do in the world, follow Rome, Greece and Carthage to the limbo of things that were? Our birth rate is already below the rate necessary for the replacement of our population.

These contraceptive practices are with us. That does not justify us in urging public health authorities to teach our women to be more proficient in doing this grave wrong. Surely you do not hold that the end justifies the means.

The reason why our women resort to criminal abortion or birth prevention is mainly an economic one, so let us tackle the root cause, the economic problem. Let us press for better housing, economic rents, a living wage, and, if need be, provision for the extra mouth to feed. That is the work for the National Council of Women.

That the fewer children the better, has not been proved a success. The children of large or normal families are the happiest, the healthiest, and most virile. Children are the best educators of children.

Prudence and self-restraint are as necessary in marriage as in any contract in life. The children can be spaced by natural means, but let us have at least a normal sized family. Let woman uphold her dignity and not allow herself to be the mere chattel of man.

So let me appeal to you to support us in stamping out this grave moral danger by voting for the deletion of Clause 2.

MRS. MAHONEY (Harrogate) : With great deference but with great earnestness I beg to second this amendment.

First of all, we think it is redundant. Already there is permission for individual women to receive instruction at the clinics. We do not think that you can wish that women should have these methods made public. Each woman knows her own business, her trials and her anxieties, and provision is made. To have public classes or further facilities is not, I think, a patriotic measure. Madam President, is this the time when we should try to give information to lessen our population? I can assure you, I do not think it is the policy of our new-found ally, (shall we call them?) over the water in Germany.

If we passed this resolution I think it would label us as an unpatriotic body, and itself be most inopportune.

THE CHAIRMAN : I think the meeting ought to realise that if you support this amendment, you rescind the policy already laid down by the N.C.W. in Manchester. Of course, it can be rescinded. It is in our power to do so and there are several speakers for and against. I just want to point out that you would be doing a serious thing if you passed this amendment.

MRS. CUNNINGHAM (Sheffield) : I wish to speak against the amendment. As the secretary of a voluntary birth control clinic, I know that until there are many more *bona fide* clinics married women will continue to use the harmful and expensive methods of birth control that in ignorance and despair they nearly all use now ; the shameful evil of quack abortions will continue because of the failure of those methods. By making scientific contraceptive knowledge easily accessible to all married women who desire it, we can do

a great deal to raise the standards of family health and family happiness. I hope that you will therefore vote against this amendment.

DR. REWCASTLE: I again ask that the amendment be accepted and that Clause 2 be deleted, because it is redundant. It has just been pointed out by your Chairman that a resolution of the same nature was passed in 1929. Is there any reason to pass the same resolution again?

Secondly, I ask you to reject the section on the ground that we are not in a position to guarantee that every woman in the country will be sufficiently strong-minded and moral to live a completely moral life if every safeguard she has is removed from her. I do not think any of you is competent to say, "I shall continue to be moral if every safeguard the law sets up against me is removed."

MRS. BRYANT (Sutton Coldfield): The final remarks of the last speaker brought to my mind a report which I saw recently. The medical officers of health of one of the largest cities in the country remarked that the increase in illegitimate births seemed to have increased as the sale of contraceptives also increased. There seemed to be some connection between the two. So apparently there is not the moral safeguard which might have been expected.

I opposed the amendment for three main reasons. Surely it is the right of all married women to have this information if they wish, and to have it from a reliable source; surely it is their right as individuals and as free citizens? Then, if left to get it for themselves, as they will in the absence of suitable voluntary clinics, they will get it from purely commercial sources, from traders whose aim it is to sell the goods for the sake of profit in as large quantities as possible and at as high a price as possible. Remember, there is no restriction at present on methods of advertisement. Consider that and decide, if you can, where advertisement in this matter ends and temptation begins.

Finally, surely a happy and voluntary motherhood is the answer to the cry of race suicide. That is what we desire for all classes.

It is a question of a woman's freedom as an individual and as a responsible citizen, and better houses and economic wages surely do not lessen the big problem of the poor woman overburdened by too frequent pregnancy.

It was proposed by MRS. BARNES and seconded by a delegate that the question be now put.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those in favour of the question being now put?

Carried, four dissentients.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now we must vote on the amendment, to delete Section 2 of the resolution.

Amendment lost.

DR. LLOYD: I do not wish to keep you more than a few minutes, but I would like to make one or two comments.

We have been told that the resolution is redundant; that owing to the fact that the Inter-Departmental Committee is sitting, we ought to wait until its report is out. My answer is that surely, however much we may respect the Inter-Departmental Committee, if we are very keen on a thing we cannot talk about it too much. The very fact that this resolution is going up from this large meeting today may even help the Inter-Departmental Committee.

I quite appreciate that a small committee from the N.C.W. has given its report, but possibly a whole body like this, sending up a resolution, may even strengthen its hands a little.

One of the speakers suggested that I did not show a great deal of sympathy with the Bourne case. I am sorry if you misunderstood me. I was very pleased indeed. It was the talk of the day. But I am a little bit sorry that it did not do quite what was expected of it. In other words, it was thrown back on the question of the mother's health. Quite frankly, probably it had nothing to do with the mother's health, although settled and decided on that point. The surgeon in question, without my offering any criticism, did not get another opinion, and therefore from my point of view I do not think that was quite in accordance with medical etiquette. Secondly, he decided what he would do before he saw the patient, and wrote saying he would do it. Those two points were professionally not correct. But apart from that I welcome very much the case being brought to the light of day.

Someone said we ought not to have birth control made absolutely public; that private individuals can get advice if they wish it. My answer is, what are we to do with those mothers whose doctors have told them they are not to have any more babies. They come and say, "The doctor said I must not have any more." I say, "Why did you not ask your doctor what you were to do?" They reply, "I did ask him, but he said I must talk it over with my husband and friends." Surely that is a point in favour of having scientific birth control clinics where people can go?

THE CHAIRMAN: Now we come back to the resolution as proposed by the Birmingham branch. I will put it to the vote.

Carried, eight dissentients.

DAME MARIA OGILVIE GORDON moved that a count should be taken. This was seconded by LADY EMMOTT. THE CHAIRMAN asked the delegates to vote again. The resolution was again **carried**, 236 voting for, and 12 against.

THE LADY RUTH BALFOUR took the chair.

Emergency Resolution

THE CHAIRMAN: We have an emergency resolution which we decided not to take the first day as there were so many urgency resolutions, but as we have time, we will take it now, if you agree.

Agreed.

MRS. HARTREE asked leave to insert the word "undue" after the word "cause" on line 8.

Agreed.

MRS. HARTREE : On behalf of the Executive Committee I beg to move :—

The National Council of Women urges that representations should be made to the Government and to all public authorities pointing out the obvious importance of ensuring that the staffs of all public services should normally include an adequate proportion of women in posts of direction and in a consultative capacity so that in time of emergency any necessary withdrawal of male members of those staffs would not cause undue dislocation of the services.

With this in view an immediate policy should be adopted of recruiting, training and promoting competent women to fill such posts in the ordinary course, it being necessary in the interests of men and women alike that pay and conditions should be the same for both sexes. In order to ensure that women found to be suitable should be encouraged to retain the posts for which they have been fitted by training and experience the rule that women should retire on marriage should be abrogated.

And further, that every effort should be made to call the attention of all private employers of labour to the fact that the interest of the country as well as of their own business calls for a similar policy.

I think we must all today be feeling extraordinary disappointed at the result of the work of the last 20 years, work for methods of consultation, work for reasoned agreement, and the failure, due not to the league idea, but to the failure of the States Members to keep their promises, and also a general debasement of international and national morality.

I begin like this because we are now considering a future war and the organisation for future war. The papers are all full of organisation for war instead of organisation for peace and health, and it is very sad that 20 years years of work seems to have gone for nothing.

I have for many years opposed the putting before the public of war expectancy, because I felt that was one of the ways of bringing about war. But now that is before us, and we have to deal with it. This resolution was put before the Executive yesterday morning, and it was accepted by a large majority.

If we have to accept war and have to prepare for war, we may as well do it efficiently. It is quite obvious that we should try to prevent undue dislocation of essential services in a national emergency. These services are increasingly specialised in technique and knowledge. Surely the least we can do is to make sure that in the personnel of these services, national and local, there should be

people that are not liable to be called up for other service, and in order that those people should really be efficient, it is only sensible that they should have been in the service permanently and not brought in from outside in an emergency. We know quite well what happens when such a thing occurs ; there is a muddle.

I understand there will be some opposition to this resolution on the ground that it is the exploitation of a national emergency to try to put over feminist views. In answer to that I want to put forward this. If we were trying to put over our views—and you remember the N.C.W. has as one of its aims the removal of all disabilities of women against the welfare of the country—I can understand there would be great and right opposition.

It is true that it would help our aims to have these women in these positions in the services. But surely we are also trying in the resolution to ensure that the services should be adequately carried on. Therefore I cannot see how the opposition can be sound if they suggest that we are exploiting a national emergency for the sake of our feminist opinions.

I understand that already firms are encouraging women solicitors and other people in a consultative capacity, in order that their business should not be dislocated at a time of national emergency.

LADY EMMOTT : I second this resolution with great pleasure. I entirely agree with Mrs. Hartree that we are not taking advantage of a national crisis to put forward the claims of women, because nothing can be so important as to avoid any dislocation in the ordinary work that is going on in the Government offices. I feel that to take precautions, whether by way of increasing our armaments or otherwise, is not a direct incentive to war. You take precautions to avoid war ; you take precautions to avoid dislocation.

When it was a question of voluntary work in the late war, for instance, there was never any question about giving women very good positions. They immediately formed big organisations which were very useful. The moment it comes to a question of money, the situation always seems to alter. Whenever it is a question of paying women for anything they do, there are difficulties.

At the moment "post-mortems" are going on to see whether there are gaps in our services. If those in high positions were called up, quite obviously juniors would not be ready to take their places, and you could not suddenly bring in women. Therefore, it is essential that we should ask that women, who are sufficiently well experienced and trained, should have the opportunities of being placed in the highest positions, so that they would then be available to take the work which had hitherto been done by their men colleagues.

I beg to second.

MRS. LEFROY (Bournemouth) : I feel I must just say one word about this subject. It was led up to by Mrs. Hartree saying that she thought the solicitors were considering women partners with a view to such a contingency.

Last year I was down at Exeter at the Law Society's annual meeting and met a brother solicitor, who was rather intrigued at coming across a woman solicitor. He did work in London but did not seem to know much about women solicitors and at first rather wondered what on earth they could do.

I met him at Manchester this year during the crisis, and he told me that he now had a woman solicitor in his office and felt very much relieved having regard to the present crisis. That is quite a case in point.

I feel also that the probability is that women will be called upon to take positions of great responsibility in the necessary services, and it is manifestly unfair to them that they should be suddenly jumped up into positions of responsibility without having had the adequate training. It is unfair to women as a whole. It is unfair to the work they have to do.

Another thing, in the last war there were certain services which were looked upon as funk holes for people who did not want to serve. It was very hard on these people who were quite willing to serve and yet were fundamentally necessary to carry on the civil work. If they had had the suitable women then, that would not have happened.

THE CHAIRMAN: An amendment has been proposed by Mrs. Nevile Rolfe. It reads as follows:—

In the fifth line to delete "an adequate proportion of women" and to substitute "an adequate proportion of those not liable to other service."

And in the second paragraph, line 3, instead of "to fill such posts" to insert "to fill a number of such posts."

That is to say, if this amendment were carried, we would ask that not only women but also certain types of men should be enrolled to take the places of those serving.

MRS. NEVILLE ROLFE: First may I say that both myself and my seconder are thoroughly in favour of the main contention of the resolution, that is that the industries of the country and the services of the country should be re-organised on lines that will prevent undue dislocation on the creation of a state of emergency. But I feel very strongly that the resolution worded in its present form does give an opportunity for criticism that we are using the fear of a state of emergency to emphasise, perhaps rather unduly, our policy. I feel that the expression of opinion going out from this Council will carry far more weight with those in authority if it is framed on broad, national lines in the national interest and not capable of being attacked as a sectional presentation of feminist views.

Therefore without, I think, altering the sense of the resolution at all, I would like to move the amendment as read by the President, making it more general, agreeing to the principle that the shadow senior staffs of industry and civil services are urgently required, and emphasising the fact that women can play a large part in forming

that skeleton crew, but without ruling out men. Very often the industry might be able to secure experienced men who had been so injured in the last war that they were unable to take active service again.

MRS. BOWIE: There is only one other point I should like to make in seconding this amendment. It is that the resolution as it now stands rather suggests that the women are going to sit back in public services and in businesses and carry on all the work in what some people might call funk holes or bolt holes.

A large number of women already have volunteered for public services, for A.R.P. and for auxiliary fire services. If it ever comes to a real emergency there are women in this country who will do just as well as women have done in China or Spain. We are not all just going to sit in office seats.

May I second the amendment.

MRS. HARTREE: You will see my difficulty in accepting any amendment, because I am not putting this forward in my own name or in the name of my own society, but in the name of the Executive; you must give me a minute or two to see whether the other officers of the Executive are in favour of the amendment.

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: As a member of the Executive, may I support it.

MISS WARD: Is that dropping out the women in the first clause altogether?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is dropping them out in the first clause, but it includes them in the second. There is special recognition of the fact that women are already liable for other things. The Executive have accepted the amendment so it becomes the substantive resolution.

MISS SWAISLAND: I want to make it quite clear that I am not speaking at the moment in my capacity as a member of the staff of the British Social Hygiene Council, but I feel I must speak because of my opposition to this resolution on the Executive. I feel that the affiliated societies should know my view on this matter as I have the honour to be one of their representatives.

One of my contentions has been removed by the amendment. What I want to put before you is this, that in this resolution, as in other activities that have been fostered by the Council at the present time, we are definitely looking forward to a state of war. We have been told—it was in a moment of emotion, we know—that "it is peace in our time," and in spite of that everything is being done to strengthen our armed forces, to increase the amount of air raid precautions and to enlist the support of women in any emergency.

I ask you to consider one point. There is a limit to the energy of human beings, and if we are putting most of our energies

into preparations for a possible war, which we still hope will be averted, we cannot put our energies into the things that can be done to avert the war.

It is to me no less than tragic that the National Council of Women should be handing itself over to the prosecution of a possible war when it should be making every effort it can to prevent war from occurring; and there are many things we women can do in that field.

MRS. RAMSDEN: I wish to put shortly two points. This resolution seems to me a matter of common sense. If the emergency does arise we know we shall be expected to fill those posts. Therefore the obvious thing to do is to have some trained people ready to fill them. You cannot be trained for any key position in one day, week or month. If the emergency arose, we and the non-combatant men would have to fill these positions: therefore let us prepare beforehand.

Secondly, I do not see how the National Council of Women can refuse to pass this resolution. It has always been one of the strongest points of their policy that women should be employed not only in subordinate positions in industries and public services but in key positions. This resolution asks for nothing else than that a certain number of women should be trained to fill key positions.

I hope that, remembering your policy, you will pass this resolution.

It was moved by MRS. T. JOHNSTON and seconded by LADY NUNBURNHOLME, that the question be now put.

Carried.

Resolution **carried**, 16 dissentients.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am very sorry to have to tell you that Mrs. Cadbury is unable to be at the rest of this Conference as her mother is very ill. She has asked me to say how sorry she is that she has had to go. I am sure we all wish to express our sympathy.

7. Hospital Pay Beds for All

MRS. GALE: On behalf of the Cheltenham branch I have pleasure in moving:

It has been frequently stated by the highest medical authorities that the most efficient medical and surgical treatment and the most highly skilled nursing can best be obtained in a large hospital.

At present, people of moderate means and the well-to-do are prevented from obtaining these advantages because of the shortage of pay beds attached to many large provincial hospitals.

The National Council of Women therefore urges that immediate steps be taken to increase these beds for the treatment of all classes irrespective of income.

In putting forward this resolution, the point I wish to stress is that the paying beds should be for all "irrespective of income."

There is an amendment to this resolution, to which I should have very little objection, but that it proposes to ignore the all important point that there should be paying beds for all, *irrespective of income.*

These last three words which the amendment omits are the main point of our resolution, and by the omission of them the resolution is not amended but nullified. The deletion of the first two paragraphs I accept, on behalf of my committee, but I now quote them as statements of fact, for they are the considered and published opinions of the highest medical authorities, such as Lord Moynihan and Lord Dawson of Penn. Sickness and pain take no account of riches or poverty. Why then should a large proportion of the community be denied the undoubted advantages which our great hospitals can offer?

The middle classes, who so largely contribute to the up to date equipment and the efficiency of our hospitals, are expected to go to nursing homes. This is not right. Our hospitals are equipped almost regardless of cost, fitted with the latest scientific instruments and appliances; a doctor is in the building day and night; the visiting staff of doctors and surgeons are highly qualified experts, so that those who are admitted are sure that everything that is known to the most modern science will be at their service.

I have said enough to show that, be they rich or poor, those nursed in a hospital have a great advantage over those nursed in a private nursing home, so far as actual facilities and treatment are concerned.

As regards the expense of their illness, those lucky enough to get paying beds in a general hospital have an enormous advantage. Many persons under existing circumstances, by having to go into nursing homes, suffer, in addition to the pain of their illnesses, the mental torture of wondering how on earth they are going to meet the expenses. This would be greatly lessened if our hospitals were hospitals for all. Paying beds in a general hospital, as well as providing the most up to date treatment, can do so at far less cost than a private concern even when making a fair margin of profit.

If the instalment of paying beds for all is not in the interest of the hospitals, why are many London and provincial hospitals adding large numbers of these beds? This is not only in the interests of the public, but also to their own financial advantage.

In conclusion, and as an example of my last assertion, I will quote a letter which was printed in *The Times* in January, 1935, written by the vice-chairman of the National Temperance Hospital, Hampstead. He writes: "Now that so many of our great London hospitals are providing in their extensions for paying beds for private patients of moderate means, it occurs to me that it may be of interest to your readers to state what has been the result of the experiment we have made at this hospital. We were one of the pioneers in this matter and when we built the new wing of the hospital about

two years ago, we provided twenty-three beds for paying patients. These are fitted up with every comfort and equal in every way a first class nursing home. From the first the experiment was a great success and in the first year, ending December, 1933, after debiting all expenses and overhead charges and a proportion of the interest on the mortgage we were obliged to raise to pay the cost of extension, we had a surplus of income over expenditure of upwards of £1,500. Last year, for the ten months period to October last, we had a surplus of nearly £2,000.

"There is no doubt that these pay beds fill a real need and are in constant demand; so much so that at the present time we are full up and have a waiting list.

"The ordinary patients in the hospital get the benefit of the increased income, which is now required to meet the ever-increasing expenditure for providing further equipment and to enable us to keep efficient and up to date. There is no doubt in my mind that many hospitals at present struggling to meet their expenditure might with advantage adopt this scheme as a way out of their difficulties."

It may be objected that the letter I have just read is from a London hospital, and that the facts contained therein apply only to London hospitals. This is not so. Many provincial hospitals have embarked on similar schemes with equally happy results.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did Mrs. Gale say she agreed to the amendment deleting the first paragraph?

MRS. GALE: Yes, the first two paragraphs.

MISS PERCIVAL SMITH: In seconding this resolution on behalf of the Cheltenham branch, I should like to stress the last words "irrespective of income."

There are in many hospitals at present a few pay beds, which are open only to those whose income is below £400 or £500. This, of course, is a most excellent and necessary provision for those to whom illness brings an added burden of anxiety as to how the expense of it all is to be met. But incomes do vary according to the claims made upon them, and what sounds a big income may, in truth, have less margin for extra expenditure than a much smaller one with fewer commitments. So this "income test" is not always quite a fair one.

Also, why should the wealthier members of the community be penalised, so to speak, and be denied the equipment and expert advice which only a large hospital can give, and to whose upkeep they have probably contributed.

One objection that I have heard raised is that the scheme would hamper, embarrass, and still further overwork the already overburdened hospital staff, and that patients of a different type would be benefiting from the services of doctors and surgeons so generously given for the sick poor.

We maintain that a sliding scale of charges could be made to meet this objection, and that the income of fees thus obtained would greatly benefit the hospital and provide for the necessary increase of staff and general outlay. As to the last part of the amendment *re* inspection, surely all beds in hospitals are paid for in a greater or lesser degree, either by the contributory scheme or through the almoner? Why, therefore, should the pay beds be inspected any more than the rest of the hospital?

I have much pleasure in seconding this resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would just point out that if the first two paragraphs are deleted, the last one must be slightly altered.

We will now take Amendment 2, which is to delete "these beds... income" and substitute "the number of paying beds in provincial hospitals; such arrangements to be made in co-operation with regional hospital committees where these exist; any parts of such hospitals used for pay beds to be subject to the same inspection as nursing homes."

MRS. WILLIAMS: In putting forward this amendment we felt that the people who required help most, on the whole, were the middle classes, and that the well-to-do would prefer to have their illnesses and those of their relations in their own houses or the better class nursing homes, where they could get all the luxuries they required; we do not want to feel that space in hospitals is taken up for anyone who does not really need it.

The question of inspection we felt was important, as there are drawbacks to things not liable to inspection. It would be as well if the ordinary beds were inspected too.

MISS RUNDLE: On behalf of the Portsmouth branch I formally second that amendment.

A DELEGATE: Would the pay bed laws come under the control of the governing body of the hospital?

MRS. GALE: I should certainly think so. I do not see the point of the amendment that the pay beds should be inspected, because every bed in a hospital is a pay bed either through the almoner or the voluntary hospital contributory schemes. It is for the hospital to decide about inspection.

THE CHAIRMAN: There are several speakers to the resolution but we will take the amendment first.

A DELEGATE: Is the word "provincial" necessary?

THE CHAIRMAN: The mover of the amendment will answer that; it arose out of the second paragraph, now deleted. That is why it was put in in the amendment, because the shortage was considered to be greater in the provincial hospitals, I take it, than in London.

A DELEGATE: Is the word "provincial" supposed to include the neighbouring kingdom of Scotland?

MRS. WILLIAMS: I think the English people quite realise that Scotland is not a province of London or England.

A DELEGATE : May I repeat the question. The Leeds branch was very anxious that the resolution should not include the word "provincial." This was expressed very strongly by the matron of a large hospital.

THE CHAIRMAN : That I am afraid I shall have to rule out of order, because an amendment to that amendment could have been sent forward before the Conference.

MRS. WILLIAMS : Is it permitted to withdraw the word "provincial"? Because we have no objection to withdrawing it.

MRS. WILLIAMS : Mrs. Williams would be prepared to withdraw the word "provincial" if Miss Rundle would agree. [Agreed.] Then "provincial" is omitted from the amendment. There are no other speakers to the amendment, so I will put it. The amendment you are now asked to vote on would read as follows :—

The N.C.W. urges that immediate steps be taken to increase the number of paying beds in hospitals ; such arrangements to be made in co-operation with regional hospital committees where these exist ; any parts of such hospitals used for pay beds to be subject to the same inspection as nursing homes.

Amendment lost.

THE CHAIRMAN : You have now before you the original resolution :

The N.C.W. urges that immediate steps be taken to increase pay beds for the treatment of all classes irrespective of income.

LADY NUNBURNHOLME : I strongly support the resolution. When I was last in Holland I visited the Deaconess House at Utrecht. There, in pavilion buildings the whole population of Utrecht, from the richest woman in the place to the poorest pauper, was treated from the same kitchen but in different wings. There was absolutely none of the snobbishness which still, I am afraid, exists in England on the question of the social status of nursing homes as against hospitals.

May I also mention one point, a very personal point. My own husband died in a nursing home where there was no resident surgeon. The surgeon was not called until eight o'clock in the morning. It was then too late.

THE CHAIRMAN : Before I ask another speaker to come up, I would like to read out a question, "Has the opinion of the medical profession been ascertained, and how would pay beds for all affect their income?"

MRS. GALE : I do not know that I am qualified to answer the question but, of course, all the doctors in England and Scotland have not been asked. I personally know a few, and some are for it and some against it. I think that the general demand for these beds is so great that they should be considered even if the doctors suffer ; but I do not see why they should and I do not think they would. Doctors charge the same fees to the patients in paying beds according to income and circumstances.

THE CHAIRMAN : In most of these pay beds the physicians charge a much lower rate, but I take it the answer is that patients would pay the same surgeon's fee as in a nursing home.

MRS. LEFROY : I am very glad to support this resolution. One of the things that interested me most when I was at Edinburgh at the I.C.W. Conference was a visit to the Royal Edinburgh Hospital for Mental and Nervous Disorders, and I was interested to learn there that in all cases of mental illness no question arises of private profit. Our resolution would be a step in that direction ; if put into practice it would mean that the treatment of illness was being removed from the region of private profit, at any rate in regard to the nursing homes, the well-being of the patient being the sole consideration.

MISS CAMPBELL GRAY : I should like to say at once that I am in support of the principle underlying this resolution, but I have risen to speak because I feel there are an enormous number of difficulties which have not been properly considered.

I am glad that the matter now also includes London hospitals, because I think it is only right that everybody should realise that anybody in London can go into a municipal hospital, and pay according to their means up to an average of £3 10s. a week. There is, however, a great disinclination among people of rather better incomes to go into these hospitals, because naturally there is no privacy ; at the same time they enjoy there the best facilities.

Then turn to the question of the voluntary hospital ; the voluntary hospital has been built and is maintained by charity. Unless you are going to make an income limit for people who can take advantage of the facilities offered, you have to charge a fee which will include the capital overhead charges of these beds. Then the enormous capital charges which will be necessary to build additions to these hospitals to make them adequate for paying patients will make them become, I consider, as expensive as some of the more expensive nursing homes.

On that basis I think the idea is quite admirable, and I support entirely what Lady Nunburnholme has said, but we have to realise that in putting forward this resolution, you suggest that it should be irrespective of income. You have therefore to make provision that the charges shall be such that they shall in no wise—if people of large incomes take beds—put at a disadvantage people of small incomes.

At present in London there is a great shortage of hospital accommodation for those who cannot afford to pay for private nursing homes, and until that shortage has been met, I do not consider that people who can afford to pay for the best facilities outside the hospitals should take up beds, as long as there is a need for these beds for the poorer people of the community and those with very small incomes.

Until the whole hospital position has been readjusted to the needs of the community, I think this is a resolution which presents very many difficult, and possibly dangerous possibilities, unless it is defined in rather clearer terms.

MRS. BARTON: I am one of those people who seem to gravitate naturally to the minority, and also I always see the difficulties so clearly, that I feel moved to put two things before you.

First, in principle I am not against providing adequate treatment for everybody irrespective of their means, and I wish we could have hospitals such as that described at Utrecht in this country, but the position in England does not make it at all possible. So I want to endorse what the last speaker said about the shortage of hospital beds, and the need at present to reserve beds for those people who cannot afford anything else.

I have come across two difficulties in connection with the immediate extension of the number of pay beds so as to make them available for all. In two places, where I know something about the conditions of hospitals, immediate steps are quite impracticable. In both places the area on which the hospital is built is so limited that it would be impossible to increase the accommodation on the site, and to move the hospital out to another site is a remedy that has been considered by the governing bodies of both those hospitals and definitely turned down. Therefore you can see that it is impossible to make those hospitals in any way big enough within the next twenty or thirty years.

There is another practical difficulty in both cases, and that is that their Trust Deeds are such that they cannot accept payment for the treatment they give; although I suppose this difficulty could be surmounted.

MRS. RAMSDEN: If it is the wish of the meeting I can give some figures about the paying ward in our voluntary hospital in Halifax.

In the paying ward in our own voluntary hospital, which was built by voluntary efforts, the charges are fixed on two separate scales. The actual charge for a bed does not vary. It is a guinea a day, or five guineas for a week or longer: but the charges for operations and for any remedial treatment, X-ray and so on, do vary. There is one charge for people with incomes under £500; there is a much higher charge for people with incomes over £500. So that actually the hospital benefits by its wealthier patients, who naturally pay a greater contribution.

The fees charged by the specialists for the operations are agreed, as they are in a nursing home, by personal arrangement between the surgeon and the patient.

MRS. GALE: I think, however difficult it is to arrange in certain cases, the principle should be accepted that there should be an increase of these pay beds. I do not understand the statement that hospitals are run by charity. They are to a certain extent, but

every patient, if he is not a contributor, is asked to pay. In the Middlesex Hospital patients pay up to seven guineas a week; or you can pay four guineas and share a room. A hospital I know fairly well gets £900 a year from the seven pay beds at six guineas a week.

Resolution **carried**, eight dissentients.

8. Van Zeeland Report

DAME ELIZABETH CADBURY, M.A., J.P.: On behalf of the Harrogate branch, I beg to move:—

That the National Council of Women cordially welcomes the Van Zeeland report as offering a most valuable approach to the solution of international problems which are causing widespread unrest and may lead to war; and urgently requests His Majesty's Government to invite other nations to co-operate in seeking a peaceful solution of these problems along the lines indicated in the report; and, with this end in view, to set up without delay expert preparatory commissions to deal with the various questions involved.

The crisis through which we have been passing has given unexpected relevance to the resolution before us. It must be generally recognised that the present immunity from war, for which we are all so devoutly thankful, is only a respite; it cannot be said that we have, as yet, the assurance of a settled peace. There is definite need for a constructive policy on the lines of Roosevelt's second message to Hitler, a plea for a wide international conference to consider all outstanding problems endangering the peace of the world. Such a conference, besides dealing with revisions of treaties, must give a central place to economic problems.

Widespread sympathy is felt for the Czech people, and a recognition that it is they who have paid the price of peace. How can we make their sacrifice morally acceptable and a true guarantee of peace? Only by promoting a general settlement in which we too make our contribution in a modification of our economic policies, in seeking a just solution of the colonial question and other matters of dispute which call for discussion. In this connection the report of M. Van Zeeland is especially opportune.

In April, 1937, the Governments of Great Britain and France invited M. Van Zeeland, the then Prime Minister of Belgium, to undertake "an enquiry into the possibility of obtaining a general reduction of quotas and of other obstacles to international trade." For the purposes of this enquiry, discussions were held between M. Van Zeeland or his assistant, M. Frere, and national leaders in the United States as well as in Europe. The results of the investigation were incorporated in a report, and communicated to the British and French Governments on January 26, 1938.

Whatever criticism may be directed to this or that detail, there can be no doubt that as a whole the report is a peacemaker's effort, a genuine attempt to restore not only communications but also close relations between countries that have fallen further and further apart. It is generally acknowledged that since the War, the world has rejected freedom in international trade; that Governments have ranged themselves, with differing emphases, on the side of economic nationalism; and that we live today amidst active hostility, with quotas and tariffs and currencies as weapons of offence or defence. M. Van Zeeland clearly recognises that the sufferers in this conflict are the plain folk of the warring countries, for economic nationalism causes national impoverishment.

The Report is divided into three sections, the first of which gives a general view of the world situation and the divers conceptions of economic life at present in conflict. The contrast is made between those nations regarding the utmost freedom of trade as a good and desirable thing and those nations, on the other hand, pursuing what is known as economic autarchy, i.e. the maximum of economic self-sufficiency. Stress is laid on the fact that these two alternative conceptions must be taken into consideration, and ways and means found of reconciling them. M. Van Zeeland concludes this section with a considered defence of free economic collaboration as the best method of promoting world prosperity and peace.

In the second section the Report surveys "the principal direct obstacles in the way of international trade and the means for reducing them." On the economic side M. Van Zeeland suggests that Governments should undertake:—

- (1) Not to raise or widen the range of their tariffs.
- (2) To carry out a general reduction of such duties as are of an exceptional character.
- (3) To abolish duties and other obstacles limiting the export of raw materials.
- (4) To negotiate bilateral commercial agreements based on "the most favoured nation clause."
- (5) To remove forms of "indirect protection" which hinder international commerce.
- (6) To appoint arbitral bodies for friendly settlement of differences of an economic character.
- (7) To suppress industrial quotas.
- (8) To reduce or end agricultural quotas.

On the financial side the chief obstacles to trade are shown to be sudden and excessive change variations and restrictions of commercial payments. A network of suggestions is elaborated, designed to lessen insecurity in international trade, and to promote its development.

The section closes with the suggestion that the co-operating States might establish "a common fund, the resources of which

might be applied under appropriate conditions, to facilitate the financing of legitimate trade operations during the period of adjustment." If this includes the provision of capital for industrial and agricultural developments in the poorer and more backward countries, then a long stride would be taken towards advance in the standard of living where destitution now abounds.

Further, the Report proposes a pact of economic collaboration, open to all States: "The aim of the pact would be to raise the standard of living by improving the general well-being." M. Van Zeeland proposes that the leading economic powers should take the first steps and if their opening discussions were favourable, proposes that a bureau appointed for the purpose should carry forward discussions with all the States. On the proposed agenda for such a conference are placed four questions:—

- (1) Are you agreed to take part in an attempt at international, economic collaboration?
- (2) Do you, with this object in view, accept as a basis for discussions the main lines of the present report?
- (3) What are the points in this report, if any, which you would wish to see either omitted or emphasised?
- (4) What points not mentioned in this report do you think it desirable to include within the scope of the attempt to be undertaken?

In the light of the replies the bureau should draw up a programme of constructive action, based on the economic reforms summarised above. The negotiations when successful would be completed by international agreements and by a plenary conference "to put the final touches and exchange signatures."

As a commentator on the report says, "Behind its discussions of tariffs, exchange controls and the like, is a vast human concern—peace instead of war, peace which could be won by a collective economic policy to aid all countries by raising the standard of living of their impoverished multitudes."

MRS. DAVIDSON: On behalf of the Manchester branch I have much pleasure in seconding this resolution. It seems scarcely necessary to add to what Dame Elizabeth has so ably put in the way of explaining the Report, but I should be glad to say one or two things which have come into my mind since I was asked to second.

By all means must men and women of goodwill strive to bring peace on earth. We realise at last, I believe, that universal disarmament is the true and surest method to make war cease. We have also to realise, in a world arming to the teeth, that disarmament may be considered in many quarters a counsel of perfection. It will be long before we can attain to it. Something less must be sought for the time being.

In the Van Zeeland report we have a definite, practical approach to the establishment of goodwill amongst the nations. Without

international trade and commerce the peoples cannot now exist. When the French and British Governments asked the Belgian ex-Minister Van Zeeland in April, 1937, to enquire into and report on existing trade problems and propose a solution, the request was promptly taken up and the report was duly presented in January, 1938.

So far nothing seems to have been done with it. Even to minds not specially familiar with economics, the report seems to be eminently clear and reasonable. It is an effort to express the possibility of the alleviation of the economic difficulties which are experienced everywhere in the world today. We must infer that they are largely due to the bad conditions created by the last war and its after-effects. Instead of aiming to make things easier in the matter of trade-exchange, power to obtain raw materials, opportunity to purchase manufactured goods, it has all been made enormously difficult. Reasonable tariffs, no dumping and above all no quotas, Van Zeeland demands. He comments on the difficulties created by the political situation in April, 1937.

What he is saying now, we may easily conjecture. Trade and the political situation act and react upon each other continually, and a just settlement in both spheres would be a matter of reason and common sense. Trade is for the benefit of the community, to create comfort and raise the standard of living. It is therefore essential to have reciprocity and exchange among the nations. Each has, or produces, what the others need. In Manchester the Free Trade Hall, our largest public hall, is a monument to it. Many in a bygone day thought free trade a great ideal. Possibly the world could never get back to that, but it is increasingly urgent to restore some sort of sound economic basis for international trade. To create the spirit of mutual helpfulness, everything possible should be done.

Van Zeeland makes the interesting suggestion that the gold standard should be re-established on a revised basis. He allows that must be a conclusion and not a beginning. We need not think that all this is just talk without concrete support. There are already in existence bodies set up to deal with international trade and finance—committees within the League of Nations, the International Chamber of Commerce—and others.

Van Zeeland also suggests a bureau to which all the States might report the difficulties in their international commercial relations and say what help they are prepared to render. On the whole this Report lays a foundation for economic reconstruction which may very well be deeply considered and in the main adopted.

I have pleasure in seconding the resolution.

MRS. LEONARD WRAGG: In speaking against this resolution, I hope no one will think that I am against free trade, the abolition of quotas, and many of the other difficulties that we have at present in international trade. The reason I speak against it is because we

know quite well—in fact, I think this is explicitly stated in the Report—that its recommendations depend on the political situations in the various countries. Also, I read, at the time when the Van Zeeland Report was issued, an article by someone without political bias, but who was competent to speak on the monetary side of that Report, saying that one conclusion to be drawn from the Report was that Germany would have to be given a very large loan. The Van Zeeland Report depends on a political situation very different from the one that exists at present. Moreover, I feel that the Report is so complicated that it is not very wise of us, as a body of women not expert in monetary policy, to venture to give an opinion on it.

MISS PENNETHORNE (P.N.E.U.): I wish to speak very briefly in favour of this resolution because it contains the words "expert commissions." I should like to appeal both to the Chair and to my fellow delegates that none of us should discuss these complicated and difficult questions of foreign affairs and bandy about the names of other countries, whether our sympathies are pro X or pro Y, without first-hand, expert knowledge. We are a body of women, all of us supposed to be experts in some subject; we are not experts in foreign policy, and therefore I feel that we must discuss these questions with extreme care, lest we spoil our reputation for knowledge of the matters of which we speak. As I do not claim expert knowledge of this complicated, but most worth-while Report, I must only close in begging once more that we remember that it does contain the word "expert."

THE CHAIRMAN: That means that we are asking for the setting up of expert committees.

MISS SWAISLAND: I do not want to take up more than one minute of your time, but I should like very warmly to support this resolution on the Van Zeeland Report. It is just one of the constructive things towards peace that we as women can do. I think many of us felt in the days when we did talk of, and hope for total disarmament, that the causes behind, such as these economic causes of which we are thinking, were likely of themselves to prevent that disarmament from taking place. If we can get at the fundamental causes of war and unrest amongst the nations, then the time may come when we can once again speak of disarmament with better chance of success.

I very warmly support the resolution.

MRS. WORTHINGTON EVANS: On behalf of the National Conservative-Unionist Association I want to say a few words against this resolution on the ground that at the moment it is not necessary, in view of what Mr. Oliver Stanley, the President of the Board of Trade, said in the House of Commons on May 24 of this year. He said, "We have during the last year carried on the general policy of the Government, which has been to try by bilateral negotiations and by trade treaties to reduce the barriers against our

goods, and so to expand not only our own trade but the trade of the world as a whole. It is a matter to which M. Van Zeeland gave his blessing in his Report, and we believe in that method. We believe that it has hitherto had a great deal of success, and we desire to continue it."

If that was the view of H.M. Government in May of this year, I feel we can safely leave it to them to take the very first opportunity, when the political situation in Europe is suitable, to pursue this policy.

MRS. WOODWARD : Speaking entirely as an individual, who was quite unprepared to speak at this Conference, I feel I must in defence of our sex say something in support of this resolution in view of the remarks that have preceded me.

Are we going to abrogate our rights to principles and to serious thought on all matters of morality because we are not experts in this, that or the other? If we are, then I see no point in holding Council meetings at all. We are here to inform ourselves. There is not a woman, anyway over forty in this hall, I am sure, who has not at some time or other voted either for Protection or against it, and never has she said that she did not understand what she was voting about. But when it is simplified down to this matter of international conciliation, she says she is not an expert and runs away. I think we ought to be ashamed of that attitude.

We have to face up to it. We have to face up to the Colonial implication within the next few weeks, and I wonder how many of us are considering what our attitude is about maintaining, or giving up, or mandating our Colonies. If we have not thought about that, I am quite sure between now and Christmas we are going to be asked to do so.

For this reason I welcome the Van Zeeland Report, which gives us an opportunity not merely of supporting the Government, but of urging them to get a move on in regard to it.

MRS. WHITE : The last speaker suggested there was something in the Van Zeeland Report about mandating the Colonies. I thought it was entirely an economic report. If there is anything of that in it, it is rather presumptuous of us if we have not read the report to be gallantly voting for it.

THE CHAIRMAN : That is not what the speaker said. She said we had just as much a right to consider the economic questions put forward in the Van Zeeland Report as we would have to consider the question of mandating the Colonies.

MRS. WHITE : How many here have read the Van Zeeland Report?

On a show of hands, the Chairman remarked, A representative number have.

MRS. STEPHEN HOBHOUSE : It is with very great pleasure that I take a brief opportunity of encouraging this gathering not only to support the resolution but to support it with enthusiasm. It is

of particular interest to me that the young and saintly king, Edward VI, anticipated the vision of the world becoming a great and friendly community through trade. In his missive he distinctly says that trade is intended to be the great instrument—I should use the word "sacrament"—of friendship between the nations. The idea therefore is not new. Some of us, who have been grieved that the League of Nations ever supported its arguments with force, which is the greatest enemy of world friendship or even personal friendship, have looked to the International Labour Office of the League of Nations to take up a purer line of conciliatory action.

I therefore hope, that as the Van Zeeland Report suggests the ultimate solution of the question of world enmity lies in the direction of economic reconstruction and conciliation and collaboration, we shall support this Report as a step in the direction of a Commonwealth of Nations.

Let us remember that the Van Zeeland Report is only a starting point and a basis. If the best people are commissioned to carry out the investigations and the conciliatory work, then a better state of affairs will emerge ; it is for us at least to encourage a start being made in the direction of economic conciliation.

May I remind you that St. James was economically right when he asked this question, "Whence come wars?" and gave that very simple and accurate, modern answer, "They come from the desire to possess, the acquisitive spirit," in other words, the inability to share in the way that the human family was intended to do. It is a wonderful thought that St. James was economically on the side of the Van Zeeland Report.

DAME ELIZABETH CADBURY : There is one thing I would like to ask. I wonder, if we went to the House of Commons and asked how many of the members had read the Van Zeeland Report, if there would be as good a number of replies as we have had here. I hope everybody will go home and study the Van Zeeland Report, because it may become practical politics soon.

Resolution **carried**, nine dissentients.

DAME ELIZABETH CADBURY : The Report can be had from the Friends' bookshop in Euston Road ; also, of course, from H.M. Stationery Office.

9. Refugees and Stateless Persons

THE DOWAGER LADY NUNBURNHOLME, J.P. : On behalf of the Executive Committee I beg to move :—

The National Council of Women, deeply moved by the distress of the refugees and stateless persons for whom assistance, the right to work and possibilities of rehabilitation should be assured, and considering that the problems can only be solved internationally,

expresses the wish that the humanitarian work carried on by the Nansen Committee and similar organisations be continued in some suitable form, under the auspices of the League of Nations.

Alive to the difficulties which the presence of immigrants creates in other nations, the National Council of Women :—

Supports the resolution adopted by the Evian Conference on July 14, 1938, (which asks that involuntary emigrants be allowed to take with them their property and possessions) and urges that negotiations should be initiated on these lines ; and that the Conventions concerning the International Statute of Refugees of October, 1933, and of February, 1938, be ratified and implemented.

Further, the Council begs His Majesty's Government immediately to explore the possibilities of receiving refugees within the Empire, in consultation with the Governments of the Dominions.

I have been asked by our Executive Committee to propose this resolution on refugees and stateless persons. The plight of refugees is one of the most vital and terrible problems of the world as it is today, and must receive our heart-felt sympathy and practical co-operation.

Events have moved very rapidly during the past few weeks, and this resolution has had to be brought up to date, even as late as yesterday, when the last paragraph was incorporated as a result of an appeal made to this Council from the women of Czechoslovakia.

Our first request—that is, that the humanitarian work carried on by the Nansen Office and similar organisations should be continued in some suitable form under the auspices of the League of Nations—has been met, for the League has made provision for this. I think, however, that a very brief statement of what has been done will be of interest, and will help to clarify the position with regard to the other points.

As you all know, the League did marvellous work after the Great War in settling hundreds of thousands of nationals, principally Turks, Greeks, Bulgarians and Armenians, who found themselves after the re-making of the map under foreign suzerainty. This migration really took the form of exchange of population and re-settlement, by means of loans advanced by the League and under its protection.

Then, later, it worked under the two main organs in its great task of assisting refugees—the Nansen Office and the High Commissioner for Refugees from Germany. These two institutions have been of incalculable help to thousands, not only in a material sense in establishing emigrants in their new homes by means of settlement schemes, but in supplying stateless individuals with papers of identity. The Nansen Office was responsible for Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Turkish and Saar refugees. Its work was doomed to come to an end in December, 1938. The opposition of Russia was one of the chief obstacles to its continuance, but the League itself wished to be free from indefinite financial obligations. The mandate

for the work of the High Commissioner for Refugees from Germany also terminates at the end of December, 1938.

The whole question of the future machinery to replace the work of the two institutions was discussed at the recent September Assembly of the League. The sixth committee recommended that a High Commissioner of the League of Nations should be constituted to deal with refugees hitherto coming under the Nansen Office and the office of the High Commissioner for Refugees who had already left Germany. The Assembly adopted this recommendation on September 30, and the appointment of Sir Herbert Emerson to be High Commissioner of the League of Nations for Refugees was confirmed. The appointment is to come into force on January 1, 1939, for five years, and the headquarters will be in London. There will be a grant from the League of Nations for administrative expenses, and the League will also be responsible for the High Commissioner's salary. It is also laid down that he may accept funds from Government or private sources, and from the Nansen International Office. Such funds do exist, and will form a nucleus for the new organisation.

The duties of the High Commissioner are to provide for the political and legal protection of refugees, and to superintend the application of the legal status of refugees as defined in the two Conventions of 1933 and 1938. He is also to work for the co-ordination of humanitarian assistance, and is to help Government and private organisations in their efforts to promote emigration and permanent settlement. So it will be seen that the desire expressed in our resolution has been met, and that the work on behalf of refugees is to continue under the auspices of the League.

A word now about the Conventions. It was early seen that provisions would have to be made to remove some of the special difficulties of refugees, who suffered particularly from their statelessness, or lack of protection by a government. A series of legal instruments culminated in the two Conventions of 1933 and 1938, which provided refugees with substitutes for some of the constituents of nationality. The 1933 Convention deals with the status of Nansen refugees, and gives them protection. It was drawn up so that there should be a permanent legal instrument on this subject, which should survive the Nansen Office itself. It embodies the previous agreements concerning the issue of Nansen passports, provisions for the juridical status of refugees, and for certain labour, welfare, relief, education and fiscal benefits, approximating to those of nationals, or, at any rate, of foreigners enjoying "most-favoured-nation" treatment. This Convention came into operation in 1935 and has been ratified by some nine countries including the United Kingdom. It applies only to Nansen refugees, but a very similar Convention was adopted for refugees from Germany on February 10, 1938, after the holding of an inter-governmental conference

for that purpose. This has been signed by seven countries, and our own country ratified on September 26; Belgium has also ratified.

The Inter-Governmental Committee which met at Evian from July 6 to 15 of this year did so as a result of a moving appeal made by the President of the United States to consider the position of political refugees. Representatives from 32 countries were present, as well as representatives from the League of Nations, the International Labour Office, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees from Germany.

Its object was to consider whether those Governments who had the problem of political refugees thrust upon them could not act promptly and effectively in a long range programme on a comprehensive scale. The compulsory migration, which is now taking place, forces upon the world large bodies of reluctant migrants who have to be absorbed in abnormal circumstances.

The most pressing problem is that of refugees from Germany and Austria, and to this must now be added Sudetenland and probably other parts of Czechoslovakia. The Committee devoted its attention to the problem of persons who had not already left Germany, but who desired to emigrate by reason of the treatment to which they were subjected on account of their political opinions, religious beliefs or racial origin, and to such of those as were already in process of migration.

It is obvious that any work of this nature undertaken by the Committee must be immeasurably complicated unless the country of origin of the refugees is prepared to make its contribution, and unless emigrants which other countries may be asked to accept have some means of self-support. It is almost impossible for thickly populated countries to accept persons who are deprived of their means of subsistence before they enter. If countries of immigration are to do their best to facilitate the admission of emigrants, then they are entitled to expect that the country of origin will, on its side, equally assist in creating conditions in which the emigrants are able to start life in other countries with some prospect of success.

The resolution passed at Evian drew attention amongst other matters to the importance of this. An office has been set up in London by the Inter-Governmental Committee, under an American director, Mr. Rublee, and it is essential that negotiations should be initiated as soon as possible with countries from which these refugees are coming, so that something may be done. The whole problem of refugees has assumed such fantastic proportions that it seems only possible to deal with some of the most urgent needs. We know that Sir Neill Malcolm, the present High Commissioner for Refugees from Germany, has just returned from Prague, and we are looking to the Inter-Government Committee to keep the Governments informed, and to speed up such schemes of resettlement as they have already under consideration. We know

that Australia and Kenya are both exploring the possibilities of settlements and it is to re-settlement that our hopes must be turned. After all, pioneers have gone into the wilderness in the past, either for conscience sake, or forced by economic conditions, and have built up for themselves a new life—hard but free—and this may well be the only solution in the future. This may be the only alternative before many of those in Sudetenland who are opponents of the new régime.

I ask you, therefore, to support this resolution, urging that the good work carried out by the Nansen Office and the High Commissioner for Refugees from Germany may be strengthened, and that the schemes of the Inter-Governmental Committee for large scale re-settlements may be facilitated and speeded up by negotiations with the countries of origin, so that refugees may not come penniless to their new homes.

MRS. PERCY BIGLAND: It is with a great deal of pleasure that I second this resolution, which has been put before you by Lady Nunburnholme, though I cannot add anything to the factual statement of the refugee problem she has given.

I saw some years ago the Armenians near Beirut living for years in the most miserable shacks. I know something about those who were stateless and bandied about between Hungary and Austria last year. I had for over a year two German members of one of the German universities in my own home—young, active, enthusiastic, delightful people. We at length got a permit for them to go to Australia, where they have started afresh.

At this moment and during the last six weeks we have had in my own locality two Austrians—rather a different story. They are in the middle sixties, and had had a home in Vienna for forty years. He was a lawyer. They have had to leave it all because it was not safe for them to stay any longer. He said to me the other day, "It is just some work to do I would like to have. All my books and all my library have had to be left behind, and I have nothing to look forward to." I think we must all feel that we have a duty to these people. We have been asking ourselves these last weeks, "What can we do?" Sometimes it seems we can do very little, but I am sure we can keep a healthy and sane opinion on this whole question. We can bring our influence to bear on all whom we meet. Where we can, we want to speak wisely on this subject; we want to see where openings can be made; and we do want to urge our Government to take a strong line in this matter. I feel that there may be and there should be openings. We have a moral responsibility, and, as we sit round our fires this winter, should we not think how we can show that moral responsibility in our own country and perhaps beyond the seas where we have influence?

I have very great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN: A question has been sent up: "In view of the changed international situation since the drafting of the resolu-

tion, would the mover agree to the deletion of the words 'under the auspices of the League of Nations.' Some organisation should be created which can act with urgency, and which can obtain the co-operation of non-members of the League."

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: I think the resolution answers that question. Certain refugees would be entirely helpless unless the machinery of the League were there for their support. The new refugees under the new circumstances are to be looked after by the Inter-Government Committee which has its office at Caxton Hall, London.

A DELEGATE: Was Germany represented at the Evian Conference?

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: No.

MRS. EDEN: I have very great pleasure in supporting Lady Nunburnholme, and feel very strongly that England, and particularly South Africa, cannot economically support many more of our present refugees. Both have almost done their utmost. As she has stated, Australia and Kenya are considering this question. I do know that Tanganyika and South West Africa have already taken a large number, and I think Australia and Kenya are two big spaces that could take more. Here is another reason, apart from strategic ones, why we should not hand over our Colonies.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must rule that out of order.

MRS. EDEN: Perhaps I am treading on dangerous ground, but I feel very strongly, that we must support this resolution, and we must give a home to all those who today have none.

THE CHAIRMAN put the resolution to the meeting.

Carried nem. con.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to read a letter to you, written by the Society for Intellectual Liberty. It is as follows:—

October 14th, 1938.

Non-Nazi Sudeten Germans.

We cannot blame the Prague Government for refusing these unfortunate refugees within their shrunken territory, for fear that if they harbour them they will bring on themselves the immediate vengeance of Hitler and create a new German minority problem in the future.

Their tragic plight is a consequence of the Munich agreement and a direct responsibility, for it rests on us. We have reason to believe that the Government is considering the problem sympathetically, but meanwhile train loads of these unfortunates are being sent back to Germany, where torture and death awaits many of them. Henlein has been reported in the Daily Telegraph of October 12th, to have said that "he would show no mercy to his political opponents" but imprison them "till they turned black." The deliberate murder of many of those who remained in the Sudeten territory has also been reported by the News Chronicle.

Our Government should therefore immediately be urged

- I. To request the Czechoslovak Government not to refuse at least temporary shelter to these refugees while arrangements are being made for their permanent settlement in other countries.
- II. To undertake, together with the French Government, to provide temporary places of refuge (camps) within their own territories, and to arrange the necessary transport by air if need be, since many refugees would be in danger in any of the countries bordering on Czechoslovakia.
- III. To use its good offices with the Dominion Government with a view not only to securing permission for a considerable number of these involuntary emigrants to enter the territories of the Dominions, but to make their transport and settlement materially possible by a substantial financial grant.

A loan has been promised to the Czechoslovak Government, but in present circumstances this will not suffice. A special grant or loan of public funds by this country should be made for the purpose of re-establishing these refugees in their new homes. It has been reckoned that the cost of a week's war would have been at least £50,000,000. A small fraction of that sum would save these people.

We therefore ask you:—

- (1) To write to your M.P. and to the Foreign Office immediately pressing for such action.
- (2) To use your influence quickly with every society with which you are connected and with your personal friends to take similar action.
- (3) To organise manifestos on these lines by groups of people, such as the staffs of colleges, schools, firms.

Above all, act quickly, or it may be too late. There is not a day or an hour to spare.

This puts the position in detail and very tragically. Part of this is already covered by our resolution. Would it be your wish that when sending forward the resolution to Government Departments, we should send this letter and ask for it to be considered immediately? Alternatively, would you like us to send forward the three points they mention, or rather the first two, because the last one is already included in our resolution?

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: I think we have already interfered enough in Czechoslovakia. It would be most impertinent to interfere again.

THE CHAIRMAN: The difficulty in discussing this matter is that it is a letter, not a resolution. Would you like a resolution based on this to be brought forward tomorrow, in which case I will ask Mrs. White to speak on it then?

A DELEGATE: I think most of us are not quite clear what the letter is. Is it a letter from us?

THE CHAIRMAN: The letter was handed to me by a private individual, and it was written by the Society for Intellectual Liberty. We would not take responsibility for all its terms if it were sent forward.

MISS WARD: Would it be possible for us to defer this till tomorrow and ask Lady Nunburnholme and others to give us their views. It is a very great responsibility. Many of us have never heard of the organisation.

THE CHAIRMAN: I suggest that, if you like, we should draft a resolution based on part of this letter.

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: We have all had enormous numbers of letters. I have six in my pocket now. Why are we to discuss letters which are not on the agenda and have nothing to do with us?

THE CHAIRMAN: Then it is your wish that we take no further action beyond the resolution we have already passed?

Agreed.

10. Physical Fitness

THE CHAIRMAN: As I am proposing this resolution, I am asking Mrs. Johnson to take the Chair in my place.

MRS. JOHNSON took the Chair.

THE PRESIDENT: On behalf of the Executive Committee I beg to move:—

The National Council of Women supports the work of the National Fitness Council which, under the Physical Training and Recreation Act of 1937, aims at the encouragement of voluntary physical training and recreation and the establishment of centres for social activities.

But the National Council of Women urges that wherever centres for recreational training are set up, due regard should be paid to the adequate training of all instructors and to the conditions under which training is carried on; to the suitability of any particular system of training to the individuals concerned; and to the factors controlling the development of the aesthetic, moral and spiritual as well as the physical powers of the individual.

To this end the National Council of Women urge upon all regional fitness councils and upon all local authorities the importance of the following factors in a physical fitness campaign:—

- (1) *Adequate medical supervision of physical training.*
- (2) *Suitability of system of training, those for women and girls being specially considered with a view to promoting easy childbirth.*
- (3) *The healthy development of the young child through ante-natal supervision of the mother and subsequent attendance of the child at welfare centres and nursery schools.*

- (4) *A knowledge of the basis of positive health, provision for character training and guidance in sex behaviour.*
- (5) *A balanced and sufficient diet, including instruction on this and on the effect of alcohol on the body.*
- (6) *Sufficient rest and sleep.*
- (7) *A maximum of fresh air day and night.*
- (8) *Hygienic clothing and cleanliness.*
- (9) *The encouragement of practical and artistic hobbies at these recreational centres.*

I must apologise for the length of this resolution, but after reading it no one could say that we have not put forward something practical.

The idea underlying this resolution was put forward by the British Council at the International Council and received enthusiastic support from countries all over Europe and America. Practical training is only one part of the development of the human being and you must have mental and spiritual training as well, and there must be close co-operation between them. Now we bring forward this resolution to show how our ideals can be implemented in a practical way.

We all of us know, to take the first point, of cases where over-enthusiasm has led to injury for lack of medical supervision. We know also, to take the second point, that a good deal of research now being done on the question of special exercises suitable for women to assist them in having easy and natural childbirth. There is much more to be done in this connection, and we wish it to be recognised from the start that these exercises are of very great and fundamental importance. Many of the native women who have children without, I might say, a second thought, have natural exercise they have always adopted, tribal exercises, and special methods of child delivery. We can give the same facility and ease to our civilised women if we recognise that suitable physical training can enormously assist the mother in childbirth.

Then we shall take the third point, to show that the whole idea of physical training should begin at the very beginning, before the child is born, and should be carried on through the different stages of life. We have for some time had ante-natal clinics, child welfare clinics and nursery schools, but all these good things have grown up separately and independently. Now we have this Physical Training and Recreation Act bringing in Governmental efforts combined with the efforts of various voluntary societies, and we want to show by this resolution that every effort at health should be included in any physical fitness scheme. The whole scheme should be inter-locked.

Then take the fourth point. That well known Latin phrase *mens sana in corpore sano* has been quoted already this morning, and it is to carry out that idea that we have put forward these words.

Also, we should like to impress upon the local authorities the value of the voluntary associations, whose special aim it is to carry out this character training, and to make them realise the value of mental discipline and spiritual ideals as all part of real fitness and of the development of the right type of citizen.

Then naturally if we are to have physical fitness, we must have the balanced diet. There has been a great effort made to increase the knowledge of and the facilities for the right diet, but we feel it ought consciously to be part of a physical training campaign. Also we have mentioned the question of alcohol, because there is a special Board of Education circular dealing with the injurious effect of alcohol. I may say that it does not mean that we advocate total abstinence; it only means that over-indulgence is going to affect the fitness of mind and body.

Then again we emphasise that part of physical training is in securing intervening periods of rest and sleep. Enthusiasm on one side is apt to forget the other, equally important, factors. Every medical officer of health will tell you that if the children do not get sufficient rest, they are tired both in body and in mind.

Seventh, a maximum of fresh air day and night. People may have this wonderful physical training in a hall with no windows open anywhere, and they would not dream of opening their windows when they get home.

Eighth, the question of hygienic clothing and cleanliness. In the big centres there are washing facilities, and people are being taught the value of changing clothes when they are exhausted and sweaty after violent exercise.

Finally, we should like to see the mind made a perfect whole through practical and artistic hobbies at the recreational centres.

We wish all these factors to be before both the regional fitness councils and the local authorities, and for these questions to be concisely co-ordinated in one scheme in every area.

Mrs. Ramsden will tell you something of the way it might be applied practically. I beg to propose this resolution.

MRS. C. A. RAMSDEN, Ph.D. : May I first of all associate myself entirely with the arguments which the proposer of this resolution has put before you. She has spoken of the fundamental principles underlying this resolution, and spoken with the authority of all her medical and public experience.

It falls to me to speak as an ordinary observant citizen of an ordinary county borough of the practical proposals which we advocate.

You have before you the factors which your Executive considers must be given an adequate place in any campaign to promote true physical fitness. Some of you may feel, as one member of my own branch said, "Everyone knows all about diet and fresh air and bringing up children these days," but, believe me, that is not true.

Very few people yet know all about these important things, and still fewer know how to incorporate their knowledge in their ordinary life. Physical fitness must follow the lead of the salesman and push its goods. I think we might well find that in this connection too, it pays to advertise.

Again some of you may say that some of these nine factors are already well provided, that the public health services and the schools deal efficiently with, for instance, numbers 3, 4 and 5 in our resolution. I agree with such people, at any rate to a certain extent, but the weakness is that these factors tend to be treated as separate subjects, not as parts of one fundamental whole, and our fear is that this tendency to separatism may result in the wider attitude to the question of national fitness being lost.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. My own local authority believes in a certain amount of advertising. We have large posters giving information about keep-fit classes. Where are they placed? Outside and inside the schools in which these classes are held. We have most attractive posters about child welfare in the child welfare clinics, and about ante-natal services in the ante-natal clinics. But placed where they are, those posters are preaching to the converted. They ought to be transposed; each of these three departments of physical fitness should be advertising not itself but the other two. And a great many useful suggestions on these lines could be made by the staffs of clinics and keep-fit classes.

I know that the nurses at child welfare clinics give a good deal of advice on diet, fresh air, clothing, not only for the babies and toddlers but for the whole family. This could without much outlay be extended into a proper service, with cookery demonstrations and talks on hygiene to occupy the many half-hours which the mothers spend waiting their turn. The same kind of helpful education could be given by instructors of physical training classes in the intervals of strenuous exercises, provided those instructors were themselves instructed in such vital complementary factors to their own work. The keep-fit class, attracting, as it does, a good many adolescents, is surely a very good centre for giving guidance in sex behaviour and for teaching the younger generation to correlate all the separate factors which make up physical fitness.

The setting up of proper recreational centres for every kind of social activity is a very much more expensive development on the same lines, and might not work so well in large towns as the present method of utilising schools and other public buildings scattered about the town.

A great deal might be done to bring together the recreational activities of churches, chapels and clubs. In my own town all organisations for juveniles are helped by a committee of the Council of Social Welfare, which helps to administer wisely grants of public mone, yand has been able to secure playing-fields, swimming faci-

lities, holiday facilities and so on for the young people's organisations. The same principle could be applied to groups of older people.

It is precisely because we know that instruction in many aspects of physical fitness is already available that this resolution is before you today ; in the hope that through our representations the more recent and the future developments may grow up not as separate movements but as co-ordinated parts, with the existing public health and education services, of a unified and systematic effort to raise the physical standard of the nation, an effort which must embrace the individual from before his birth, through a healthy and vigorous life, right to the day when, at a great age, he is laid to his rest in a hygienic and well kept cemetery.

Do you wonder that such an all-embracing resolution should be a long one?

I beg to second the resolution.

THE PRESIDENT : I have a question here, "Is it in order to ask the proposer to accept the insertion of 'or' in line 12, so that it reads 'regional fitness councils and/or upon all local authorities,' thereby making it more correct ; e.g. such a request as No. 3 re nursery schools is not in the scope of a regional fitness council. 'And/or' would make the nine points apply to the respective bodies concerned."

I would like to say I am not prepared to accept that amendment, although I think it probably would be in order. I am aware that nursery schools and welfare centres are not run by fitness councils, but I wish the fitness councils to realise that nursery schools are an important part of their ideal of training, and that when they co-operate with the local authority, they must be conscious that what the local authority is doing at the early stages is going to help them at the later stages, and at intervals they should go and visit those nursery schools. It does not matter that this particular section (3) is not under the control of both authorities. I want inter-communication and reaction between them.

MISS ANTHONY : I want to support the resolution, dealing with one phrase only, which you will find in the second paragraph. It stresses the adequate training of all instructors, and is fundamental to the satisfactory working of the whole scheme.

As we all know, there is a shortage of skilled instructors, partly due to the quick development of the movement and partly because the local education authorities have failed to create as many posts as they should for the full-time, fully paid, skilled instructor.

The Central Council for Recreative Physical Training with great foresight have arranged many short courses, and 6,500 men and women took those courses last year. Their work would be very valuable in certain directions if they were supervised by a skilled instructor ; but there are scientific sides of the work which are really dangerous for people to undertake who are not fully trained.

So I ask for your help, first, in impressing on the local education authorities that these full-time posts with full pay for fully trained people are urgently needed ; and secondly, if you would try to keep alive the idea of the National Physical Training College that was foreshadowed in 1937 and has not materialised. This latter need applies to men even more than to women, because the women have had the advantage of excellent physical training colleges for many years.

MISS CAMPBELL GRAY : I should like to stress particularly a point made by the seconder of the resolution, propaganda. Perhaps in that connection you would allow me to tell you what is being done by the National Fitness sub-committee, of which I am chairman, of a London borough. Last summer we held a conference of all the organisations which had any form of physical training or work among children and young people. We have collated all the information, and are publishing a booklet which gives particulars of all the facilities in the borough for all sorts of physical training under fully trained instructors for all ages. We give particular prominence to all clubs and voluntary organisations employing L.C.C. instructors.

I would suggest to any of you who have influence or who are members of your borough councils or town councils or county councils, that you should use that influence to see to it that the facilities already existing in your boroughs are made better known. There is extraordinary ignorance throughout the country of the facilities already existing.

THE CHAIRMAN : This note has been sent from Glasgow : "We feel sure that the Executive Committee realises the importance of the due amount of natural sunlight. That is not included in the points. Fresh air is noted, but that is not quite the same thing."

THE PRESIDENT : I am quite willing to accept this point, to add under No. 7, "A maximum of fresh air day and night and sunlight."

MRS. NEVILLE ROLFE : Neither the Fitness Council nor the local authorities could produce sunlight, and therefore it is surely inappropriate to put in sunlight?

THE PRESIDENT : We are only asking them to stress the importance. We could put in "Natural sunlight and a maximum of fresh air day and night."

MRS. GAIR : I wish to support this resolution very heartily, especially clause No. 4, that there should be provision for character training and guidance in sex behaviour. One speaker said that the keep-fit classes were a good opportunity for helping adolescents in that respect, and I should like to add that the centres for mothers and babies give an opportunity for helping mothers to teach their children from the very beginning.

THE CHAIRMAN : I will now put the resolution to the vote.

Carried nem. con.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair again.

THE CHAIRMAN in reference to the public meeting said that Mr. Harold Nicolson had been asked to speak in March, when there was no special controversy. Since then he had taken a very definite line, and a number of members had suggested that it was not fair to have only one speaker on a controversial matter. In order to get over this difficulty, she had consulted Mr. Nicolson, and it had been decided to have a second speaker Mr. Maxwell Fyfe, K.C., M.P., Recorder of Bristol, who would speak after Mr. Nicolson.

The Sutton Coldfield Women Citizens' Association ask leave to withdraw their resolution on contraceptives.

MRS BRYANT: Sutton Coldfield Women Citizens' Association have agreed to ask your permission to withdraw the resolution down in their name, because of the attempts being made to introduce the Bill which this Council has agreed to support. It is hoped to be able to re-introduce that Bill next session, so we thought this further discussion would be inopportune at this moment. We do so on the understanding that this further suggestion may be considered at a later date or if the Bill is not successful. The discussions that have taken place have been most important in forming thought and opinion on the subject. We are withdrawing our resolution to emphasise the need of co-operation in the face of a great and growing danger.

Leave **granted.**

THE CHAIRMAN adjourned the Conference until Sunday afternoon.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before the business of the afternoon begins I should like to welcome Mrs. Talbot Hill from Melbourne, Australia, and Mrs. Colton and Mrs. de Villiers from South Africa.

THE CHAIRMAN remarked that a certain number of people had objected to the Conference being held on a Sunday. This had been discussed at Bournemouth, and it was decided to hold the Conference over the week-end by a very large majority. There was a special request on behalf of the teachers, who otherwise could not come to the Conference at all. But she thought they should feel that Sunday had not been in any way violated and that they should carry on their discussions, as throughout the Conference, with every kind of friendliness and no acerbity.

II. Adoption Abroad of British Children

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: Whatever we feel about Sunday observance, I think with a quiet conscience we can now set to work to consider this resolution on children. It is a great privilege for me to have the opportunity of moving the resolution because I happen to be a member of the Executive of the National Vigilance Association. On their behalf I beg to move:—

This Conference, recognising the particular necessity for the protection of children taken out of the country, urges the British

Government to give effect to the following recommendation of the Departmental Committee on Adoption Societies and Agencies:—

"It should be an offence for an adoption society or any other body or person to arrange for a British child (a) to be taken out of the country for adoption by foreign nationals, or (b) to be taken out of the country for adoption by British subjects, without a licence from the Chief Magistrate of the metropolitan police courts or any magistrate of the metropolitan police courts appointed by Order in Council for the purpose."

The question of the adoption of British children abroad—and especially in Holland—was first brought to our notice at a conference on vigilance work held in Holland. The Dutch were then becoming extremely anxious regarding the large number of British children coming into that country. It is difficult to get accurate figures, but we do know, for example, that four adoption societies alone had arranged since the War for 140 adoptions in Holland, quite irrespective of private adoptions arranged outside their auspices.

A Departmental Committee was set up early in 1936 to enquire into the whole subject of the methods pursued by adoption societies and other agencies engaged in arranging for the adoption of children. This enquiry naturally included adoptions abroad. The report of the Committee was presented in June, 1937, and my statements are based almost wholly upon its findings.

The great majority of foreign adoptions have taken place in the United States and in Holland. The reason why so many of our children are adopted in the latter country is because the Dutch law makes no provision for adoption, and the Dutch authorities are opposed to any form of adoption as we understand it. It is not even possible, for example, for foster-parents to give an adopted child their own name without obtaining the express permission of the Queen, which is given only in exceptional cases, and is an expensive procedure.

There is in Holland, as in other countries, a wish to adopt children, and the number of children available in Holland is not sufficient to meet the demand. This accounts for the many applications which are received by British adoption societies from Holland. Some at least of the applicants are under the impression that the adoption can be legalised in England, and that the name can also be changed here. In any case, the adoption of a British child offers virtual security against the possibility that the parents may later retake possession of the child, whereas in Holland the mother may apply at any time for the child to be returned to her. Under the present Dutch immigration laws, there is nothing to prevent these children from entering the country and they can, for example, be admitted into Holland without a passport. Figures given from a very reliable source show that in 1936 there were at least 300 British children in Holland without passports.

The risks these children run do not exist merely in theory. Sad instances of the plight of British children adopted abroad can be quoted, and it must be remembered that these cases are not always effected through the agency of adoption societies. There is the case of a young man of 24 who was deported from Germany as he had become a public charge. He had been adopted there at the age of three, and knew no English. Another case is that of an illegitimate son of an English woman of superior social status. This child was placed with adopters of a similar social position in Holland, and the father agreed to pay a sum sufficient to cover the cost of the boy's education until he reached the age of sixteen. When the boy was seventeen, the payments ceased, and the adopters then brought him back to England. He knew no English and had been unaware that he was a British subject.

In view of the difficulties in the way of making sufficient enquiries and the impossibility of ensuring that the adoption will be legalised, and also the particularly unhappy consequences which may result, the Departmental Committee seriously considered whether adoption societies and other agencies should be prohibited altogether from sending children abroad for adoption in any circumstances. It decided, however, that such a prohibition would be too sweeping. It would be hard, for example, to debar British people temporarily resident abroad from adopting British children. Moreover, in cases of this kind, very full enquiries can be made in this country concerning the character and antecedents of the applicants. There are greater dangers in the case of adoptions by British people in the Dominions and Colonies, but the Committee was reluctant to close the doors to such adoptions, since they do not involve the child's upbringing in an alien community nor any possible loss of nationality. Special consideration also had to be given to adoptions by relatives, whether of British nationality or otherwise, and whether or not domiciled in the United Kingdom.

But with these exceptions it was felt that the disadvantages of adoptions abroad outweighed any possible advantages. The National Vigilance Association feels strongly that there should be total prohibition of adoption of British children by foreigners abroad, and the Departmental Committee makes the same recommendation.

The Committee further considers it essential that in cases of adoption by British subjects resident abroad, the sanction of some competent authority should be obtained. It is anomalous, for example, that a child or young person committed to the care of a local authority or other fit person under the Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, may not be sent abroad without the authority of the Secretary of State, yet there is no restriction on the freedom of an adoption society or other agency or person to arrange for a child to be taken abroad for adoption, although in some cases the consent of its parents may not have been obtained.

The Departmental Committee therefore recommended that in the case of a child being taken out of the country for adoption by British subjects, the provisions for dealing with such a case might follow the analogy of those sections of the Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, under which a young person under the age of 18 years may not go abroad for the purpose of singing, playing, performing or being exhibited for profit, without a licence. It is suggested that in adoption cases the jurisdiction should be restricted to the London courts, and should be exercised by the Chief Magistrate of the metropolitan police courts, or by any magistrate of the metropolitan police courts, appointed by Order in Council for the purpose.

In view of the extraordinarily harsh laws which are being promulgated almost monthly by various European countries against foreign nationals, it does seem a matter of urgent importance to safeguard the future of British children.

And may I interpolate here—which I am positive will be asked from the body of the hall—these questions: Why only London? Is not Scotland a kingdom? What about Wales? What about the provinces?

The answer is that there is always a central authority for the administration of the status of our nationals abroad. That central authority for all those very important parts of Great Britain is invariably the metropolitan police or Scotland Yard. That is the reason why it is suggested in this case to fall into line with the law as it stands for young people who go abroad for purposes of singing or theatrical troupes.

I feel we shall all wish to endorse the recommendation of the Departmental Committee that in no circumstances should a British child be taken out of the country for adoption by foreign nationals, and that safeguards of the type outlined should be employed in the case of children taken out of the country for adoption by British subjects.

Whatever our political views may be about free trade or protection, I do not think at this moment we have any right to countenance free trade in that finest of all our exports, the lives of our British children.

I beg to move this resolution.

MISS SUSAN MUSSON: I beg to second this resolution on behalf of the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child, of which I have the honour and great happiness to be Secretary. There is no doubt that there is a demand by people living in other countries for English children for adoption. These would-be adopters may be British subjects, but they also include many foreigners, for whom the British-born child seems to have a particular attraction. My Council strongly deprecates the transfer of British children to any foreign country for such a purpose.

May I give you two instances of proposed adoptions by foreign nationals in which I was personally consulted during the last 18 months.

A foster-mother reported that the mother of a foster-child proposed to hand over the child to a Swiss gentleman who was a temporary visitor in a hotel where she was a chamber-maid; he would take the child back with him to Switzerland.

In the second case a moral welfare worker reported that an unmarried mother had been introduced by an official of a public authority to a foreign lady who was looking for an English child to take to the Dutch East Indies. The lady was said to be of Dutch nationality, but was apparently of mixed race. So far as I could learn, her husband was not in England with her. It was understood that he was a European but not Dutch by birth. This unmarried mother's baby was a little girl aged 18 months.

I was sure in my own mind that the law could not interfere in either of these transactions, but to make assurance doubly sure, I made personal enquiries in authoritative quarters. There was nothing to be done if the mother chose to hand over the child to these people.

Many well meaning members of the general public do not appreciate the position. They are under the mistaken impression that the ultimate responsibility in such a proposed adoption rests on our English courts and the Home Office. I must remind you that foreigners may only adopt children in the English courts if they are themselves resident and domiciled in England or Wales. No passport is obligatory for a British subject under 16 years of age going abroad. What may happen at the frontiers of other countries is not within the scope of English jurisdiction.

The Home Secretary personally assured my own executive committee in June last that he would do what he could to see that there was no avoidable delay in proceeding with the preparation of a Bill which would include the points now under discussion. Let us now remind Sir Samuel Hoare of our great concern on this question and pass this resolution.

LADY EMMOTT: I wish to support this resolution on behalf of the National Children's Adoption Association. I think that this Association may be allowed to take credit for having promoted legal adoption many years ago, and we also, I think, brought with other societies the necessary pressure upon the Home Secretary in order that he should set up the Commission to which the proposer has referred. The exact wording in that Commission is just what we of the National Children's Adoption Association propose with regard to these foreign adoptions. I would like to say what is sometimes, I believe, not quite realised in this country, that the number of people wishing to adopt babies and living in this country of Great Britain, is quite enormous. We have not enough babies

to go round. I am glad that that should be so, but at the same time it shows that there is no need for our babies to be taken out of the country.

I beg to support the resolution.

MRS. JOHNSON: I would like to ask a question. What about children who go to the Irish Free State? I want to know whether there is any safeguard against their being taken out of the Free State into some foreign country where the children would have no protection?

LADY EMMOTT: The Free State is now a Dominion.

MRS. JOHNSON: I want to know the position, because I have been told on good authority that children are being taken to the Free State, an easy matter, and then from the Free State they can easily be exported to foreign countries. I want to know how the law stands with regard to that.

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: I do not think we can interfere with the laws of the Free State; but if you will pass our resolution those children will not be moved out of the United Kingdom into the Free State without proper investigation. We shall have to have proper investigation, which shows that we must pass our resolution and get it implemented.

A DELEGATE: Will the proposer please explain why it is worse for the child to be adopted by a foreigner than by a native Britisher?

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: I did not hear the question very well but I am amazed at its being asked. Surely the greatest thing we all have today is our British citizenship.

MISS SWAISLAND: I only want to ask a question about the British subject, and I am not asking it in any spirit of anti-European nationality, but we know that among British subjects we count a vast number of non-European people; and according to this I gather that it would be possible, with the safeguards indicated, for a child to be adopted by a member of the Empire not an Englishman, Scotsman or Irishman and to be taken out of the country in that way. I want to know whether that has been envisaged and whether I am right in my assumption.

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: Yes, it certainly has been envisaged, and that is the reason we want the simple authority to investigate carefully every individual case on its merits, with absolute freedom for the central authority to refuse such permission for adoption.

Resolution **carried**, one dissentient.

12. Instruction in Domestic Service

MRS. HALE: On behalf of the Farnham branch I beg to move:—

The National Council of Women welcomes the fact that the examining boards in England and Wales have included domestic science in the subjects for the examination for the School Leaving Certificate, but urges that the Board of Education be approached with a view to ensuring that in all schools for girls maintained by a public authority or receiving grants from public funds, instruction in domestic science should be a compulsory part of the curriculum.

First may I make it quite clear that I am looking at this subject entirely from the point of view of good citizenship, and not with any reference to vocational training.

The necessities of life, I think we shall all agree, are food, clothing and shelter; without these necessities we cannot embark on intellectual training and mental development. So the first aim of all education ought to be to teach a child how to live, as a foundation for the development of her latent powers and possibilities.

I should like to quote a few words from the speech of the headmistress of Cheltenham College at the speech day last July, to show that this subject is having serious attention in some of our larger schools for girls.

Speaking of changes in the school she says, "The home science house is being increased so that instead of five it may hold fifteen resident students. The girls combine work for housecraft examinations with the practical experience of learning how to run a house, cater and entertain."

She goes on to say, "I suppose we all agree that the function of a school is not solely to impart information, or to prepare girls for examination, or even to arouse only intellectual interests. Rather, its function is to develop each individual along the lines on which she is most capable of development, and in this case this involves at least a year in practical training to fit them, not only for professions but for home lives. We all know how much the welfare of a country depends on the stability of its houses so that a training in domestic subjects, first aid and home nursing, have a right to a place in the curriculum."

Wealthier parents are realising this necessity, and it is always true that he who pays the piper, calls the tune. What I want to emphasise is that if it is necessary for those who can pay, it is equally necessary for those who cannot.

A great deal has been done of late in developing various schemes to deal with this question, not only in this country. Various methods are being tried, such as using schools of domestic science as centres of instruction and working through women's organisations, or through teachers visiting the homes. I am glad to see

that it was proposed at Edinburgh to set up an International Committee to study the whole subject, which will greatly facilitate the exchange of information and experiences. At the same time there is a great deal to be done, as we shall see if we cast our eye over various medical and educational reports.

Here is a remark from the *Journal of the Institute of Public Health and Hygiene*, taken from speeches made at Blackpool this summer, "The food supply may be adequate but ruined by bad cooking." If we improve the condition of the expectant mother, we should enforce a knowledge of cookery upon the future mothers of the nation. Too little attention is paid by the medical profession to the preparation of foodstuffs.

Dame Janet Campbell had a good deal to say at Edinburgh on this subject. She said that arrangements are made in many countries to assist the housewife in purchasing, preparing and cooking food, and to teach women and girls how to provide suitable nutritious meals at low prices. Of course, the need for teachers of domestic management was emphasised, and the hope expressed that the subject might receive a better status.

Many young girls cease to live at home after leaving school, and migrate to our big towns for further study or to become wage earners. The hostel movement has done a great deal to help these girls, but I know of several students living in London in bed-sitting-rooms, looking after themselves and cooking their food on a gas ring; and in several instances the results lead to dyspepsia and a jaundiced view of life, through a complete ignorance of food values and food preparation.

The President of the Board of Education has decided to appoint a Departmental Committee to consider the question of instruction in domestic subjects, particularly cookery, in elementary schools. A very able and far-reaching committee is being set up. That all is not well we may gather from remarks made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, when speaking in the debate on June 21 last. He said that in 12 of the most rural counties of England over 50 per cent. of the boys over 11 years of age received no instruction in gardening or the girls in domestic science.

I speak from personal experience when I say I would give a great deal to have been properly trained in domestic science when young. I belong, like many others, to the Victorian age, when domestic help was plentiful and cheap, and it never struck my parents that those conditions could alter. The consequence is that in middle age, I was faced with all these difficulties, and had to manage as best I could, laboriously finding out for myself, by trial and error, the things I ought to have known years before. Think of the time wasted in making stupid mistakes!

In times of national emergency it is the practical people who come to the fore. Many of us can remember in the last war that women who could cook, or had a knowledge of nursing, were at a

premium. I am not disparaging intellectual attainments. but I, maintain that training in practical matters is an asset to everyone; I am looking at the individual as a whole, and not as a specialist in one particular line, to the detriment of all others. I want a symmetrical, balanced development of all the possibilities in the individual in order to obtain the perfect citizen.

Almost every woman, married or unmarried, will have to run a house at some time in her life, be she a professional woman, shop assistant, factory hand or whatever you like, and until recently the need for training in these matters seemed hardly to be realised. We therefore welcome all the efforts that are being made to remedy this lack of training.

Some people may think this resolution does not go far enough, but I assure you it was very carefully considered by our committee before it was finally drafted, and we came to the conclusion that to frame a resolution to apply to educational establishments over which we have no control, could be nothing but a pious hope. At the same time, it is very urgent that the principle should be accepted, and a working scheme thought out. I will therefore leave it to my seconder to elaborate.

I beg to move the resolution.

MRS. COLMAN (Farnham branch): I am very glad to be allowed to second this resolution, because I am convinced that it touches a matter of vital importance to the happiness of the nation. I venture to speak in a three-fold capacity.

Firstly, as a Victorian relic. I received very little instruction in domestic science at school or at home, and bitterly regretted my ignorance when I had to set to work to manage my own establishment. This makes me sympathise with those similarly handicapped today.

Secondly, as a medical woman. I have seen a great deal of bad health directly caused by ignorance of domestic science, especially of food values and methods of preparation. This experience is overwhelmingly supported by medical opinion drawn from observations throughout the country in hospitals and among patients in private and panel practice, and by medical officers of health and medical officers of schools.

Time forbids quotation from a memorandum submitted recently by the Food Education Society to the Departmental Committee on Domestic Subjects in Public Elementary Schools (which is at present holding an enquiry), but I hope that it will be widely read and carefully considered.

Thirdly, as a medical inspector of three large day schools for girls in London during a period of 20 years, and as a pupil in one of them for seven years, I learned what crowded time-tables mean, and how difficult it is to get in anything extra without putting an

intolerable strain on the teaching staff. Part of my duty was to advise modifications in gymnastics and home work for girls needing special consideration. This involved the study of scores of time-tables. I learned to feel the deepest sympathy for the teaching profession and the highest admiration for the manner in which their difficulties were approached and overcome. But the most devoted persons must not be asked to attempt the impossible.

I am informed by the headmistress of the school with which I am connected that though she favours the idea of domestic science for all, it would be impossible for her to carry it out with her present staff and equipment.

If domestic science is sufficiently important to be made a compulsory subject during part of the child's school life, additions to the staff and equipment will be necessary in many of the schools under consideration. Extra expense must be faced. Can we show this to be justifiable? I think we can.

Domestic science means the study of the care of the home and family; it includes a knowledge of food values, the choice of raw materials for a meal and their protection from contamination by dust and insects; and good simple cooking to render the food fit for digestion.

Our study includes also the principles of house-drainage, disposal of refuse, water supply, care of sinks, waste-pipes and chimneys; suitable lighting, warming and ventilation; personal hygiene with care of the teeth, inner and outer cleanliness, rest, exercise and self-control.

Ignorance of this subject is at the root of much waste of time, temper and money; of much strain on newly married women, who without previous instruction are struggling to find out by experience how to make comfortable homes for themselves and their families. It affects also a considerable and growing number of single women living alone, who work outside their homes, and also do their own cooking and housework. Many such persons develop troubles of the nervous and digestive systems owing to ignorance in the choice and preparation of their food; and they waste much of their precious spare time in ineffectual cleaning operations which dishearten them and produce little commensurate result.

There has been a tendency during the past 30 or 40 years to regard domestic science as a subject suitable only for non-academic persons or "duds." But we know now that it gives as much scope for the training of the mind as latin or arithmetic; it is coming into its own at the universities with the granting of diplomas in domestic science at many seats of learning. To make it compulsory for all pupils in schools will raise the subject to its proper place, and will compel the education authorities to provide adequate staff and equipment for a high standard of teaching in theory and practice.

I beg to second the resolution.

MRS. WHITE : On behalf of the Open Door Council I beg to move the following amendment :

Line 3. Delete "but urges....curriculum" and substitute "and urges that in all schools instruction in housecraft should be included in the curriculum."

The points that I want to stress are these. First, that we ought to take away all this idea of compulsion upon one sex only. Now that domestic science has been raised in status by being included in the curriculum in some schools, why should we give with one hand and take away with the other and spoil the status just given to the subject by making it compulsory upon girls alone?

I myself have always felt—I agreed with almost every word that the seconder of the resolution said—the importance of this subject and the need that it should be more generally studied and known that it is today ; but I think having it known by the young of both sexes is very necessary indeed.

Let me take two of the seconder's phrases : the knowledge of food values and the choice of foods, their preparation and cooking. Who of the household very often does the shopping on his way back from London? I find it is the man, and sometimes in his ignorance he chooses very badly.

Again, in the matter of cooking, the male members of a household should have some practical knowledge as well as the female. The disaster that falls upon the happiness of a whole household when the housewife is laid up would not occur if some male member of the household could as a matter of course take on and do the simple cookery required.

I have always thought that boys and girls should be taught three things, cookery, mending, and carpentry. It would be no bad thing if that were compulsory upon both sexes ; but I am all against having it compulsory upon girls and not upon boys. We are wrong if we now pin this subject down as being just for the housewife, for the girl, for the dud, but not necessary for the boys.

One of my sons darns as well as I do to this day, and he is a man of 30. In the matter of cookery I would be very glad to have my coffee, soup and mayonnaise sauce made by that man any day. He is earning something like £800 a year and took a First at the University in both his schools.

I hope very much that this amendment will be passed, and that we shall take away the stigma of making it compulsory for girls only.

THE CHAIRMAN : Do I understand that if the word "boys" were inserted, Mrs. White would then not object to the compulsory clause?

MRS. WHITE : No other subject is made compulsory. It takes away the status.

LADY BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH : I too am a Victorian like the proposer of the resolution, and as a Victorian I am old enough to

remember the glorious fight made by the pioneers, who were the means of making education for girls of an equal standard to that of boys. This resolution seems to make a difference, a difference for the first time since 1870. On that ground alone I should like to oppose it, or rather to amend it.

I agree very heartily with the last speaker and the proposers of the resolution, that some sort of domestic training, or housecraft training as I prefer to call it, should be taken by both sexes. But I do not like this resolution as it stands, because in addition to making it sex legislation, it also makes it class legislation. The resolution seeks to impose upon children who are being educated in schools receiving a grant, supported by public funds, a different curriculum from that which is given in schools which are not so supported.

I am the mother of six children, five of whom are attending day schools in London. I am very glad to know that in all these schools some sort of domestic or housecraft training is being placed in the curriculum ; but it is not obligatory, and I am very much afraid that if we send this resolution up as it is, we shall have the criticism levelled at us that this great body of women is a middle class body.

I should not like that to be said with reason of the National Council of Women. We should not seek to impose upon girls or boys something which we are not prepared to have in our own schools, which we can avoid teaching our own children.

If training in housecraft is not to be made compulsory for the paying schools, I object to it being made compulsory in the schools where they receive a public grant. Therefore, on the grounds not only of this being sex education but also class legislation, I beg to second the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN : We will take this amendment first.

MISS ETTY POTTER : I wish to support this amendment because there are various points in the resolution as it stands which I think want clearing up.

In the first place, in all elementary schools, it is a statutory duty of the authority to provide instruction in housecraft. Unfortunately, in many rural districts this is impossible, even where the children desire such instruction. The schools are small and badly equipped. The districts are too scattered. Therefore I feel that if we can formulate some resolution showing that we wish housecraft to be in every curriculum of every school, it may hasten the reconstruction of the schools, especially in rural districts.

With regard to secondary schools, housecraft is a compulsory subject in secondary schools inspected by the Board of Education and needlework counts as a housecraft subject. In any new schools that are coming up, no plans are passed that do not provide at any rate accommodation for instruction in other branches of housecraft such as cookery, laundry and housewifery. Therefore, you see, as

regards the State-aided schools for girls there already are these regulations, so that the second part of the resolution as it stands is really not necessary.

I feel strongly that the point that we do wish to emphasise in this great body of women is the equality between boys and girls, and that the instruction should be there for both. Also, I feel that public opinion can influence other schools. In so many privately owned schools there is no instruction in housecraft in any shape or form. I constantly have girls coming to me at 17 who have never handled a needle in their lives!

You may say that it is the parents' fault, but in these days when the education of the children has been taken from the parents to a large extent, it is only right that the schools should provide all types of education for these children.

I feel that if we can pass this resolution in its amended form, it will be a great step forward towards a chance of instruction in this vital question for every man and woman.

MISS MANSON: I am heart and soul for including the boys in the scope of this resolution.

I have had a good deal to do with trying to teach women and girls improved spending of their money through a knowledge of food values, and I have found that whatever instruction I gave to the women was negated by the men because they must have everything "as mother had it."

THE CHAIRMAN: May I ask, are you in favour of domestic science being compulsory for both sexes?

MISS MANSON: Yes, for the reason that in this country I am afraid that until we can get it compulsory, domestic science or the domestic arts will never come to their rightful place in the curriculum.

Years ago it was my duty to do research in this subject in two or three European countries, and the thing that depressed me most was to find that whenever a domestic class of any kind was started in Switzerland or Germany, there was a waiting list even in country villages, where the children walked miles to get the instruction. In England we simply spend our time begging and praying them to come in where it is not compulsory.

Lastly, the working-class woman is over-worked, and her children should learn to take care of their own clothes, especially the boys. I persuaded a headmaster to let me have a clothes' mending class every week in his boys' school. We went down to the school with our rag-bag and took off the offending garment and there and then patched it. The class was so popular that we had to be careful that the boys did not rip their clothes on purpose.

To my mind the most important thing is that we should discard the shibboleth that a *man* needs rump steak whatever the family has. Men have no knowledge of food values whatever.

It is so often objected that the curriculum is too full. In the most successful school I have ever known, which carried off the biggest proportion of university scholarships, I was told that the main reason for academic success was that the headmistress made it compulsory for every girl between 14 and 16 to cry off brain work and take a course of domestic science.

A DELEGATE: On a point of order, was not Miss Manson really speaking in favour of the second amendment?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, she was; but she was also speaking in favour of the compulsory clause.

MRS. HARTREE: I remember very well when my brother was sent to take lessons in carpentry and I was not allowed to go. He and I had done everything together, even putting up electric bells all over the house when we were about ten, and then it was not supposed that I would be interested in carpentry! That is one thing I have never forgotten. I may have been an immodest female; perhaps I was.

My sons went to a school where they all had to learn a certain amount of sewing and housecraft and bed-making. My son (now he is well over 40) when he comes to stay with me always as a matter of course makes his own bed.

I should also like to mention this question of compulsion. You cannot really see the Board of Education making it compulsory for all the boys in secondary schools to take special courses in domestic science. That is asking too much altogether. What we are asking is that in all schools the curriculum should include some education in the art of living, not only in the three R's.

MISS SMITH: I feel I have a little experience of the difficulties that have been mentioned today, because I have charge of a high school in which we have been considering this question of domestic science. It has been said that the teaching of domestic science is compulsory. That is not quite true. Domestic arts are taught. They are recognised as a subject in the curriculum, but there are schools where, practically speaking, the teaching is not practised. Perhaps a visiting teacher visits the school once in the week, or two days, or less, and in fact very few girls have that training.

I find myself in great difficulty about both the resolution and the amendment. I agree with almost everything that the seconder of the amendment said; but I do think that we ought to make the teaching compulsory. Otherwise you are simply legalising the *status quo*. For instance, in my own school it has been the practice until recently for the better girls to go on with latin and other more academic subjects, and for the slower girls to take domestic science and more needlework. That is precisely the position we do not want. Therefore unless you introduce some element of compulsion, I think you are really relegating the subject to its present position.

What we should support is the second amendment, with the addition of one word. I would suggest the addition of the word "normally"—"should at some suitable time during their school life normally be a compulsory part of the curriculum." That would mean that every girl should, generally speaking, take domestic science at some time in her school life, but also it would mean that the exceptional girl would be free to be excused that part of the work.

I suggest we reserve our votes in favour of the second amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the first amendment is carried, it becomes for the time being the substantive resolution, and voting on it does not preclude your subsequently voting on either of the other amendments.

There are a few people who feel that if the first amendment is carried, ruling out the question of compulsion, you cannot vote subsequently on the last amendment, which once more includes compulsion. I hold that you can, because the original resolution urges compulsion in the schools under a public authority but does not touch the question of compulsion in all schools. The seconder of the amendment spoke against the compulsion, because it was discriminative and did not apply to all schools. That is a different point and you can vote on it again in a new form.

I have a question, "Has the Government any power over private schools?" The power that can be exercised over schools is on the question of the school leaving certificate. There are certain compulsory subjects for this certificate, and domestic science can be made a compulsory subject; automatically it would become necessary then for all schools to include it in their curriculum. Most schools are inspected.

Amendment **carried**, 255 for, 55 against.

THE CHAIRMAN: The resolution at present reads:—

The National Council of Women welcomes the fact that the Examining Boards in England and Wales have included domestic science in the subjects for the examination for the School Leaving Certificate and urges that in all schools instruction in housecraft should be included in the curriculum.

Now, with the consent of the proposer and seconder, I propose to put the next amendment to the vote now. If that is passed the resolution will read "urges that in all schools for girls and boys."

Amendment **carried**, eight dissentients.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will now ask Mrs. Karlake to propose the third amendment:—

"Urges that in all schools for boys and girls instruction in the domestic arts—at present included under the term 'domestic science'—should at some suitable time during their school life be a compulsory part of the curriculum."

MRS. KARSLAKE: I have pleasure in moving this amendment on behalf of the National Women Citizens' Association.

I am glad to find myself in entire agreement with Mrs. White on the first part, that is that when she said "all schools" she included the boys. Therefore the things I wished to say about that need not now be repeated.

The point we wish to make is that we should use the words "domestic arts," because we do not wish the children taught too much science. Practical application of what they learn is the thing children enjoy.

I should like to insist upon the "compulsory" part being included, because I agree with the last speaker that it is only thus that you will give domestic science a better status in the school world.

We know so well, we who help to train the domestic science teachers, what a struggle we have had to get them the same position as people who think themselves superior because they have taken a degree in some other form of instruction. Therefore, I hope you will accept this amendment to the original resolution; that you will describe what you desire as the "domestic arts" and that you will make it a compulsory part of the curriculum. We not only wish to teach children how to think but also how to live.

MRS. POTTS: As the mother of five sons, I am seconding this amendment. If this had been passed some time ago, it might have strengthened my hands in more than one way. I found with my family I was able to cure them being late for breakfast by making the last comer wash up the breakfast things. Those dishes might have been washed better!

I wonder if Mrs. Hartree has succeeded better than I have in teaching her boy to make his bed? We took a country house a little time ago, and I congratulated one of my boys on having made his bed so neatly. He said, "I did not make it. I only got out of it very carefully."

MISS ETTY POTTER: I wish to make one small point. No subject is compulsory. If a headmaster chose to say, "I will not teach arithmetic in my school," he is within his rights; but there would be such an outcry that no man in his senses would suggest such a thing. Therefore I do not think we can advise that this subject should be made compulsory. It could only be compulsory if it were a compulsory subject for the school leaving certificate.

I think we should be killing our resolution by passing this amendment.

In schools inspected by the Board of Education, if no provision is made for the teaching of housecraft, they recommend it should be made. But there are thousands of schools that are not inspected, and one has no power over them except by public opinion.

I have been asked to make this point about "domestic arts." "Domestic arts" is an American expression; it is not used in the domestic science world at all. "Housecraft" is the word that is generally known for instruction in schools, as "domestic science" is felt rather to mean something a little more advanced.

MRS. HARTREE: I very much want to deprecate the idea that a subject cannot take its proper place in a curriculum without being compulsory. Also I have a message from a member of the staff of a training college for elementary teachers who was to have been here; she begged that we should not ask for any subject to be made compulsory. She said, "One of the great merits of the teaching of England is that the things are not compulsory, that there is a freedom of teaching here which is not seen anywhere else."

MRS. NEVILLE ROLFE: I want to speak in favour of the resolution with the addition of this amendment, but I want to ask a question at the same time.

I am very concerned that as we are asking for boys as well as girls, we should be quite clear that the term we are using covers the information it is essential the boys should have. One of the big omissions in home-keeping and house-making today is not only that the men do not understand the ordinary food values, but so many of them are so ignorant of house-craft. They cannot put a washer on a tap. They do not know how to manage the electric bells. The lack of such information on the part of the man makes quite an inroad into the small income of a London family. That is a point we want to safeguard, and I am afraid "domestic arts" will not cover that.

Also, I feel very strongly that this should be included in a compulsory form. Housecraft is an essential factor in home building and in maintaining the stability of family life in this country.

THE CHAIRMAN: I rule that if we wish to, we can substitute "housecraft" for "domestic arts."

MRS. WHITE: That seems like speaking twice on one matter.

LADY EMMOTT: Has Mrs. Karlake accepted "housecraft" instead of "domestic arts"?

It was moved, seconded and **carried** that the question be now put.

THE CHAIRMAN: You will vote on the "compulsory" clause of this amendment:—

The National Council of Women welcomes the fact that the Examining Boards in England and Wales have included domestic science in the subjects for the examination for the School Leaving Certificate and urges that in all schools for girls and boys instruction in housecraft—which is at present included under the term "domestic science"—should at some suitable time during their school life be a compulsory part of the curriculum.

Amendment **carried**, 145 for, 135 against.

THE CHAIRMAN: The amendment has been carried by ten votes only.

A DELEGATE: Does it not require to be passed by two-thirds of those present and voting?

THE CHAIRMAN: No, not the amendment, but the resolution will require it. I will now put the substantive resolution.

Resolution **carried**, 199 for, 89 against.

13. Child Fitness

MRS. ERNEST JAMES: On behalf of the National Free Church Women's Council I beg to move:—

Whereas the Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, whilst excluding children from the bar itself, does not exclude them from rooms, passages and gardens connected with licensed premises, it is known that children from a few weeks old to those of school age are often on the premises until and after closing time. Realising how detrimental this is to the moral and physical fitness of the children of our nation and having in mind the drive for National Fitness being made by His Majesty's Government, the National Council of Women urges that the law be altered concerning this evil and legislation be secured to exclude all children from the vicinity of licensed drinking bars after 7 p.m.

I bring these facts before you this afternoon, reminding you of the Government National Fitness drive. To this end there are the pre-natal clinics which the expectant mother can attend. And at the post-natal clinics the food and weight of the infant are considered; the mother has the best advice obtainable concerning the health of the child. This is provided so that the child may begin its school life, fit and ready.

On entering a school at five years old the child has a medical examination; on leaving school another. During its school life there has been at least one other medical examination.

All through the school years, the head teachers and class teacher, in co-operation with the school nurse, care committee visitor and most parents, are watching the physical fitness of the child. For necessitous cases, free milk, free meals, free cod liver oil, are provided. Facilities are there for country holidays and school journeys.

Large sums of money are spent annually throughout the country for the medical services provided by the educational authorities. We are glad that so much is done. But there is another side which concerns child fitness which almost escapes notice. Waiting in the evening for a tram or bus, often outside a public house, you must have noticed children about too. They are waiting for one or both parents who are in the licensed premises.

The Children and Young Persons Act of 1933 made it illegal for children to be in the bar of a public house. It is just here that the National Free Church Women's Council is particularly interested. Upon investigation—and I do hope some of you will investigate—one finds there are paved yards or gravelled spaces with garden tables and chairs, where parents are sitting with the drink they have ordered. The children run about or sit and wait.

At other houses a room at the back has been converted into some kind of parlour. "Ladies' and Children's Parlour" is sometimes the sign for the use of the family. In others "Children's Room" is plainly written up. Sometimes these rooms and gardens are well furnished; many are the reverse.

Why have these places been provided? Because the Children and Young Persons Act of 1933 made it illegal for a child to be at any time in the bar of licensed premises. Therefore to make accommodation within the law, rooms and beer gardens have been built adjacent to licensed premises. In these premises children of all ages are to be found, and often they are very sleepy, having been there for two or three hours. Sunday night is the worst night.

If the nation is out for the fitness of her young people, we should do something about this. Such surroundings are far from helpful to the child's body or its mind.

There were 74,681 licensed houses in Great Britain on January 1, 1937. Average one child per night in these places on 365 nights in the year, 74,681 x 365 amounts to millions of visits for thousands of children. A very conservative average estimate is one child per licensed house, three nights per week.

We strongly urge that children should be off the premises of which I have spoken by 7 p.m.

(The speaker showed a collection of toys placed in the children's parlours, consisting of dummy bottles of whisky and gin.)

A DELEGATE: Are those the toys provided in the public houses?

MRS. JAMES: They are not provided in all public houses; they are provided in some. The labels are identical with those on real whisky and gin bottles.

MISS M. HATCHER: On behalf of the National Free Church Women's Council I beg to second this resolution.

As you have heard, the law only prohibits children from being in bars and rooms where drink is sold. They may be, and are, regularly found in other parts of licensed houses and adjacent premises. I speak from the knowledge and experience of two years' constant visiting of licensed premises in many different towns.

Mothers with small babies in their arms, children toddling by their side, children of school age, are there every week-end for almost as many hours as public houses are open in the evening. Sips of all kinds of drink are given to children under five, as well as to those over five. (It is not only in the slum public houses

where these things are found. It is astonishing to see how many well dressed people are found in these places.) A very few minutes' thought will show the impossibility of preventing it unless indeed a special constable is on duty in every place and all the time.

Girls and boys, having grown accustomed to this life, come without parents, sit about hearing very undesirable conversation, and, terrible as I am sure it will sound to you, I have seen such boys and girls emptying the drops left in beer, wine and spirit glasses all into one, seeing which can get the most, and then drinking the mixture. And I have seen men and women adding to the children's collection from their own jugs and glasses.

Added to this is the unhealthy atmosphere. In many places tobacco smoke is so thick, no one can see from one side of the room to the other. The fumes of many kinds of alcohol, the vile odour of many over-heated bodies, the invariably close proximity of sanitary arrangements, is indescribable; it can only be realised when seen and felt.

One of the heart-breaking aspects of this evil is the youthfulness of many parents, decidedly under the influence of alcohol, dragging their small children home. Imagine this at 10, 10.30 and 11 o'clock on cold, rainy, snowy, and foggy winter nights. Are such parents in a fit condition to attend to the natural needs of children? Further are not such children robbed of rest and sleep, unfitted for school and stunted mentally, morally and physically?

Against these things there is no law. Licensees cannot in any way be held responsible for these conditions. To their credit it can be said that many of them would be glad to be free from such conditions. But the law allows it, and licensees are powerless to prevent it.

Those people who argue that it is better for children to be accommodated in parts of a building where the sale of liquor is not permitted than for them to be left in the street, surely do not know anything of the conditions to which such an argument condemns thousands of children every week-end. The only way of bringing to an end this mind-and-body-destroying evil, is to amend the Act and make it illegal for children to be on licensed premises or premises adjacent thereto after 7 p.m.

Therefore, I earnestly appeal to you to come to the rescue of these children by supporting this resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN: A question has been asked, "What would the result be if the law were amended so as to exclude children from public house premises? (If the Act is amended it does not prevent parents leaving their children outside or at home alone.)"

MISS HATCHER: There is a law in England against cruelty to children. If the children were left outside under conditions which made it cruel, the law is there to deal with that. In any case adults are always about, and such children would not be left there long.

The few children that would be left outside are not comparable to the thousands inside.

MRS. BRUCE: I am speaking on behalf of the Scottish Committees to give hearty support to this resolution. I said the other day that Scottish licensing law was very often different from English licensing law, but on this point the law is the same for both countries.

We would like to go the whole length of entirely excluding children from licensed premises, but meantime we very heartily support this effort at least to get the hours reduced when children may be taken into the precincts of public houses.

I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution.

THE CHAIRMAN: An amendment has been suggested. I am afraid it is not in order, but I will read it so that the point may be answered by the mover of the resolution. The amendment suggested is after "exclude all children" to insert "not living in the house."

MRS. BERNARD BRIANT: I have been a licensing justice for some years, and those toys are absolutely new to me.

I know of the very great danger of having children wait outside, because I have had to deal with it several times. When they are small children, we very soon get the N.S.P.C.C. inspectors on to them; the difficulty is when you have bigger children. In my district I have never heard of any children being allowed inside the premises.

But I want to point out that licensing justices have a very great deal of power. For instance, if I were to come across a place where they had these toys, we have only to go to the licensee and warn him that his license may be taken away, and he will do anything you may suggest. I hope the visiting justices will really visit. Some, I know, only go to the bars: others like myself go all over the house to see that it is in good condition, because it is laid down that you should see that the house of the licensee is in good condition as a living place.

I have been very much struck by the very good way in which the houses that I have visited—and many have been in the slums—are conducted: also that the families of licensed houses, when they grow up, are very often total abstainers.

MISS HATCHER: The Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, covers the suggested amendment when it states:—

Nothing in this section shall apply in the case of any child who is:

- (a) *a child of the license-holder; or*
- (b) *resident but not employed in the licensed premises; or*
- (c) *in the bar of licensed premises solely for the purpose of passing to or from some other part of the premises, being a part to or from which there is no other convenient means of access or egress and not being itself a bar.*

Resolution **carried**, four dissentients.

FURTHER RESOLUTIONS.

Medical Benefits for Wives of Insured Men

MRS. J. L. MACKIE: On behalf of the Hornsey branch I beg to move:—

It being the experience of all social workers that the health of mothers with whom they come in contact suffers seriously from their inability to afford the expense of a private doctor or to spare the time under present conditions to attend the out-patient department of a hospital, the National Council of Women urges the Government to introduce legislation extending the medical benefits under the National Health Insurance Acts to the wives of insured men.

When one considers the admirable national and local social services of this country, it is a matter for surprise that a large and important section of the community is left wholly unprovided for. There are clinics for the mother and her unborn child, local midwives and maternity hospitals, then welfare centres, clinics and day nurseries until the child is five years old, school medical services until 14 years (elementary), 16 years (secondary), then National Health Insurance while the person is employed or available for employment.

Do you realise what this means? It means that as soon as a woman marries and leaves her employment, she loses all benefits under the N.H.I. except the maternity grant for her first baby; thereafter the grant is paid by reason of her husband's insurance. The married woman loses entirely the services of her panel doctor.

Take the case of a working-class mother with three or four of a family. Most of you know many such families where it is a struggle to make ends meet. The birth of each child has sapped the mother's strength; she has probably returned to her household duties before she was fit; in the intervals she has had no rest, probably insufficient nourishment and consequent ill-health. What happens? There is no money to spare for doctors' bills; if she goes to the hospital there is some payment to be made, also travelling expenses to be met; there is also the necessity for finding someone to look after the children at home.

We have at present a National Fitness Campaign. The greatest enemy to national fitness is the ill-health of the mother. If she is sick she takes no interest in her home, her cookery, her children or anything else. You can give the housewives excellent lectures on cookery, but, if she has not the energy to do the work, she just sends round the corner to the cookshop. That is common sense. If the husband is out of work, if milk or bread goes up in price, the children must have the same amount, and the mother simply goes without. Then the woman gets run down and somewhere she

feels a pain. She takes no notice of it, and for the time continues her work until she is so ill that she must have a doctor, with the possible result that she may have to undergo an operation. If only she could have gone to the doctor in the first instance, the case might have been diagnosed, and the operation and the long illness prevented. You will say that it is not always so serious as the picture I have painted. That is so, but there are many minor ailments these wives and mothers suffer which, if they were dealt with in the early stages, would prevent much illness in later life.

There is no need to emphasise such cases. All social workers have experience of them. Why is it that these women have not been provided for, either under the N.H.I. or under some similar scheme? Of course, if a married woman goes out to work of any description, she is insured and has the same service as a man in similar circumstances, but the large majority of these women have enough to keep them occupied in their homes. If the husband is ill, he goes to his panel doctor. The adult son and daughter also have a panel doctor.

I am not suggesting that there shall be any payment of money, but that they shall be able to obtain medical advice and treatment on the same lines as the juveniles of 14 to 16 years of age.

May I stress at this point that the recent amendment of the N.H.I. Acts has bridged a gap and brought into medical benefit these juveniles, and this means that every member of the family except the mother is provided with medical service.

The B.M.A. has a very comprehensive scheme for a general medical service for the nation—prevention and treatment of disease, dental, pathological, pharmaceutical, midwifery and mental services—it is an ideal scheme but it will be many years before it is in operation, and, in the meantime, is it not possible for our great organisation to move in the matter and try and get some measure of consideration for these women. We are very concerned about the high rate of maternal mortality, and rightly so. Would not this be one way of helping to reduce that figure?

There is, as always with such schemes, the question of cost. Certain calculations were made by the Royal Commission on N.H.I. in 1926 as to the cost of extending the present N.H.I. scheme to the dependents of insured persons. I take it that would include the wife and family of an insured man. That service was estimated at 9½ million pounds. This is only approximate, and it is to be noted that since then the number of insured persons has increased.

I would ask you to discuss this question now, and to give your vote not to a pious resolution, but to a vital question, affecting the health of many hundreds of thousands of women, the mothers of the future workers of the country.

MISS INES BLANCH: On behalf of the Ruislip branch I have pleasure in seconding this resolution. In doing so, I should first

like to point out that a Royal Commission on the Health Services, which was held some time ago in Scotland, reported entirely in favour of extending the benefits to all dependants of insured persons, and the British Medical Association have included this in their general comprehensive scheme for the nation.

But as the proposer has pointed out, it may take many years before the various points of their plans are put into operation. We are bringing this question to your notice now, because we feel that in view of the many cases of women who have suffered through not having early medical treatment, the immediate need is very great.

It seems a strange anomaly that the wife and mother, of all people, should not be included in the Act, especially in these days of a falling birth rate, when mothers have perhaps assumed a greater importance than ever before. We know, of course, that the financial aspect has to be very carefully considered and our social services budgetted for in a way that will keep us solvent. At the same time this does seem a justifiable expense, and we have had every opportunity to realise lately how vital it is for us to have a strong and healthy race to carry on our great principles of liberty and freedom, which can only be done by encouraging mothers first to safeguard their own health.

At the beginning of this year in the Ruislip district we organised a local fitness campaign in connection with the national one, with the object of bringing to the notice of the public the many health services at their disposal. As one result we realised the great necessity for being thoroughly practical in all these matters. Obviously, the practical thing to do in the first instance, is to see that the wife of every insured man is provided with an adequate system of free medical treatment. To be a wife and mother, to look after the house, bring up children and make both ends meet, can certainly be regarded as a full time job, and therefore a woman who is doing this valuable work should have the same privileges through her husband as a woman who is actually working in a job.

In some cases of women requiring medical treatment N.C.W. branches have provided the money for fares to the hospital and helped to look after the children at home. This should not be necessary.

I ask you to endorse this resolution this afternoon in such a way that the authorities will realise the great necessity for putting it into practice immediately.

DR. SHARP: My object in speaking is to put you wise as to the position of the British Medical Association in this matter, because the Association has devoted a very great deal of attention to this point within the last few years.

The first speaker airily dismissed the schemes of the Association as something that might be all right but would take many years to implement. I should like to tell you, ladies, that at the time of our conference in Plymouth in July, the Association had already

no less than 60 schemes of their public medical service in actual working order in different large towns in the country. The vast majority were reported as being entirely successful.

The idea of the Association is that not only the wives but the children of insured people (and not only of insured people but of many other members of the community) are in desperate need of some form of contract medical service. The B.M.A. scheme is a family one, the idea being that people should contribute so much per week as families, the amount being higher for the first members and getting less and less for many more.

The point to my mind of this resolution is, first, that it attempts to deal with the married woman alone, the children being equally or more important. It disregards entirely the possibility of family schemes. Moreover, it tries to link the matter up with the present N.H.I. We have no particular objection to that, but it is not essential.

The doctors desire that the Government should take the matter in hand for two reasons. First, when they do, they will contribute to the expense; and, second, if such a scheme is compulsory, it obviously works much better. To make any contract scheme work, you need to have the healthy people as well as the sick people. But we have realised for some time that monetary reasons are definitely keeping the matter back, so the B.M.A. decided instead of waiting any longer for the Government, they would try and get going themselves.

I happened to be chairman of our Association branch in Bradford at the time the idea originated, and I have been associated with trying to launch a scheme in Bradford. It is an exceedingly complicated and difficult thing to do. We are giving a great deal of time to it, and I should like this meeting to realise our position in the matter, and to work *with* us and not against us.

MRS. MCWILLIAM (Hornsey): I wish to give my wholehearted support to what was said by the proposer and seconder of this resolution. As you have heard, the British Medical Association Report, 1938, goes even further. It advocates a national scheme for all whose incomes are under £250 a year, i.e. for 80 per cent. of the people of this land. The Scottish Department of Health also advocates the same. It had a Health Conference at the Glasgow Exhibition, and urged the same—a general medical service for the nation.

The estimated cost would be £2,000,000, but it would be a small matter compared with a healthier nation, happier homes and a probable rise in the birth rate. As against that cost there would be more working days, that is fewer days off for sickness and fewer hospital cases, and fewer chronic infirmity cases.

LADY NUNBURNHOLME: Every one of us here is in favour of extending National Health Insurance and elevating the present low condition of national health. But what I want to point out to you

is that in your resolution, you are not asking for that, but specifically state the N.H.I. Act should be in operation for these cases.

The Insurance Act is not charity. It is an actuarial scheme. The workers contribute, the employers contribute, the State contributes. In any insurance scheme you insure individual persons, and these people are the workers of the country.

There are other dependants of working men in employment, and I think for a great body like our own to ask for something which is actuarially unsound, which would upset the whole insurance scheme of the country and only benefit a single class of the community is not worthy of us.

A DELEGATE: Is the proposer's idea to make it on a contributory basis; the seconder mentioned the word "free"?

MRS. MACKIE: I certainly think that there should be a contribution; I do not want to upset the actuarial schemes of the N.H.I. The service should not be on the same contribution as is now made by the man.

May I say in answer to Dr. Sharp, that I have every wish to see the B.M.A. scheme put into operation; it is a far better scheme than anything which our resolution proposes. But if we can only get these women into an insurance scheme now, it will help towards the larger scheme.

Resolution **lost**, 56 for, 91 against.

Votes of Thanks

Chairman: I wish to thank the Guiders, who acted as stewards and were always on the alert to carry up messages to the platform. Also I would like to thank the tellers, members of the Birmingham branch whom we have kept so busy this afternoon.

Then I would like to thank the Home Counties Regional Committee for undertaking the registration, and the London branch for so kindly arranging hospitality and giving advice in regard to hotel accommodation; also I would like to thank the London branch for taking charge of the literature stall.

May I thank Mrs. Franklin and Mrs. Karlake for being so kind as to give two luncheon parties, which have made the whole difference to our welcome in London, and Mrs. Raine for presiding at the Imaginary Stall.

MRS. JOHNSON: I wish to call upon Mrs. Barnes to propose a vote of thanks to our President.

MRS. BARNES: Ladies, you will understand that I address myself to you rather than to the President, as she is not very likely to approve of what I have to say! But we are so accustomed this afternoon to family revelations, that I think you will excuse me for sounding in this N.C. W. family a most pressing note today, and that is to thank the President herself for all that she has been to us and for all that she has done for us during the past year.

Now you may well ask why it has fallen to me, I won't say to rush in, but to step in diffidently where my betters have refrained from treading. I think I am not quite such a fool as it may appear. The reason that I am here is that the Officers of the Council wished to bring in somebody who is, for the time being at any rate, a provincial. The Officers have particular ways of working with, and thanking the President, of getting her help and of giving her help, so it remains for those in the provinces to show their gratitude. Yesterday Lady Ruth allowed a definition of "provincial"—not London but those places outside it, and even the sister kingdom of Scotland. She demurred, of course, as every good Scotswoman must, at that definition, but I think she accepted it none the less, and it serves my purpose this afternoon very well.

Today we thank our President in London, from London, but also from those places outside it and from the sister kingdom of Scotland. It is not only at London meetings that we have seen her at work. I at least can speak for one branch to which she gave great interest and pleasure during her year of office; but perhaps more than all we have seen her at work in her own transcendent city of Edinburgh. I am sure the memory of the last great international gathering there, the contacts and the friendships that some of us were able to make, will go with her as she goes back home to her new, most pressing work in Scotland.

Nor do we forget the other beneficent work, for which Lady Ruth's training has fitted her, nor the experience and the trained mind, which has given her her place on great national bodies such as the Inter-Departmental Committee on Abortion.

One advantage—and sometimes a doubtful advantage, I think—of a regular change of President is that though time does not seem to wither them, neither does custom stale their infinite variety. I think myself that Lady Ruth had in some ways a somewhat difficult task in following Mrs. Hartree, but she too has been—she will forgive my plain speech—very good-tempered with us all. There has been a buoyancy about her not only in her conduct of business, but I think you will agree, in her attitude of mind, which has endeared her to us.

I fancy that Lady Ruth has borne no grudges and has given fair play all round. She told us herself on Friday that she had learnt a lot from her year as President. We somehow tend to believe that she has, and we hope most sincerely that it will stand her in good stead in whatever good work she sets her hand, just as her previous experience and her readiness to share it and to use it have stood the Council in such good stead during the past year. That she has had a twinkle in her eye at times, and at least appeared to enjoy what she has been doing has, I think, helped very much, and it has not been the least of her gifts to us.

Her year of office has been a year of small happiness for this nation or for the world, and I suppose the last few weeks of it have been fraught with unparalleled anxiety.

Lady Ruth must know this better than most of us. She must know the responsibility of guiding at such a time such a big body of women as our Council. Perhaps she is not altogether sorry to slip that burden off, and I am sure she must be very glad that she is going to slip it on to such shoulders as those of Mrs. Johnson.

We have been called a body of experts, and I suppose that with certain exceptions that is true. It is not altogether a pleasant title, but you will forgive me this, I wish we could learn to become experts in the art of peace building.

Lady Ruth has said she has learnt much. If we are ready to learn in that great school, then perhaps we shall in some sense put on her mantle, the mantle of learning, an old attitude of quiet in a new world of difficulty; a new school but the same readiness to learn.

Lady Ruth has given us something, as I said, that is buoyant; that is, I think, the elasticity of youth, a youth of a heart which will never grow old. We thank her for it very deeply, very warmly and very sincerely, and we give her our very best wishes for her work to come in thanking her for all she has done for us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Barnes, I must thank you very briefly for all you have said about me. I do not feel I really deserve it, but I am not only very grateful to you but very relieved. When you said you were going to say a lot of things I should not like, I thought I was going to be found out at last, but I think I have been let down most kindly.

I was told by one of the representatives in Edinburgh, a Frenchwoman, that I had a twinkle in my eye whenever I said something which I knew that the Conference would not like. I realise that Mrs. Barnes is probably thinking something of the same kind when she refers to my twinkle and what she called my "boyishness."

I must again say how much I have been interested, how much I have learnt during this year of office; how many new contacts I have made, how many new friends; how many different points of view you have put before me. I feel it has been a real education, a real pleasure and a real inspiration, one that I shall never forget, that will colour my life and help me in any future work I may be called upon to do. I thank you all again very sincerely.

PUBLIC MEETING

Chairman : THE PRESIDENT

THE CHAIRMAN : We are honoured tonight, at the close of our Annual Conference, by having two very distinguished speakers to address us on a subject of vital importance, that of foreign affairs.

It was the original intention to ask Mr. Harold Nicolson. In March he very kindly consented to come. Since then foreign affairs have been the subject of deep thought and of division of opinion. It was felt that we, who are a non-party organisation, would like to hear two points of view as to the past ; but I do believe that as to the future, there will be no two points of view, but one united front.

Mr. Nicolson is well known to all of you. I expect you have all listened to his extraordinarily brilliant broadcasts. We look forward with very deep interest to hearing what he has to tell us on some aspects of foreign affairs. What he has to say, and what Mr. Maxwell Fyfe will have to say afterwards, will help us to clear our minds, to look into the future and to see what our duty is from now on.

THE HON. HAROLD NICOLSON, C.M.G., M.P. : I am very glad indeed that this meeting has been adapted to topical requirements in the sense that I do not have to speak alone. I should be very much alarmed if I had to give my opinions at this moment to any meeting of whatever nature without being contradicted by someone else, and I am very glad that my friend, Mr. Maxwell Fyfe, is here tonight in order that he may give you a contrary point of view.

But, on the other hand, even if I had been speaking quite alone tonight, I should not, I think, have raised any very controversial subjects. I did not wish to talk too much about the actual situation as it stands today. I only hoped to be able to give you some estimate, some comparisons, some historical analogies for what might be called the foundations of British policy. They may have applications. They may entail certain innuendoes, I suppose, but actually in themselves they are uncontroversial and permanent. And they are these.

Whatever party we belong to, whatever class we belong to, whatever may be our prejudices or our sympathies, the one question we must ask ourselves is this, What are the bases, the actual foundations of British policy?

Well, I think you would find it rather difficult to get any foreigner to agree. There was a famous interview at Sans Souci between Frederick the Great and certain foreign visitors, and they said to him, "But tell us, Your Majesty, what is the British system?" He replied, "The English have no system."

That to a certain extent is true. But beyond that extent it is not true. We have a system. We do not know it ; we do not realise it ; and until this month that system was permanently carried out with

momentary lapses, with momentary attempts to adopt other systems, but on the whole quite permanently for 250 years, from the moment, that is, when we became a great power.

And it was this. It was based, as all foreign policy should be based, upon geography. It was based upon the fact that this tiny little island was situated a few miles from the Continent of Europe, and was dependent for its magnitude, its power and even its sustenance, upon its communications with overseas.

The vital organs of other countries, their heart, their liver, their lungs, are contained within the organisms of those countries themselves. We are a most extraordinary phenomenon, because our vital organs, our heart, liver, lungs, are dispersed throughout the world and are connected by thin umbilical cords to the life centre of our whole existence, London. This is the result. That although other countries, such as Germany and France, retain within their own organism the actual vital elements of their existence, the vital elements of *our* existence are dispersed in a most vulnerable manner throughout the world.

Put it this way. You can defeat France, you can conquer Germany, but they remain France, they remain Germany. If you ever conquered this country, it would cease to be the British Empire. We have got to understand that. We have to realise that our power, although immense, is qualified by our vulnerability, which is also immense.

Therefore we have to adopt certain axioms of British policy, which have been followed from the days of Wolsey onwards by the architects of our magnitude and renown. The absolute axiom, the absolute basis of British power is this. Not, as some people think and as has often been averred, that we can never allow any single Power to dominate the Low Countries, to occupy Belgium, France, Holland. That is not true. We have allowed that ; for centuries we allowed Spain and Austria to dominate Belgium and the Low Countries. But, we can never allow, without danger to our existence any single Power or group of Powers in Europe to achieve such dominance over the Continent as will enable them to threaten our sea communications.

In the old days we thought that depended upon a fleet. Today we realise that it depends upon the amount of pressure that any given Power in Europe can exercise upon London, the nerve centre of the Empire. We therefore realise that, although the fleet is and remains of almost overwhelming importance, London, the nerve centre, is susceptible to aerial bombardment.

We must reconsider the whole basis of British policy, because, from having been the most invulnerable country in the world, we have now become one of the most assailable, and our nerves are not attuned, as continental nerves are attuned, to that great assailability. The French, the Germans, the Belgians, the Italians, have for generations been prepared for the possibility of invasion.

What does invasion mean? It does not mean so much the actual emergence or appearance of foreign troops upon your own territory. It means the fact that your own nerve power can be assailed by physical force from outside. We have always been immune to that. We have always felt that a war meant going down to Southampton and waving flags, and then going back and knitting socks. We have always felt that a war meant our gallant lads overseas. This is the first time we have realised that war means fear. When we realised that, we became afraid. We did not show courage a fortnight ago. We showed fear.

The French, the Italians, the Germans, had been used to that form of intimidation. They were braver than we were. I think we have got to pull ourselves together, especially the women of England, who must face the fact that three weeks ago they were *afraid*.

They may have been rightly afraid; but we have to look back upon our history and think of the women of England in previous ordeals, and think how they were so brave, and how they knitted so many socks, and how they were not at all afraid. Why? Because they were not in danger. Now they are.

If the women of England are going to prove themselves of any value whatsoever, they have not got to show how generous, how sensible, how reasonable, how pacifist they are; they have to show whether they are brave or not, because this time the thing has come to their homes.

I know this is not a very popular thing to say, but it is what I feel very deeply. I shall be called a warmonger for saying these things. Good gracious, if there is one thing on this earth that I dread it is war! But I believe from the depths of my being that although the manhood of this country is just as vigorous, as vigilant and as determined and as resolute as it ever was, the women are afraid.

But let me, in the few minutes I have to talk, get away from these rather provocative sayings and back to the whole problem that confronts us. I think the wisdom of the British public is enormous, but it is terribly slow; that is one of our great disadvantages. But I think the great wisdom of the British public is beginning to come round and to realise that this recent crisis is one which has shown up the appalling conflict and predicament in which we stand.

There is a tendency among a lot of people to imagine, or rather to evade unpleasant thoughts by imagining, that the recent crisis has been concerned with a little Central European state called Czechoslovakia. The extreme escapists believe that the issue was really whether three million Germans should join the rest of the Germans. I do not suppose anybody in this hall really imagines that! They know perfectly well that the issue was not at all whether the Sudeten Germans should join the Germans. The issue was this, Shall this Czechoslovakia, the only really democratic country in the East of Europe, be destroyed by the Nazis?

Again, I imagine that most people in this room like myself would have said, "Well, the time has come that the frontiers of Czechoslovakia should be altered and the German area incorporated in Germany."

I think that we should have felt that that was a right process of revision; and I think that not one man or woman in this room would have considered for a second provoking a war to prevent such a solution. It was right up to a point, but it should have been carried out with certain guarantees. There should have been guarantees about the German Jews in that area and the German Socialists in that area.

I accept, like most people in this room, that if we could have carried that out in a peaceable manner, while keeping their safety and independence secure, it would have been a good thing. I should have said, "It is 20 years after the Treaty of Versailles and the Treaty of St. Germain. Let us do it." But we, the reasonable people, would have stopped there. We would have said, "Yes, do that, but do not destroy the independence of what remains. Do not go too far. Do not seize areas where you have no right to be. Do not destroy the economic organism of this great State because you are doing it for revenge, you are doing it in order to destroy the independence of the only really democratic country in Eastern Europe." I think, if we mean anything as a democracy—and we in Europe are the protagonists and champions of democracy—we ought to have taken a stand on that.

We did take a stand in the person of Mr. Chamberlain. I do not wish to diminish, or in any way to criticise his enterprise, his courage and his loneliness. But, in the person of our Prime Minister, the head of our State, acting in his own capacity, without consultation with the House of Commons at all, with very little consultation with the Cabinet, went out and gave away the Sudeten areas—that was all right; the independence of Czechoslovakia—that may have been necessary; but, he gave away the great principle that the country that was dominant in Europe was not ourselves but Germany. Above all what Hitler wanted to show in the most demonstrative way was that when it came to decisions in European matters, what counted was Berlin and not Downing Street.

That means that the small Powers of Europe, who looked to us with almost pathetic appeal for protection against this rising menace, know that they can look to us no longer. It means that Germany acquires complete economic domination over the Danubian basin, and thereby such complete control of the necessary economic resources that she becomes invincible in war and can defy the strength that we possess, namely, the British fleet. Moreover, it means that at a certain moment the issue between democratic and totalitarian states was raised in an extraordinarily intense and dramatic form; it means that at a certain moment we, Great Britain, in the person of our Prime Minister, had behind us the whole force

of this country and the Empire, an opinion more united than it will ever be again in this country. It means that at a certain moment the Prime Minister had in his hands terror on the part of Italy—absolute terror, because they thought we meant it—and on the part of all the smaller Powers an anxious hope that we were going to win. It means that at a certain moment the Prime Minister of this country knew that if he threatened force, he would have with him the whole force of Russia. It might not have been as great as we imagined, but it was imponderable and immense. And it meant, above all, that at a certain moment the Prime Minister of this country, having personified democracy in his own person, had with him the vast, imponderable and overwhelming might of the opinion of the American people.

And he went to Munich—I am putting this in an extreme way because Mr. Maxwell Fyfe will contradict me—he went to Munich, and he gave away the co-operation of Russia, because he treated her with almost intolerable effrontery. He gave away the hope and confidence of all the small countries, because he capitulated to force at the expense of one of the best small countries in the world.

He exposed this public of ours, this splendid, generous public, to a moment of great emotional relief, followed by a moment of great spiritual shame. And he antagonised and alienated for ever, I fear, the whole generous soul of the United States. Yes. Read the American papers: do not read *The Times* only.

In conclusion, I think Mr. Chamberlain was possibly ill-advised in believing that he could risk the power and fortitude of this country, the strategic position of this Empire, upon the personal charm of Herr Hitler. I would never say a word against Mr. Chamberlain. I think he is one of the most sincere men who has ever been, and I would like to pay this tribute to him. When he came back from Munich he said it was peace in our time. Some of us thought that was not true and regretted that a man like that should have said a thing like that. And when he got up in the House the other day and said, "When I said that, I was speaking under the stress of emotion," I cheered. I felt, there is a great man, a man who can admit he is wrong. And whatever happens, we must get behind him.

Now we must all get together in order to try and retrieve this appalling situation without allowing ourselves for a moment to imagine that it is not an appalling situation. Now we must not go back on who was right or who was wrong, but think only that this is our country, that it is in great danger, that we have to make great sacrifices, and that if the present Government under a very remarkable leadership can really achieve harmony and peace, every man and woman must devote, not only ordinary sympathies and votes exercised in an ordinary situation, but all their energies of mind and soul in order to give that Government every chance that it deserves.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Nicolson has moved us in a most astonishing manner, and has made us think a great deal. Now Mr. Maxwell Fyfe, a most distinguished K.C. with a great legal brain, will give us another point of view.

MR. MAXWELL FYFE: Lady Ruth, as I listened to the honeyed words of Mr. Nicolson, I could not help wondering if the real divergence between us was in our view of foreign affairs. To Mr. Nicolson, foreign affairs would seem to have the difficulty and the ease of a transcendent game of chess on a board where the men have the added interest of animation and even the phantasy of free will, and where the forces are divided conveniently and sharply into black and white.

To me foreign affairs conjures up a humanity divided into nationalities but of as many moral as physical colours, and so united in one desire that they say, "For God's sake, leave us in peace and give us a good standard of comfort."

Mr. Nicolson has on his side the achievements of the diplomatic conferences of history. He can boast proudly of 40 years of peace given after 23 years of war at the Congress of Vienna. But although the attitude of mind which I represent cannot point to a lineage of urbane conferences after war, we can at any rate point to one successful conference which came before and which prevented a war.

But that is what is being attacked, and I have tried to examine in the same three stages as Mr. Nicolson suggests, the points which he puts forward as being the bases of criticism of the action of the Prime Minister during the last few months.

On the first point, the question of Czechoslovakia itself, I want again to point out the fundamental divergence. I do not believe that people are any more cowardly because they recognise the horrors of war. We should be children if we did not face the fact that the next war will make the world safe for everything except humanity, that the horrors which will come in that war will leave—as a novelist put it the other day—the Government after the war a Government of King Typhus with a parliament of corpse-fed rats.

We recognise that, but it does not make us more afraid. It makes us more clamant, more demanding, that the cause in which we are called upon to undergo these miseries is one which we are perfectly certain is right, just and moral, demanding all the sacrifices that are asked.

That is my point of view. I ask you to examine with me the stages of this controversy, and ask yourselves fairly, bearing in mind every word that Mr. Nicolson has said, at what stage do you think it was right to call for these sacrifices and expose *everyone*, as Mr. Nicolson has pointed out, to the certainty of these dangers?

We are at one that it was not right to call for that sacrifice with regard to the cession of the Sudetenland. Remember that that disposes of the argument that we betrayed Czechoslovakia. Mr.

Nicolson is far too well versed in the position of European affairs to put that forward for an instant. If you take it from any point of view, we recognise, after all that was said by political parties in this country, by foreign opinion, by the appeals that were made to the League of Nations, that the Sudeten Deutsch were placed in a position which exposed them to great hardships and discrimination in their land, and raised a problem which required urgent attention ; and not only required that attention in the last few months, but has demanded that attention—and demanded it in vain—for the last 19 years.

We have seen the letter in which Lord Runciman, after a full examination of the position, after seeing the leaders of both sides and making every possible effort to bring the two sides together, declared that it was impossible. He showed what mistakes the Czech Government had made, and stated that it was necessary that cession should take place, and take place at once. With these facts, found by someone who had been studying the problem on the ground, there were no merits left for the case that cession should not be granted.

There is no responsibility on our part, as we know ; the responsibility that we had undertaken was under the Covenant of the League of Nations. If you examine the procedure of the League of Nations, does anyone here imagine that with Poland on the Council of the League and with Col. Beck directing the policy of Poland, that it would have been possible for an instant to bring the machinery of the League into play and have Germany declared an aggressor, and common action under the League produced on the crisis of the Sudetenland? Of course it would have been impossible, and therefore no one can say (Mr. Nicolson has not suggested it), that there has been here any question of betrayal of Czechoslovakia at this time. We know, and everyone knows, that it would have been impossible to reach Czechoslovakia with assistance in time to prevent the country being destroyed.

At the very moment, in August and September, a Russian statesman was saying at Geneva, "I must keep on the right side of Poland, and then perhaps if the occasion does arise, there would be a chance of Russian troops being allowed to pass through Poland." On these slender foundations was being based the only hope of assistance from Russia.

So, from every point of view, merits, responsibility and expediency, no assistance could have been given in time to save Czechoslovakia today.

But I do not base my view on that. I base it on this, my moral opinion, that I would not have thought it right to ask any man, woman or child—all of whom are in the front line today in Britain—to risk their lives in order to keep the Sudeten Germans subject to the Czechs ; and on that general point I gather that Mr. Nicolson and I are in agreement.

But then we proceed and Mr. Nicolson says, "But what about the destruction of Czechoslovakia?" I do not think he went further than that with regard to the maintenance of the Czechoslovakian State.

We must consider the position. Mr. Nicolson has said time and again that he would have accepted—although, I admit, with great bitterness of heart—the Anglo-French plan for the cession of the Sudeten regions. That plan had four main features. It allowed for a cession of the territories where the Germans were over 50 per cent., the boundaries to be defined by an International Commission ; a right to return ; an exchange of populations who did not desire to stay in their territories ; and a guarantee.

Now what I want everyone here to put to themselves is, How can anyone who would agree to these proposals justify the decision to go to war and to ask people to die for the difference between these proposals and the matters agreed at Munich? It was quite true that Godesberg intervened, and there Herr Hitler put forward proposals which, while keeping the 50 per cent. basis, did away with a great deal of the work that was to be left to the International Commission—the guarantee, the right to opt, the right of the populations to choose where they should be, and inserted a term that all foodstuffs, raw materials and goods were to be left and not to be withdrawn by the Czech Government.

Herr Hitler went further. He said, "These are unalterable terms. Unless they are given within six days, I march. I attack."

I draw a fundamental distinction between that position and either the Anglo-French plan or what was agreed at Munich. I say that if, when an offer is put forward, when a matter for discussion is laid down between countries, someone says, "I will not discuss. I insist. I attack if every word and every comma that I have written is not observed," then, I say, that somebody who takes that attitude and that line is threatening civilisation, is undermining the basis of any hope of peace in the world. That I was ready to resist. I was ready to do more, to ask other people to resist ; and the Government was ready, as I am glad to state tonight.

But once you have come beyond that, once at Munich it is admitted that it is a matter of discussion, that you are ready to discuss the method and change your details—can you see Mr. Nicolson's point of view, which would not ask for war on the question of cession and yet would ask that lives should be spent and untold misery be undergone as to the method of cession, when the principle of discussion is once admitted by the parties who are there?

Czechoslovakia stands apparently in the mind of my friend on the Anglo-French terms which I have outlined to you ; it does not stand on the Munich terms, which restored the guarantee, restored the right of opting of the population, took away the ban on the Czechs withdrawing their goods and their food. And we know that the

time was arranged so that the districts which would be occupied in the first days were those which were, not 50 per cent. but 100 per cent. German, where there was no question what the parties desired.

That is the second point, and I ask you to decide, where is this magic divination which sees Czechoslovakia maintained by the Anglo-French plan and sees it destroyed by the Munich plan with these differences I have indicated?

Now I come to what I think Mr. Nicolson will agree is the third and most important point; that is the real matter, as he has always stated in the House of Commons and here, which moved him and stirred him in this affair, namely, whether this country or Germany was to be dominant in Europe.

Again, I disagree fundamentally with that point of view. I may or may not be popular in this matter, but I am not concerned today with dominance in Europe or in world affairs. I am here and my political life is concerned with trying to secure co-operation in world affairs. My friend wrapped it up in eloquent terms by saying in the House of Commons, "Should we, who stand for the rule of law, be dominant, or Germany?" But it is always easy to say we stand for the rule of law, especially if you have made the law yourself, if your law rests on the Versailles Treaty or the other Treaty of St. Germain, which was dictated by us, but was subject to Article XIX of the Covenant of the League of Nations, by which adequate and proper revision should have taken place over the arches of these years that have gone. It is easy to say we are standing on the rule of law, when every postulate of the law has been decided by ourselves and our allies.

It is easy to bring up the mistakes, the folly and the foolish words of men. There is no politician who can look back on his political life and not recognise mistakes, many and glaring, from a very early stage in his career. If there is, God help him! But I do say this, that today for the first time Germany has seen that Great Britain and France are ready to negotiate and to consider fairly, freely and frankly, the grievance which she and those of the German race have suffered in the past.

But far more than that, they have realised through Mr. Chamberlain's visit that we in this country are vitally interested in the securing of righteous conditions, and we, and the world, and the rulers of Germany have seen that in Germany just as in every other country there is a great body of opinion which Mr. Chamberlain's visit called into expression, clamant in the cause of peace.

It is often easier and almost more effective to make the flesh creep by tales of impending horror than to summon people to a road of mediocre effort and great trust. But I say this, that I am just as certain as Mr. Nicolson is that we have not an easy road to travel. In the world today you have to have armed strength if you wish to have diplomatic strength. We know we must be in a position

to defend our Empire, to defend the narrow seas, to defend the Low Countries and France, as we have always been. And I do not shrink from the fact that, having given this guarantee to Czechoslovakia, we must be in a position to see that it has effect, that we shall never again be in the position of not being able to make an effective stroke and give effective support. We have undertaken that responsibility. It was one of the terms by which we got peace, and we must honour that term today, difficult though it is. For all these reasons we must have strength, and everyone in the world recognises the necessity of our strength in arms today.

But that is not enough. We are not again going to secure and maintain peace merely by talking of it. We have to be active and forthright in our search for peace. We have on the one hand to show our strength to stand for what is right.

But I say that if I were to leave to my children today only the thought of a respite, only the feeling that war had been postponed for a few months or a year or two, then I should indeed be miserable. But I feel that if, on the other hand, we can examine the differences between the nations of the world; if we can look at these problems fairly and squarely, not when we are forced, but now when the hour of clear vision has come to us, then there will be some hope, not, as we have heard, of a mute neutrality, standing to your arms and snarling distrustfully at the nations of the world with forms of government with which you disagree, but of the chance of convincing them that in this country there is a new strength, a new vision, with at the same time no diminution of our ordinary life of industrial and commercial endeavour, and, please God, no diminution of that kindness of English men and women, which beyond all Empires and military glory, has been our greatest contribution to the world.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have listened to two speeches, fairly and clearly setting out two views. We have our own minds to make up. We realise the differences and the agreements between the two speakers.

Now anyone can ask questions of either of them.

QUESTION: How are we to be there in time next time for this defenceless Czechoslovakia, since it was impossible we should be there when it was well fortified and with a million army?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE: It may be impossible to be there before great damage is done. But it will be possible to put our forces—and the forces of the other guarantor Powers must be in the same condition—in such a condition as to make it so dangerous, so terrible for the aggressor to carry out his aggression that he will refrain and refuse to allow the balloon to go up for that purpose.

QUESTION: I understood Mr. Nicolson to say that Mr. Chamberlain gave way at Munich to practically all Herr Hitler's demands. By implication, I gather Mr. Nicolson considered that Mr. Chamberlain should have stood firm. I ask how could Mr.

Chamberlain stand firm at Munich if the disparity of arms between Great Britain and Germany was as great as we know it is ; have not other parties been to blame for this disparity in the past?

MR. NICOLSON : I think the answer to that question is that it is one on which none of us can possibly for one minute presume to give any material for a definite decision, because the only possible answer is that none but those who were in the Cabinet know the state of our defence.

But I think there is this comment in answer, and it is a very definite comment, that if indeed the Prime Minister were bluffing, he had no right to bluff with the honour of this country.

QUESTION : Is there any evidence that Lord Runciman would have recommended cession before the Berchtesgaden interview? His report, as published in the White Paper, is dated after the Anglo-French plan had been agreed and published. Could he at that time have recommended anything else?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : That, of course, is a question whose answer depends on your view of Lord Runciman. I have known him for many years, and I am certain that he is the last man on this earth to have said that cession was the only possible solution for the difficulty if he did not honestly believe it.

QUESTION : What about impending revolution in Germany?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : If I were on a different kind of stage, I should say, "What about it?" because it seems rather a difficult question to begin a dissertation on.

I only want to say this, that I take a similar view of bluff to Mr. Nicolson from a slightly different angle. I do not think—this is where I disagree with Mr. Duff Cooper and a number of Mr. Nicolson's co-thinkers—you ought to threaten war unless you are prepared to go to war. I think that is the most disreputable form of bluff. Therefore I think that to threaten war on the basis of revolution in Germany, when one of the first things that war does is to close the ranks in a country immediately, would be absolute folly. It is a matter that you should not take into account.

QUESTION : What is the difference between Godesberg and Munich now? Is not Hitler the dictator of the International Commission?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : The answer to the second question is that it is rather a curious attitude of mind that places Hitler as the dictator of the International Commission, on which there is a majority of the democratic Powers, England, France and Czechoslovakia.

With regard to the first point, I would like to deal with that taking the items one by one. The 50 per cent. remained. The second point, one to which I personally attach a great deal of importance, was the lifting of the ban on removing material. Actually, apart from foodstuffs, goods and the like, the Germans have handed over to the Czechs guns and military material as well.

Thirdly, we have still got the right to opt ; that is, that those who do not desire to remain in the German State can go back in six months. They are being sent back at the moment into those territories so as not to disturb conditions in Czechoslovakia, but they can move in the six months when the Czechoslovakian State has been prepared.

Lastly, there is the question of the guarantee. If any questioner thinks that it is no good trusting anything that Germans or Italians do, then he or she is entitled to the sneering and laughing which accompanied the questions, because if that is their attitude of mind, then the sole hope for the world is merely in the chance, is the war going to come in a short time, or can it be staved off.

If you still think that if you meet people fairly and squarely, you can get co-operation, then there is the hope of two matters. When we were younger and worked for the League of Nations, arbitration was one of the things that we used to stress as a hope in international affairs. You have arbitration here through the International Commission. The other is security guaranteed by common action. If we can get security guaranteed by common action of the Powers, then I say we have passed a great milestone on the road to peace.

QUESTION : How many times has Hitler broken his word?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : Never in a written treaty.

QUESTION : Mr. Fyfe said that he had never broken his word in a written treaty. Germany made a treaty with Czechoslovakia. When Hitler marched into the Rhineland, he nevertheless said that that arbitration treaty remained valid. The Czechs decided to revoke that arbitration treaty at some stage between Berchtesgaden and Godesberg. The Germans refused. Was not that the written treaty which Hitler broke?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : It was a written treaty, but when you come to written treaties you have to consider that no international jurist of repute in Europe held that that treaty applied to the situation between the Czechs and the minority in Czechoslovakia.

QUESTION : Would Mr. Maxwell Fyfe give to this meeting the terms of our Government's guarantee to Czechoslovakia?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : The terms of the guarantee are not in writing, to which my friend attaches great importance, because at the moment the frontiers are not finally drawn. But what has been said is that Sir Thomas Inskip has, in the most solemn words at his command, stated that we are from that day, the 5th October, bound by that guarantee, i.e. bound to protect the frontiers of Czechoslovakia which are either agreed or brought into being through the fact of the plebiscite or whatever arrangements may be come to with Poland and Hungary as well as with Germany.

QUESTION: Was Mr. Nicolson's speech intended to be defeatist? May I ask him to give us some indication of whether in his opinion we have to sit down now and think we are permanently defeated, or does he think there is any way out of it?

MR. NICOLSON: If we sit down and call it appeasement, then we sit down. But if we stand up and call it peace, then we stand up. Sitting down is called appeasement; standing up is called national regeneration.

QUESTION: Mr. Maxwell Fyfe says we stand for co-operation in international politics. How does he explain the absence of Russia at the Munich Conference?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE: In order to be effective, the Munich Conference had to get results by the morning of Saturday, 1st October. If the time had been occupied by discussions conducted with the diplomatic correctness which I am sure Mr. Nicolson would insist on, for Russia to be there the time in which action had to be taken would have expired, and there would have been an invasion of Czechoslovakia. This was prevented by the rapid steps taken.

QUESTION: Would Mr. Nicolson give his opinion on the possibility of a revolution in Germany?

MR. NICOLSON: I think there was a chance if we had acted a little quicker. Mussolini was obviously frightened for once in his life, and the German General Staff were much alarmed. But unfortunately we missed that chance. We have proved that Hitler and Von Ribbentrop were absolutely right. Von Ribbentrop's advice was always, "Go ahead. The English governing class will funk at the last moment." The General Staff said, "Don't you be so sure. The governing class in England are dependent upon democratic feeling, and the democracies are much more alive to the situation than are the governing class."

Von Ribbentrop was right.

QUESTION: Did Lord Runciman in a published letter to Mr. Chamberlain before he went to Germany state that the fourth plan suggested by Prague, which did not envisage any secession, was a just plan which might well have been expected to work?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE: He said it might have been expected to work, but went on to say he did not think it would be accepted by the Sudeten Deutsch; that it was an excellent plan for those districts which were not ceded, but that in his view, districts had to be ceded and ceded at once without a plebiscite.

QUESTION: Where would the Czechs be now if we had gone to war?

MR. NICOLSON: The Czechs would probably at this moment be in a disastrous position, almost as disastrous as the Belgians were about August, 1914, and about as disastrous as the Serbians a few months later.

QUESTION: What about Hitler's programme as expressed in *Mein Kampf*?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE: As I have indicated, that really depends on your psychological outlook. Up to now Hitler has been working for minorities of Germans outside the Reich. He has assured Mr. Chamberlain that this is the end of his territorial ambitions in Europe. Mr. Chamberlain believes that he was sincere.

QUESTION: Does Mr. Chamberlain think that the great national effort required is likely to be made under the leadership of a Prime Minister who has just made such a deplorable diplomatic blunder, and whose foreign policy is based on a four Power pact with two totalitarian states as the senior partners?

MR. NICOLSON: I do not think that we can approach this great national danger in any mood of recrimination. I happen to be one of those who think possibly that the policy of H.M. Government lacked understanding, but to call it a great diplomatic blunder would be an impertinence.

QUESTION: Does Mr. Maxwell Fyfe consider a 1910 census as a fair basis for estimating the wishes of the population?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE: I think that the Saar basis (that is the same basis as the Saar plebiscite) which was agreed at Munich, was a fair basis, for this reason that I disapprove of the infiltration of Czechs into the Sudetenland because it was carried out with great unfairness to the German population and landowners.

QUESTION: Is not that rather misleading, seeing that the Saar basis was not the 1910 basis at all; it was much later.

MR. MAXWELL FYFE: Whatever the basis, the Saar basis was what was agreed at Munich.

QUESTION: Mr. Nicolson said the Prime Minister should have stood firm. Knowing Hitler was ready to march, should he have let loose the dogs of war on the civil population of Czechoslovakia?

MR. NICOLSON: It is quite obvious that nobody could have desired war at all, but I am not among those who think that the Czechoslovakia solution was anything more than a gross betrayal of a gallant little nation; anything more than a cowardly evasion of our own responsibilities in Europe; anything more than a retreat from a situation which will come again in a more acute form, when we shall not be able to face it, either with similar unity in our own country and similar backing among the smaller nations of Europe, with similar economic vulnerability on the part of Germany, with similar assistance from Russia or with similar sympathy on the part of the United States.

If I am called a warmonger, I say that war is the greatest evil on this earth, but that a war that you may win is possibly preferable to a war that you are quite certain you can't.

QUESTION: If we can get everything by negotiation, why do we have to re-arm and that very quickly?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : I think there is a great chance of peace having been obtained. But we have to re-arm for three reasons.

(1) Today, unless you have armed strength you do not command respect in the world which we have allowed to come into being. That is a fact that must be recognised.

(2) We have responsibility for our own defence and the defence of our Empire. That has to be looked at in the light of the conditions of modern war and requires a great deal of re-armament.

(3) We have responsibility in Europe to the Low Countries to hold the narrow seas, to France and to Czechoslovakia, and we have got to be prepared to carry out these obligations.

QUESTION : Will Mr. Nicolson tell us what alternative means of expansion there are for Germany ; and will he tell us how to begin this national reconstruction?

MR. NICOLSON : In the first place, is it necessary expansion? I suppose you know that the number of Germans to the square mile in Germany is much less than the number of Englishmen to the square mile in England.

The German expansion is a perfectly natural, virile, reputable and not at all disreputable desire. We must recognise it as that, not despise it or think it wicked, but regard it as the same sort of growing pains that we had in the Elizabethan era. Do not let us think of it as right or wrong, but as natural, and young and rather splendid in a way ; but also let us realise that they are so powerful that it will extend over areas that are extremely vital to our own preservation unless we are careful.

QUESTION : The Germans have been aware of the minority question in Sudetenland for 20 years. Why was there such a hurry this time? Did not lack of decision among democratic powers create risk of war?

MR. MAXWELL FYFE : The answer to the first question is that there had been appeals to the League of Nations, and as we have been told, during the time of three Foreign Secretaries before Lord Halifax, the Foreign Office had been continually advising the Czechs in strong terms to get on with the settlement of the Sudeten question, and the Czechs had refused. It came to a head because of the municipal elections. In May of this year the Czechs were again told that they ought to settle the question. They made the very smallest offers between May and July, and in July, before Lord Runciman went out, the matter came almost to a deadlock.

On the second question, did not lack of decision among the democratic powers create a risk of war? Emphatically no. I disagree entirely with the attitude of mind that says, "Threaten war. If you threaten, you will not have to do it." You can only threaten when you are willing to pay the stake that you are wagering, which is untold misery. I think the democratic powers were morally

right in refusing to submit their people to the chance of the untold misery of war unless their cause was absolutely and transcendently right.

QUESTION : Does Mr. Nicolson not think that Mr. Chamberlain chose the lesser of two evils? Is Mr. Nicolson sure that America would have come in with us against Germany. Did they not always say that they intended to be neutral?

MR. NICOLSON : If Mr. Chamberlain goes on choosing the lesser of two evils, we shall be edged out of our position as a Great Power. That is certain. The lesser of two evils is always surrender in the face of resistance. When you say, did not Mr. Chamberlain choose the lesser of two evils, I say, Yes, he did. He chose the line of least resistance. If he goes on doing that, then we shall become like Sweden, and you have to get that inside your heads. You may want to be like Sweden, but you will be very poor, very hungry and much less happy than the Swedes are.

Secondly would America have come in if we had gone to war? I think it is very unlikely. I think that any foreign policy which is based upon an assumption of America doing this or that is a very futile, superficial and ignorant sort of thing. I would never myself advocate or support any policy which relied for its efficacy upon the assumption of any action of any sort on the part of the United States.

But on the other hand I would always oppose a policy which shocks the conscience of the United States to such a degree that they regard us as cowardly and treacherous, as they do now. Any policy which was certain to shock the conscience of the United States, as this policy does, is certainly wrong.

Final Votes of Thanks

DAME ELIZABETH CADBURY : I am sure you will all feel that we have had an extremely interesting and exciting evening. It was far better than going to the House of Commons and listening to speeches, not only because we have had two of the most able exponents of a variety of things with us, but also because we could ask questions.

The gathering here is probably pretty fairly divided in opinion. Some have been more vociferous than others, but each speaker has received a large amount of support.

We listen to Mr. Nicolson always with the greatest interest, not only in his broadcasts but also through his books. Now he took us into a very doleful place, and I am sure we are all ready to profit by his warnings.

Mr. Nicolson promised to come to this meeting last March. I think we owe him a special debt of gratitude for being still willing to come after all these anxious days.

Now I want to thank specially Mr. Maxwell Fyfe for having agreed to come and defend a policy. It is always pleasanter to attack than to defend, and we must all agree that he has valiantly defended the policy of the Government.

There is one point in common with our two speakers and with us, that they both are working for peace. They are both interested in the League in spite of the League's failures; they both look forward to a reconstruction of the League.

Therefore in finally thanking them, what we all want to do is to say, go on and do your very best to bring about reconciliation and reconstruction in this sad world.

MISS TANCRED: I have been asked to second this vote of thanks. It would be a presumption on my part to say where the sympathies of the audience lay. We have had such a wonderful case made out for each point of view that if we could force our wills, some of us would be in danger of wavering.

We have many of us sat under Mr. Nicolson on the air, and we know the calm way in which he presents very controversial subjects. We do not know Mr. Maxwell Fyfe so well, but we realise that he knows his own mind, and for that many of us envy him.

Looking at the state of Europe, the confusion and the chaos, some of us are haunted by the lines:

Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive.

It haunts us, and yet we take courage from the quotation made by the Prime Minister as he set off for Munich "If at first we don't succeed, try, try, try again," and we know that is what both our speakers intend to do. We thank them.

RESULT OF POSTAL BALLOT
FOR
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 1938

President:
MRS. A. F. W. JOHNSON (321)

Vice-Presidents:
(Returned unopposed)

MRS. W. A. CADBURY, J.P.
MRS. PATRICK NESS

Hon. Treasurer:
(Returned unopposed)
LADY HORT, J.P.

Hon. Parliamentary Secretary:
(Returned unopposed)
MRS. ARTHUR WATTS

Twelve Elected Members:
MRS. LEFROY, J.P. (477)
MISS NORAH E. GREEN (463)
MISS ALLINGTON-HUGHES (461)
MISS M. G. COWAN, O.B.E. (457)
MRS. W. A. POTTS (425)
THE LADY CAWLEY (420)
MISS PICTON-TURBERVILL, O.B.E. (409)
MRS. HILYER, A.R.SAN.I. (383)
MRS. M. I. CROFTS, M.A., LL.B. (332)
MRS. BINGHAM-HALL (328)
MRS. HERBERT HEWSUM (304)
MRS. BENTLEY MURRAY (293)

NOTE.—Mrs. Canadine is unable to serve on the Executive Committee; Mrs. Muirhead will, therefore, be asked to take her place for the year 1938-39.

Sixteen Representatives of Affiliated Societies:
COMMISSIONER ADELAIDE COX, C.B.E. (59)
MRS. PERCY BIGLAND (55)
MISS SUSAN MUSSON (55)
MISS ALISON NEILANS (49)
MISS V. D. SWAISLAND, B.SC.(ECON.) (43)
MRS. KARSLAKE (39)
MISS HELEN WARD (39)
MISS YOUNGHUSBAND, J.P. (39)
MRS. J. M. PHILLIPS, J.P., C.C. (38)
MRS. NEVILLE ROLFE, O.B.E. (38)
MISS M. S. RIDDELL, R.R.C., S.R.N. (34)
MRS. L. G. KILLBY (30)
MISS M. REEVES (30)
MISS VALERIE GRAHAM (29)
MISS J. S. WALKER (29)
MISS F. E. RELF (24)

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT for the 11 months ended 31st July, 1938.

1936/7.		RECEIPTS.			
£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
To Subscriptions :					
254	17 2	Members	237	10 6	
335	13 3	Branches	286	4 3	
389	0 0	£5 fees	375	0 0	
116	15 0	Societies	128	9 6	
				1,026	4 3
3	0 3	Household Service League (Capitation Fee)			3 0 6
„ Donations :					
		Bournemouth Conference	125	18 3	
		Special for 3 years	20	0 0	
		General	34	5 0	
		Household Service League	5	0 0	
141	0 9			185	3 3
„ Dividends and Interest :					
1	9 7	3½% War Stock	2	19 2	
4	0 0	Bank Deposit	4	2 0	
				3	3 4
„ Sale of Literature :					
		Conference Report	59	0 9	
		Conference Agenda	12	8 5	
		Handbook (Sales and Adverts.)	68	6 8	
		Pamphlets	54	0 1	
				193	15 11
34	3 9	„ Public Service Minutes	27	16 3	
225	9 3	„ “Women in Council” Sales	219	5 3	
25	1 0	„ I.C.W. Bulletin Sales	28	0 1	
„ Miscellaneous Receipts					
		Sale of Badges	10	13 0	
		Duplicating	2	15 6	
				13	8 6
„ New Offices Fund—Contribution towards :					
		Salaries	277	13 2	
		Rent	70	0 0	
158	0 7			347	13 2
42	10 0				
				47	13 2
4	17 0	„ Profit on Conference Dinner and Tour ..			
				78	4 0
				135	9 5
		„ Deficit, carried to Balance Sheet ..			
				78	4 0
				135	9 5
				135	9 5

£1,998 6 5

£2,125 14 6

1936/37.		PAYMENTS.			
£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
860	5 9	By Salaries and National Insurance	929	10 5	
200	10 0	„ Rent	197	12 6	
				1,127	2 11
13	16 3	„ Insurance : Life Policies ..	14	7 0	
3	7 11	Fire and Burglary	3	7 11	
				17	14 11
„ Heating & Lighting :					
		Coal	2	13 11	
		Gas	20	12 0	
		Electricity	6	5 10	
				29	11 9
36	9 9	„ Office Cleaning			36 8 10
„ Renewals and Repairs :					
		Addressograph Equipment	15	18 8	
		Sundry	3	9 0	
				19	7 8
				103	3 2
54	8 0	„ Stationery	62	19 1	
100	11 8	„ Postage	100	6 0	
27	19 5	„ Telephone	41	0 3	
				204	5 4
6	19 11	„ Newspapers	4	8 2	
4	4 0	„ Press Cuttings	10	10 0	
7	1 4	„ Petty Expenses	1	16 4	
				16	14 6
13	16 8	„ Bank Charges	6	14 8	
12	12 0	„ Audit Fee	6	6 0	
4	4 0	„ Legal Expenses			
				13	0 8
				234	0 6
6	4 4	„ Travelling Expenses			8 3 8
52	10 0	„ Committee Grants			30 0 0
136	9 0	„ Printing : General			123 12 0
		Conference Reports	104	7 5	
		Conference Agenda	22	18 6	
		Handbook	57	4 0	
		Pamphlets	66	16 8	
				251	6 7
17	13 6	„ Public Service Minutes			19 4 6
„ “Women in Council”					
		Printing	93	10 6	
		Salary of Editor	100	0 0	
				193	10 6
23	4 2	„ I.C.W. Bulletin			24 2 8
15	2 2	„ Badges			— — —
5	5 0	„ Subscriptions to other Societies ..			2 17 0
6	10 0	„ I.C.W. Affiliation Fee			6 10 0
		„ Edinburgh Tour—Net cost			2 1 0

FAWCETT COLLECTION
£2,125 14 6

43rd ANNUAL REPORT, 1938.

In view of the International Council of Women Golden Jubilee Conference which was held in Edinburgh from 11th to 20th July, the I.C.W. has been very much to the fore this year. A great effort has been made by individual members of the Council, and the resources of the branches have also been called upon to make this Conference a great success.

I.C.W. Hospitality. Delegates to the Conference began to arrive in England from about April onwards, and many visited the office for help in various ways. Branches offered hospitality and took much trouble to arrange for delegates to see places of local interest, as they landed at or passed through some of the principal towns.

The London Branch Luncheon Club invited about 20 delegates to a lunch and Lady Nunburnholme and Mrs. Patrick Ness both kindly gave delightful cocktail parties.

Branches. Owing to the enthusiasm of Miss Allington Hughes, the Wrexham Branch, which was founded in 1916 and dissolved in 1918, was re-started last January, and is now flourishing. There are 120 members and 15 affiliated societies. A small Branch has been formed in Hampstead with about 50 members.

Unfortunately Haslemere, Folkestone and Guildford have had to close down. Greenford sub-branch has now been absorbed into Ealing. The total number of Branches, therefore, not counting Newmarket sub-branch is 83.

Membership. Lady Ruth Balfour was warmly congratulated on her appointment as Chairman of the Scottish Committee of Women's Voluntary Services.

The Executive Committee congratulated Dame Maria Ogilvie Gordon, who was invited by the New South Wales Government to visit N.S.W. last winter for the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the State.

During the year the Council has lost two valued members through the deaths of Miss E. M. Eaton, Honorary Vice-President of the Council and for many years Hon. Editor of "Women in Council"; also Miss Rose Squire, for 7 years Chairman of the Household Service Committee.

Affiliated Societies. St. Andrew's House, Portsmouth, Dr. Barnardo's Homes, and the Institute of Hospital Almoners have withdrawn from Affiliation and the following Societies have affiliated :—

Child Guidance Council.	Over Thirty Association.
Mothercraft Training Society.	National Council for Animals' Welfare.
British Dental Association.	
Women's League of Health and Beauty.	Institute of Child Psychology.
National Children Adoption Association.	Liberal National Council (Women's Division).

Close co-operation has been maintained with the Societies, which are frequently put in touch with branches requiring speakers on specialised subjects.

Deputations. Mrs. Killby represented the N.C.W. on a deputation from the College of Nursing to *the Minister of Health* in order to suggest the lines on which the enquiry into Nursing conditions should be carried out.

In March, Mrs. Hartree represented the N.C.W. on a deputation organised by the Committee on Wage-Earning Children to the Home Office regarding hours of employment of Young Persons in unregulated occupations. Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd gave a definite promise that legislation would be introduced by the Government during that Session.

The Council had agreed to co-operate with the Women's Freedom League in a deputation to the L.C.C. concerning the ban on married women employees, but owing to the I.C.W. Conference the Council was unable to send a representative. Mrs. Hartree, however, sent in a written statement to Mrs. Corbett Ashby, who lead the deputation.

Members of the Glasgow Branch and certain of its affiliated societies took a deputation to the Empire Exhibition authorities on the question of the inadequate policing of the Exhibition.

Relations with Other Bodies. Through the appointment of delegates, observers or representatives, the N.C.W. has co-operated with the following organisations :—

- Alliance of Honour Conference—Representative.
- British Commonwealth League—Representative.
- British Dental Association, Conference—Representative.
- Council of Scientific Management in the Home—Representative.
- Domestic Services Exhibition—Representative.
- Empire Migration and Development Conference—Representative.

International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship—Co-operation with *Ad Hoc* Council in organising Status of Women Day.

International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women—Representative.

International Peace Campaign—Representatives.

International Peace Campaign, International People's Assembly—Representative.

Joint Council of Midwifery—Representative.

League of Nations Union, Women's Advisory Council—Representative.

National Council for Maternity and Child Welfare, Congress—Representative.

National Council of Social Service—Representative.

National Fitness Movement—Representative.

National Peace Congress—Representative.

National Safety First Association—Representative.

National Society of Epileptics—Representative.

Nationality of Married Women Pass the Bill Committee—Representative.

Our Dumb Friends' League, Joint Meeting with the Noise Abatement League—Representative.

Parents' National Educational Union, Conference—Representative.

Research Bureau of British Youth Peace Assembly—Co-operation.

Royal Sanitary Institute, Health Congress—Representative.

Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women, Representative.

Trade Union Congress General Committee, Organising Department (Domestic Workers)—Representative.

Women's Advisory Housing Council—Representative.

Women's Voluntary Services, Advisory Council—Representative.

Workers' Educational Association, Conference—Representative.

The Executive Committee has met ten times to date (23rd September) and the average attendance has been 74. Visitors welcomed to the Committee included :—

- Miss Jhirad—N.C.W. India.
- Mrs. McClemons—N.C.W. West Australia.
- Mrs. Starr Stuart—N.C.W. South Africa.
- Mrs. Basil Price—Southern Rhodesia.
- Mme. Ractivand—N.C.W. Greece.
- Mrs. McIlwraith—N.C.W. South Africa.
- Miss Rienits—N.C.W. New South Wales.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The 46th Annual Conference was held at Bournemouth from 11th-14th October, 1937, and over 700 representatives and visitors attended. As a result the Bournemouth Branch was able to contribute the record sum of £125 to Headquarters Funds.

Constitution.

Two important amendments to the Constitution were made: first, that the Constitution of the Housing and Education Sectional Committees be assimilated to that of the Public Service and Magistrates Committee, with a view to including individual members of Local Authorities interested in these subjects; secondly, that a week-end annual conference be tried as an experiment.

Resolutions.

Mui Tsai. In November it was made known that Miss Picton-Turbervill's recommendations contained in the Minority Report of the Commission on Mui Tsai in Hong Kong and Malaya had been adopted in principle in Malaya.

Limitation of Powers of Disinheritance. An Act entitled the Inheritance (Family Provision) Act, 1938 has now received the Royal Assent.

Equal Pay for Equal Work. As a result of a campaign run by women's organisations, the Hammersmith Borough Council has established equal pay for equal work between men and women on the Council's staff.

Young Offenders: Abolition of Imprisonment. This resolution was sent to the Home Office, and it has been announced that the Home Secretary will introduce shortly a Penal Reform Bill which, it is hoped, will deal among other matters, with Young Delinquents.

Private Zoos. The R.S.P.C.A. has co-operated with the Humane Treatment of Animals Committee in collecting information with a view to future legislation.

Mortuaries. This resolution was forwarded to the Home Office, the L.C.C., Chief Constables and others. Many branches took the matter up actively in their areas.

Unregulated Employment of Young Persons. (See under Deputations, page 2).

Dental Treatment for the Adolescent. This resolution was sent to the Ministry of Health, the Board of Education and a number of societies including the British Dental Association, which later affiliated to the Council, and is now co-operating with the Public Health Committee on this question.

Character Training and Physical Fitness. The Council has been greatly interested in this subject during the year, and a further resolution, giving a detailed definition of the Council's policy has been passed by the Executive Committee.

Domestic Help. Shortly after the Conference, the Minister of Labour stated that he regarded foreign servants as a national need for the moment, and that he did not propose to restrict unduly their entry into this country.

Housing the Single Person Family. The Over Thirty Housing Association has undertaken to build a model block of flats for the single person family, and several branches of the N.C.W. are bringing pressure to bear on local authorities to provide this accommodation.

PUBLICATIONS.

The Handbook for 1937-38 was published in October. "Women in Council" is published nine times a year, and the existing contract with the printers has been renewed for one year at a slightly higher charge, owing to the rising cost of paper. Although the circulation is going up steadily, great efforts should be made for a further increase, as this would enable the advertising agents to obtain more advertisements and thus reduce the cost of printing. Also by reading the official magazine, members are kept in touch with the whole work of the Council at the small cost of 2/6d. a year.

The following publications have been issued since September, 1937:—

"Mui Tsai" by Miss Zimmern (Price 2d.)*.

A Historical Sketch of the National Council of Women of Great Britain by Dame Maria Ogilvie Gordon (Price 1/3d.)*.

Reports prepared by British Representatives on I.C.W. Standing Committees on Equal Moral Standard, (Price 4d.)*, Trades and Professions (Price 6d.)*, Child Welfare (Price 4d.)* and Cinema (Price 3d.)*.

An additional page written by Miss Tancred, was added to the Women Police Pamphlet, thus bringing it up-to-date (Price 3d.)*.

A four page leaflet entitled "Recent Achievements of the N.C.W. of Great Britain." (Price 1d.)*.

A four page leaflet setting out the terms of reference, etc., of the Sectional Committees of the N.C.W. (Price 1d.)*.

*These prices do not include postage.

STAFF.

In view of the I.C.W. Conference it was found necessary to engage an extra half-time assistant in April, and in May this assistant became full-time. A good deal of the staff's time was occupied in answering the telephone and seeing callers, the office having 301 visitors during the year. This does not include trade representatives.

Letters in.

September 1937	590	as against	296	in 1936.
October	570	" "	369	" "
November	646	" "	505	" "
December	435	" "	316	" "
January 1938	530	" "	416	in 1937
February	508	" "	473	" "
March	775	" "	560	" "
April	573	" "	760	" "
May	877	" "	633	" "
June	1,062	" "	581	" "
July	658	" "	835	" "
August	387	" "	248	" "

Letters out.

September 1937	550	as against	228	in 1936.
October	525	" "	343	" "
November	634	" "	458	" "
December	392	" "	278	" "
January 1938	470	" "	602	in 1937.
February	467	" "	364	" "
March	541	" "	702	" "
April	619	" "	1,047	" "
May	690	" "	751	" "
June	1,024	" "	688	" "
July	813	" "	738	" "
August	270	" "	253	" "

These figures do not include the duplication of Minutes, Agenda, Reports, circular letters, etc., and in comparing them with previous years, it should be borne in mind that April last year was the month before the one-day conference and dinner to Lady Aberdeen; also that this year one member of the staff was fully occupied with making and correcting a card index of the 1,100 delegates and visitors to the Conference and in sending lists and corrections to Edinburgh. Further, that during July, the whole staff was in Edinburgh and letters were only dealt with in the first and last weeks of the month. In addition, when, as sometimes happens, there is no Hon. Secretary for any Sectional Committee the staff undertakes the work.

Miss Forster, Assistant Secretary, Miss McCall, Miss Lloyd-Davies and Miss Evand all went to Edinburgh for the I.C.W. Conference, and by their cheerful and willing work at all hours, contributed to the smooth running of the Conference.

Miss McCall, the Press Secretary and Editor of "Women in Council" resigned in August, and Miss Gunilla Liddle has been appointed in her place.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN.

The I.C.W. Golden Jubilee Conference was held in Edinburgh this year from 11th-20th July, under the able Chairmanship of Baroness Boël. Lady Aberdeen was present at most of the Sessions, and 524 British members took part, 179 of these being Triennial Contributors.

The Conference was most successful and provided a splendid opportunity for the Branches and individual members to gain a knowledge of the International Council of Women and the important work it is doing. 32 Branches, 1 Regional Committee and 264 members are now Triennial Contributors, and it is hoped that the keen interest aroused will not lessen.

The appeal for the Lady Aberdeen Fund for the Endowment of the I.C.W. launched in January 1937 met with an excellent response, the total amount subscribed being £574. 15s. 0d. This, together with sums collected from all Councils was presented to Lady Aberdeen on 18th July, the Day of Jubilee Celebration. The total amounted to approximately £3,000.

The second appeal for money to meet the expenses of the Conference itself, was also generously supported by branches, individual members and societies, a total of £355. 8s. 0d. being raised, and a further £232. 15s. 0d. guaranteed. In view of the heavy expenses incurred and the fact that the I.C.W. was entitled to all money received for tickets, it was found necessary to call in the guarantee.

In addition, a Hospitality Fund of over £161 was raised by Mrs. Martin Hobkirk (almost entirely in **Edinburgh**) and used to accommodate delegates coming great distances, or from countries where there were currency restrictions. This remarkable effort helped greatly to make the Conference a success.

Delegates were the guests of H.M. Government at a most enjoyable Garden Party at the Palace of Holyrood House. H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent had kindly consented to be hostess.

Cambridge, York, Carlisle and **Manchester** generously entertained the motor coach party of 26 foreign delegates on its way to and from Edinburgh, whilst **Carlisle** invited 30 delegates for the week-end prior to the Conference. At **Newcastle**, 27 members of the Norwegian delegation were entertained to morning coffee on the arrival of the boat and before leaving for Edinburgh. Branches near London including **Richmond, Ruislip** and **Wat-**

for, also arranged to entertain I.C.W. delegates; whilst in Scotland during the period of the Conference, delegates were entertained in the homes of members of the **Edinburgh** Branch; the **Glasgow** Branch invited a large number to lunch at the Exhibition; The **Dundee**, **Stirling** and **Greenock** Branches gave to many the opportunity of visiting some of the beauty-spots of Scotland. **Aberdeen** members offered week-end hospitality to 50 delegates, who were among those present at a garden party at Haddo House given by Lady Aberdeen in honour of the Conference.

WORK OF COMMITTEES.

I.C.W. Joint Sub-Committee. This Sub-Committee was appointed to deal with all preparations for the I.C.W. Golden Jubilee Conference, both at Headquarters and in Edinburgh. It met eight times and in conjunction with the I.C.W. Office and the Edinburgh Sub-Committees satisfactorily undertook all the detailed arrangements for the Conference.

Abortion Sub-Committee. In May, 1937 the Government set up an Inter-departmental Committee to enquire into Abortion, which the Council had pressed for at the deputation to the Minister of Health on Maternal Mortality in 1936. The N.C.W. set up an *Ad Hoc* Committee in September, 1937, under the chairmanship of Lady Nunburnholme, to collect information with a view to giving evidence before the Government Committee. After some enquiry, however, the Committee decided that the Council was not in a position to present a new memorandum, nor to add in any way to the value of the evidence given by the deputation in 1936. Copies of the 1936 memorandum were, therefore, forwarded to the members of the Inter-departmental Committee for their information.

Ad Hoc Committee on Household Employment. This Committee, of which Mrs. Hartree was Chairman, was set up in May 1937, has held 7 meetings and in June 1938 presented its final report, containing recommendations on (1) Training, (2) Formation of Local Joint Committees of Employers and Employees, and (3) a minimum standard of hours and conditions of work. Printed copies of this report may be obtained from 92, Gower Street, W.C.1. Price 1½d. each, post free.

Ad Hoc Committee on Nursing Services. The President was Chairman and Mrs. Killby Hon. Secretary of this Committee, which was formed in November 1937 to collect information on nursing conditions (i) from the patients' point of view; (ii) from parents regarding nursing as a career for their daughters, with a view to submitting it to the Government Inter-departmental Committee on Nursing Services recently set up. Representatives of a number of expert societies co-operated, a questionnaire was distributed to individual members of the Council and Societies, and the replies collated.

Publicity and Broadcasting Committee.

The Committee has met five times. Following on the resolution passed at Dubrovnik that National Councils should form Broadcasting Committees, the Executive Committee decided that the Publications and Press Committee should include broadcasting in its plan of work rather than that a separate Broadcasting Committee be constituted. Each sectional Committee of the N.C.W. was asked to send a representative to the newly constituted Publicity and Broadcasting Committee. Mr. M. Farquharson, Director of Home Intelligence at the B.B.C., was invited to attend one meeting. In answer to questions, Mr. Farquharson said that suggestions from the N.C.W. on subjects for talks would be welcomed by Broadcasting House.

Publicity for the I.C.W. Golden Jubilee Conference in Edinburgh formed a large part of the year's activities. The English and foreign Press was kept informed of developments at regular intervals from September 1937. A number of advance notices appeared in the London and provincial press and in dominion and foreign newspapers. There were over 1,000 notices in British papers alone between July 11th and 22nd—the dates of the Conference Sessions.

The B.B.C. was approached by the Committee, and Edinburgh Broadcasting House arranged a symposium which was broadcast on the 17th July. The speakers were Lady Ruth Balfour, Baroness Boël, Dr. Castellani (Convener of the I.C.W. Broadcasting Committee), Mrs. Thompson Seton (Leader of the Delegation from the U.S.A.), and Mrs. W. Fyfe (British Representative on the I.C.W. Committee) deputising for the Convener, Mme. Germaine Dulac, who was unable to speak in English.

A resolution, sent up for the consideration of the I.C.W. Press Committee, deploring the tendency of certain sections of the Press to sensationalism, was passed at Edinburgh. Prior to the I.C.W. Conference, a sherry party for the Press was given by Mrs. A. F. W. Johnson, the speakers being Lady Ruth Balfour and Miss E. M. Delafield. Over fifty press representatives were present.

"*Women in Council.*" The circulation of "*Women in Council*" has increased considerably. Although the number of subscribers in 8 branches has slightly decreased, it has risen in 34 branches.

Since the Committee has been reconstituted, it has been decided to draft new standing orders, and these were passed by the Executive in June.

General Publicity. The number of press cuttings received at the office in connection with the N.C.W. has greatly increased, over 5,000 being sent in during the year. In one month, reports of the activities of over 40 branches were received.

Status of Women. In May 1938 a letter was received from the I.C.W. stating that the Committee of Experts charged by the Assembly of the League of Nations to carry out a comprehensive

study of the political and civil status of women had been appointed by the Council of the League and had held its first Sessions. This Committee asked women's international organisations to send in before October, concrete examples of any discrepancies between the written law and its application.

In view of this request, the *Ad Hoc* Committee of representatives of women's organisations which had drawn up the memorandum on the Status of Women submitted to the Government in September 1936, was re-formed. A meeting was held in June and various members of the Committee undertook to make enquiries; any information obtained would be forwarded to the I.C.W.

Status of Women Day, 14th May. A number of branches initiated or co-operated with other local societies in organising a day of propaganda to arouse the interest of women throughout the country in the work of the Committee of Experts appointed by the League of Nations to study the political and civil status of women.

Sectional Committees.

The Council has again lost the services of several valued Chairmen and Secretaries. Dame Maria Ogilvie Gordon has resigned from the Joint Chairmanship (with the President) of the I.C.W. Committee and has also resigned from the Chairmanship of the Cinema Committee after 11 years service. Miss Fox has been elected Chairman of the Cinema Committee with Mrs. W. A. Potts as Vice-Chairman. In regard to the I.C.W. Committee, now that the Jubilee Meeting is over, it was considered unnecessary to have two Chairmen, and the President will in future be the Chairman alone, with, if necessary, a Vice-Chairman to help her. Lady Steel-Maitland has retired from the Humane Treatment of Animals Committee and Mrs. Rattray takes her place as Chairman; Mrs. Goodyear, for ten years Chairman of the Temperance Committee, gives up this Committee to Miss Matheson. Dame Elizabeth Cadbury wished to retire from the Committee on International Affairs, but finally agreed to continue for one more year.

Miss Zimmern, Hon. Secretary of the I.C.W. Committee has resigned and Miss Inez Blanch will become Hon. Secretary instead. Mrs. Nowell Watkins, for many years Hon. Secretary of the Regional Committee retires, and Miss Nina Rickard, till recently Hon. Secretary of the Bournemouth Branch, has agreed to take her place.

The Cinema Committee has also lost its very able Hon. Secretary, with the retirement of the Hon. Eleanor Plumer. Neither this Committee nor the Public Health and Child Welfare Committee has at the moment an Hon. Secretary, and Chairmen of both would be glad to receive offers of help.

Arts and Letters Committee.

Chairman : MRS. ST. LOE STRACHEY, O.B.E., J.P.

Hon. Secretary : MISS MARY SHAW.

The Committee met three times during the year, and the average attendance was 25 out of a membership of 78.

An address was given on "Journalism as a Career for Women" by Mrs. Marsden-Smedley of the *Sunday Express*, who said that women had equality of opportunity and equal pay for equal work in this profession. A paper by the ex-Art Critic of the *Spectator*, Henry Strachey, was read on "The Seventeenth Century Exhibition at the R.A." A member of the Committee sent a paper on "The Federation of Rural Schools of Music," a venture to establish centres of teaching in rural counties.

In answer to the enquiry of the I.C.W. Arts Committee regarding the existence of "Youth Theatres," an address was given on the "Drama Section of the London Schools Guild of Arts and Crafts" by Miss Despicht, the Minuting Secretary. She told of the flourishing condition of the Guild, and the enthusiasm of the children. The I.C.W. Arts and Letters Committee's Questionnaires were answered by Miss Helen Ward and Miss Mary Shaw.

The Committee has kept in touch with the League of Audiences, who are pressing for the introduction of a Bill to subsidise Music and Drama. The regular Book Reviews, Theatre criticisms and Music reports have been much appreciated, also an account of the pictures at the Paris Exhibition.

British Empire and Migration Committee.

Chairman : LADY BOWRING, C.B.E.

Hon. Secretary : MISS E. M. ZIMMERN.

The British Empire and Migration Committee sponsored the resolution at the Bournemouth Conference, which urged the Government to accept the main recommendations of the Minority Report regarding the treatment of Mui Tsai in Hong Kong and Malaya. The Committee had the satisfaction later in the year of hearing that Miss Picton-Turbervill's recommendations had been accepted in principle. According to the new draft Bill before the Hong Kong legislature, every person in charge of a girl, who has been transferred, whether by gift or otherwise, will be obliged to register that girl before the Protector of Chinese for the Colony within three months, and anyone bringing such a girl into the Colony will have to register her within one week. Registration and inspection well carried out will strike at the root of the whole Mui Tsai system and will mean that the long fight against this particular form of slavery will at last have been won. The new Ordinance for Malaya is much on the same lines and in some details it even goes beyond what was laid down in the Minority Report.

The Committee considered the preliminary agenda for the meeting of the I.C.W. Migration Committee meeting in Edinburgh in July and also had a discussion regarding the conditions under which girls from other countries can take up *au pair* positions, a resolution on the subject being on the agenda for the I.C.W.

The question of Empire Migration was discussed. Mrs. Eden spoke of her visit to South Africa the previous year, and reported on the work of the Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women; Mr. Donaldson, Organising Secretary of the Empire Development Conference, spoke on Empire Migration since the beginning of the century; Miss Hart gave an account of the Fairbridge Farm Schools, and explained how much the scheme owed to the devotion and vision of Kingsley Fairbridge, the Rhodes scholar from Rhodesia; at the last meeting Brigadier M. Owen Culshaw gave a full account of the migration and settlement work of the Salvation Army, work which was not confined to the British Empire, but was undertaken wherever the need for it was shown.

The Committee was represented at the Annual Meeting of the British Commonwealth League, when migration problems and questions concerning native labour in the Colonies were discussed.

Cinema Committee.

Chairman : DAME MARIA OGILVIE GORDON, D.B.E., LL.D., J.P.

Vice-Chairman : MISS E. M. FOX.

Hon. Secretary : THE HON. ELEANOR PLUMER.

The Committee had considered the following questions :

The Cinema and Promotion of International Goodwill. *Proceedings of the Assembly of the League of Nations, October, 1937.* Miss Plumer reported that the British Films Institute proposed to draw up a memorandum on two points mentioned in the Report on Modern Means of Spreading Information utilised in the Cause of Peace, which was presented by the League of Nations Assembly in September : (i) the training of children's taste in regard to the Cinema and (ii) the role of cinema-goers' clubs, as a means of encouraging the production of good-quality films.

Censorship of News Reels. It was pointed out that any episode that was photographed direct, was uncensored, so that horrific pictures were shown to children.

Cinematograph Act and the setting up of a Films Council. A letter had been sent through the Executive to the Board of Trade suggesting that every member of the Film Council should give a written declaration that he or she had no connection, direct or indirect with the film trade. Further that in the opinion of the N.C.W. "at least one woman member" was not a sufficient proportion.

Children's Matinees. A list of Films for Children had been prepared by the B.F.I. and members had got into touch with cinemas in their districts, urging them to make use of the list.

Single Feature Programmes. Members were asked to approach managers in their localities, asking them to put on single feature programmes, i.e., one long film, the news, short interest film, and a cartoon.

Sub-Standard Cinematograph Association. The Association had expressed willingness to co-operate with the N.C.W. Cinema Committee in matters affecting the sub-standard section of the Cinematograph Industry.

Effect on Children's Eyesight of sitting too near the screen. The Medical Research Council had been written to on this subject, but the reply was unsatisfactory, and it is proposed to write direct to the L.C.C.

International Council of Women. The Report presented by the British Representative on the I.C.W. Cinema Committee (Mrs. W. Fyfe), can be obtained from the N.C.W. Office, price 3½d. post free.

The Committee regretfully accepted the resignation of both Miss Plumer and Dame Maria Ogilvie Gordon. The new Chairman is Miss Fox.

Education Committee.

Chairman : MISS ANTHONY, B.A.

Hon. Secretary : MISS CHRISTINE KITCHIN.

On December 15th Mr. Alec Rodger, Head of the Vocational Guidance department of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, spoke on "The Usefulness of Vocational Guidance." At the May meeting, Lady Ruth Balfour called attention to the new scheme for the formation of County Branches of the Institute.

On March 9th Mr. Harold Nicolson, M.P., aroused great interest by his address on "The Ten Year Plan for Children" which had been initiated by Lady Astor in 1935.

A Joint Meeting with the Public Health and Moral Welfare Committees was held on May 11th, at which Dr. Marjorie Macrae of the North Western Child Guidance Clinic, spoke on "Some Aspects of Child Guidance."

At the request of Mrs. Killby (the N.C.W. representative on the National Council of Social Service) a resolution was framed to express the policy of the N.C.W. with regard to the National Fitness Campaign, emphasising the desirability of a balanced fitness.

Household Service Committee.

Chairman : MISS B. M. RANDLE.

Vice-Chairman : MISS ETTY POTTER.

Hon. Secretary : MISS BORTON BROWN.

At the May meeting the Committee heard with great regret of the death of its first chairman, Miss Rose E. Squire, O.B.E., who had given devoted service for seven years.

The *Ad Hoc* Committee on Household Employment which presented its interim report in September 1937, made its final report in June 1938.

A resolution was passed at the December meeting and sent, to European National Councils, drawing their attention to the danger to girls of coming to England through unknown agencies and newspaper advertisements in order to enter Domestic Service. Five replies were received from the National Councils of Austria, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden and France.

In March Savings and Pension Schemes for Domestic workers were discussed and particulars were obtained of five such schemes now in existence.

The Domestic Services Exhibition and Conference was held for a week in January at the Horticultural Hall. Miss Randle represented the N.C.W. on the Conference Committee and acted as liaison officer between the 17 Women's Organisations represented. Members of the N.C.W. contributed greatly to the success of the Conference by their work as Chairmen of Sessions, speakers, etc.

The Committee had interesting addresses from : Miss Nancy Martin, President of the Nursery Nurses Association, on "The Nannies Point of View," and Mr. Harries, of the T.U.C. General Council on the "Union for Domestic Workers" which was launched on the 1st July. (An account of his address was given in the May number of "Women in Council").

A number of N.C.W. Branches and Women's Organisations in various parts of the country, have been addressed during the year by Miss Randle and Miss ETTY POTTER.

Housing Committee.

Chairman : MISS M. GALTON.

Vice-Chairman : COUNCILLOR MRS. STEVENSON, J.P.

Hon. Secretary : MISS A. M. WILSON, B.Sc.

Membership of this Committee is 104. There have been four meetings, and the average attendance has been 41. Addresses were given on the following subjects :—

"Lifts in Working-class Flats and Community Centres in Westminster" by Miss E. Murray of the Westminster Housing Trust Ltd.

"Health and Housing" by Miss C. Morris, Lady Almoner of St. Thomas' Hospital.

"Miss Octavia Hill's work for Housing" by Miss J. Sunderland.

"Miss Octavia Hill's work for National Trust" by Mr. E. Hamer, C.B.E.

As this year is the Centenary of the birth of Miss Octavia Hill the Meeting in May was devoted to the recognition of the work Miss Hill had done for Housing and for Open Spaces. The two speakers had both known Miss Hill personally, and had worked with her. Many old friends of Miss Hill's were invited to the Meeting and had written afterwards to express their appreciation.

Humane Treatment of Animals Committee.

Chairman : MARY, LADY STEEL-MAITLAND.

Vice-Chairman : MISS CÉCILE MATHESON.

Hon. Secretary : MISS CHALLEN, B.A.

The Committee has met four times during the year. A request was received from the Hastings and St. Leonards Branch for help in securing information to support the resolution on Private Zoos proposed by that branch and carried unanimously at the Representative Council Meeting at Bournemouth in October 1937, urging the Government to introduce legislation to prohibit the keeping of wild animals in private zoos run for profit. Following an address to the Committee by Dr. Jean Vinter, a questionnaire was drawn up and circulated to N.C.W. branches asking for the help of their members in obtaining particulars. The R.S.P.C.A. has given invaluable assistance by the circulation of a similar questionnaire to its inspectors all over the country. The result of this work cannot yet be reported.

The following resolution, proposed by the N.C.W. of the Netherlands was on the Agenda for the Council Sessions of the International Council of Women at Edinburgh: "That the International Council of Women include the question of the protection of animals and their legal status in its programme of work." (The resolution was carried with this re-wording "... legal status in the programme of work of all the Committees that it might concern.")

Two addresses explanatory to this resolution were given—one on "The legal status of animals in Great Britain" by Mr. F. E. Hodgson, Barrister-at-Law, and the other on "The necessity for international co-operation in matters relating to the welfare of animals" by Dr. Jean Vinter. The latter address was published in pamphlet form for distribution at Edinburgh.

The resolution was supported by Lady Ruth Balfour, on behalf of Great Britain, and after a lively discussion was carried by a majority.

The Committee has been concerned over arrangements to be made for the care of animals during air-raids and has decided to distribute copies of a special leaflet to be issued by the R.S.P.C.A.

Parliamentary Bills. The Bill to prohibit the importation of the common quail during the close season (Quail Protection Act) received Royal Assent on December 22nd, 1937. The Docking and Nicking of Horses (Prohibition) Bill passed through the House of Lords and is awaiting second reading in the House of Commons. A Bill to give effect to the recommendations of the House of Lords Select Committee on Agriculture (Damage by Rabbits) is ready for introduction into the House of Lords by Lord Sempill, and during the session 1938-39 the Hon. Harold Nicolson will sponsor a Bill in the House of Commons to secure abolition of the sale of rabbits mutilated by the gin trap, if he obtains a place in the ballot.

The Committee heard with great regret that Lady Steel-Maitland was unable to stand for re-election owing to her frequent and prolonged residence in Scotland. Mrs. Rattray, J.P., the representative of the Cambridge Branch, has been elected in her place.

Industrial and Insurance Committee.

Chairman : MRS. HARTREE.

Hon. Secretary : MISS LLOYD-DAVIES.

The Committee has met three times, the fourth meeting being postponed to September owing to the Conference of the International Council in July.

Since the disbanding of the Insurance Sectional Committee in 1931, matters regarding insurance have been dealt with by this Committee and in order to make the position clear, it was agreed that the word "Insurance" should be added to the title of the Committee. Owing to pressure of work, Miss O'Mahony was unable to continue as Hon. Secretary, and later, Miss Lloyd Davies expressed her willingness to undertake the work and was appointed in her place.

During the year the Committee has studied the very interesting Reports of the Unemployment Statutory Committee and the Bills and Orders resulting from the recommendations made; also the Unemployment Insurance Bill, the National Health Insurance Bill (Juveniles) and other matters coming before Parliament relating to industry and insurance. The Chairman represented the N.C.W. on a deputation to the Home Office on the subject of the Hours of Work of Young Persons, and it is satisfactory to note that at last a Bill has been introduced by the Government to deal with this question.

National Insurance Schemes.

Following on a resolution passed at Bournemouth, the position of women under the National Insurance Schemes has been studied, and Mrs. Champneys, an investigator employed by the London and National Society for Women's Service gave a comprehensive statement on these schemes, which having grown up piecemeal

during the last 27 years, are extremely complex and contain many anomalies.

Transference Schemes.

Difficulties resulting from the transference of juveniles from the Special areas have been considered, and a deputation was received very cordially by the department of the Ministry of Labour concerned, when the precautions taken were explained and an enquiry promised. Unfortunately, in the town principally concerned the steps taken by the Ministry as a result of the enquiry have been nullified to a great extent by the particular firm undertaking its own recruiting in the Special Areas with the result that the girl juveniles recruited are under no care other than the usual factory inspectorate inside the factory.

The extremely interesting report of Mrs. Abbott, British Representative on the Trades and Professions Committee of the I.C.W. was considered by the Executive Committee of such importance that it was decided to have it printed in time for the meeting in Edinburgh. Copies can be obtained from 92, Gower Street. Price 6d.

Committee on International Affairs and for the Promotion of Peace.

Chairman : DAME ELIZABETH CADBURY, M.A., J.P.

Vice-Chairman : THE HON. MRS. FRANKLIN.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. IAN McMASTER, M.A.

In a year marked by the rapid advance of international anarchy the Committee reflected the general anxiety for a restoration of order. It has dealt with a vast correspondence on the subject of International Affairs, and with proposed remedies and means of obtaining Peace from Societies and individuals all over the world. It has kept in touch with the work of other peace societies, especially with that of the National Peace Council and of the Women's Peace Crusade. Various members have attended conferences as observers, there has been an increasingly large attendance and lively discussions. These discussions, and the excellent lectures suggest that security lies in maintaining principle rather than in the pursuit of expediency.

In selecting resolutions for the I.C.W. Conference at Edinburgh, the Committee was unanimously of opinion that the most urgent question was the bombing of civil populations from the air and the need for general international agreement "with a view to a solution on the only ultimately effective basis, the abolition of all air-bombing." The second in importance was the betterment of economic conditions, and, on the lines of M. Van Zeeland's report, international economic organisation.

In November, Mr. Arnold Forster dealt chiefly with the Far East, urging the need for friendship with America. Dr. Chang

(of the China Institute) emphasised the fact that co-operation between China and Japan is essential. China is in conflict only with the military element in Japan. In February Col. S. F. Newcombe, D.S.O., spoke on the "Problem of Palestine." He explained how the troubles between Arabs and Jews had arisen with the Balfour policy in 1917, and could only be ended peaceably when the idea of setting up a Jewish State over the native population should be abandoned. The Arabs have never objected to a National "Home" for the Jews.

In April, Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M.P., followed by Lady Rhys Williams, D.B.E., spoke on the crisis. Miss Orred read a paper written for the meeting by Captain Liddell Hart on "The Strategic Problems involved."

In June, Dr. Seton Watson gave his Historical Survey of Central Europe.

All the speakers have taken one title, "The present situation," but since in its various aspects they have set it against an historic background they have left members in a far better position to understand and judge future developments.

To the great pleasure of the Committee, Dame Elizabeth has kindly consented to act as Chairman for at least another year.

International Council of Women Committee.

Joint Chairmen : THE PRESIDENT, THE LADY RUTH BALFOUR, M.B., B.S.

DAME MARIA OGILVIE GORDON, D.B.E., LL.D., J.P.

Hon. Secretary : MISS E. M. ZIMMERN.

The chief work of the Committee has been in connection with the Golden Jubilee Conference of the International Council of Women in Edinburgh last July. The Committee wrote to all the I.C.W. Office bearers and in the light of their replies a list of nominations was drawn up for submission to the Executive Committee. Resolutions for the I.C.W. agenda were also considered and recommendations made to the Executive Committee. When the final programme for the I.C.W. Council meeting was received, the list of nominations was carefully considered and recommendations were made regarding the votes that should be cast for I.C.W. office bearers with the proviso that it be left to the discretion of the President after seeing the final list of nominations, as changes might still be made by the I.C.W. Executive Committee at its meeting in Edinburgh, before the opening of the Council sessions. The Committee also considered the attitude to be adopted by this Council towards the resolutions and amendments on the I.C.W. agenda.

The reports prepared by the British representatives on the I.C.W. Standing Committees were submitted to this Committee

and a recommendation was made to the Executive Committee that reports of more general interest should be printed and be on sale at the Edinburgh Conference.

At the June meeting Dame Maria Ogilvie Gordon and Miss Zimmern resigned from the positions of Co-Convener with the President, and Hon. Secretary, which they had held since the formation of the Committee in 1935.

Moral Welfare Committee.

Chairman : THE DOWAGER LADY NUNBURNHOLME, J.P.

Vice-Chairman : MISS ALISON NEILANS.

Hon. Secretary : MISS D. M. RETCHFORD.

Careful consideration was given to the following subjects during the year.

The Contraceptives (Regulation) Bill. This was introduced into the House of Commons on the 8th March, but unfortunately did not obtain a second reading during the session. Branches were also asked to send in information regarding automatic machines for the sale of contraceptives.

Proposed Co-ordinating Committee between the Social Questions Committee of the League of Nations and Voluntary Organisations. A meeting was called to consider this question in Paris, which Lady Nunburnholme attended as observer for the International Council of Women. It was agreed that such a co-ordinating Committee would be most helpful and it is hoped to establish some form of liaison. Miss M. G. Cowan suggested that the British representative on the Social Questions Committee should be a woman M.P. with an expert Civil Servant as her adviser, and a letter was accordingly sent by the Executive to the Foreign Office to this effect.

Inadequate Sentences in cases of Assault on young Girls. A letter received from the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child on this subject was referred by the Executive to the Moral Welfare and the Public Service and Magistrates Committees. Members of the Moral Welfare Committee have been asked to report any inadequate sentences in cases of such assault to the Hon. Secretary. In addition, a letter was sent to the Home Office urging that the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Persistent Offenders should be put into operation.

Proposed Liaison Committee with Scotland Yard. After an address given by Miss Alison Neilans the view was strongly expressed that contact should be established between the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and experts engaged in Moral Welfare work, and a resolution embodying this suggestion was sent from the Executive to the Commissioner. As a result Lady Nunburnholme had an interview at Scotland Yard with the Assistant Commissioner of Police, and a small sub-committee is now being formed of selected experts from the Moral Welfare Committee.

International Council of Women. Two resolutions were put forward for the consideration of the Equal Moral Standard Committee of the I.C.W. at the Council Meeting held in Edinburgh. Miss Retchford, as British Representative on the Equal Moral Standard Committee prepared the British reply to the Questionnaire on preventive measures and methods of re-education employed in the campaign against the demoralisation and prostitution of minors issued by the Equal Moral Standard Committee and also as Hon. Secretary of that Committee, prepared a summary of the replies received to the Questionnaire from 17 countries. Both these reports were printed, and the report of the British Representative may be obtained from the Office, price 4½d. post free.

Addresses: The Committee was addressed by:—

Miss Alison Neilans, on The Need for liaison between Scotland Yard and expert Social workers.

Mrs. Rackham, J.P., on The Report of the Committee on Persistent Offenders and Sir Samuel Hoare's proposals relating thereto.

Mr. R. H. Turton, M.P., on The Law regarding Prostitutes and Brothels (at the joint meeting with the Public Service and Magistrates Committee).

Miss A. R. Ward, on Moral Welfare Work for Children in London.

Sir Ernest Hotson, on The Problem of Children in Residential Homes.

Parliamentary and Legislation Committee.

Chairman: MRS. A. F. W. JOHNSON.

Vice-Chairman: MISS M. G. COWAN, O.B.E., M.A.

Hon. Secretary: MISS J. K. DONALD.

The Parliamentary and Legislation Committee met 8 times, with an average attendance of 41 members.

Standing Committee. The Standing Committee met on 3rd, and again on 18th November, 1937, to consider what action could be taken towards carrying out the Resolution passed at the Council meeting at Bournemouth on the *Contributory Pensions Act*. It was only the last Clause of the Resolution that required consideration:—

"It (the N.C.W.) further urges that a Commission of Enquiry be appointed into this and other anomalies of Social Insurance for Women."

It was agreed that little useful discussion on the matter could take place until a full list of these anomalies had been made. Fortunately, Miss Strachey was able to inform the Committee that the London and National Society for Women's Service had arranged for an investigation of the present position of women in Social Insurance, and promised that, when completed, a report would be given to the N.C.W. This was done in March, when Mrs. Champneys, the

investigator, gave an address on the result of her researches to the Industrial and Insurance Committee. The following month, Mrs. Hartree summarised the findings for the Parliamentary Committee.

Inheritance (Family Provision) Bill. Mr. Stanley Holmes, M.P., gave an address on this Bill, which he sponsored, at the November meeting. The Clauses have been watered down since then, so that the provisions will be even less effective than the law in certain of the Dominions, on which the terms were originally modelled.

Native Affairs in South Africa. At the February meeting, Sir Robert Hamilton gave an illuminating address on the problem of the three Protectorates: Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland—whose ultimate fate has been causing a good deal of feeling in South Africa, on both sides. At the close of his lecture, after clearly showing the impasse at present existing, he said the best way would be for representatives of the three parties concerned: i.e., the South African Government, the Protectorates, and the British Government, to get together and talk things over. It is gratifying to know that this recommendation has since been carried out.

Hire Purchase Amendment Bill. In March, Mr. Astbury, General Secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, gave an account of the terrible effects of the Hire Purchase system. He did not wholly condemn the system, but, except as run by a few of the very best firms, (by whom the Bill was welcomed), it worked havoc and devastation in innumerable working class homes. Since then, Amendments have reduced the scope of the Bill, but it is still likely to do away with the worst abuses.

Parliamentary Procedure. At the May Meeting, Col. D. Clifton Brown, M.P., dealt with this very complicated and technical subject in such a way as to make it truly interesting.

Proportional Representation. Mr. J. M. Humphreys, J.P., in June, spoke in favour of this system of voting, which, in his opinion, is the only fair one. It is used in various countries: among them, Ireland and Denmark, and in U.S.A. for Municipal Elections. Though it makes it difficult to get a leading majority, the policy for which the nation is ready can be pushed by combining parties.

Parliamentary Report. Keen interest has been shown in many points brought forward by Mrs. Home Peel, in the Parliamentary Report. The Committee will much regret to learn of her resignation from the onerous post of Hon. Parliamentary Secretary.

Public Health and Child Welfare Committee.

Chairman: THE LADY RUTH BALFOUR, M.B., B.S.

Hon. Secretary: MISS SCOTT-ELLIOTT (Oct. 1937-Apr. 1938).

The Committee has met five times, there being a joint meeting in May with the Moral Welfare and Education Committees. In

February, Mrs. Oliver Strachey spoke on the "Shortage of Nurses." With the approval of the Executive, an *Ad Hoc* Committee was formed, to collect information as to the reason for this shortage. This sub-committee had reported to and worked in close co-operation with the Public Health Committee (see page 8).

The Committee's attention had been drawn to:—

- (a) The menace to the public health by traffic in proprietary medicines.

As a result of a letter from the Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee on Food and Health, the branches were asked whether in the view of their members: (i) The Public is being injured and exploited by the sale of these medicines and appliances; (ii) Skilled treatment is being delayed by their use. The replies are being collated.

- (b) The safety of children on the roads. This matter was referred to the Regional and Branch Representatives Committee.

- (c) The price of milk all over the country.

The Colwyn Bay Branch sent the following resolution to Headquarters—

That this meeting of the N.C.W. views with much concern the present high price of milk. In the interests of the health of the nation, it urges the Government to take all possible and immediate steps to reduce the price of milk to the general public.

The Committee then invited Mr. W. A. Hill, Publicity Officer of the Milk Marketing Board who gave a talk on the Aims and Achievements of the Board, on 8th February, and simultaneously issued a questionnaire to the branches on prices of milk in each of their areas. A great deal of information was received and it is hoped to summarise the replies and submit a report shortly.

Dr. Rewcastle, British representative on the I.C.W. Standing Committee on Child Welfare prepared an interesting account for the Edinburgh meeting in answer to a questionnaire of what is being done in this country. (Printed copies are obtainable from the office, price 4½d. post free).

Lady Ruth Balfour, British representative on the I.C.W. Standing Committee on Public Health, also submitted a most thorough report (copies obtainable from the office, price 2½d. post free) in answer to a questionnaire on the whole question of Nutrition in this country, she was greatly assisted in her investigations by more than 30 branches.

Public Service and Magistrates Committee.

Chairman: MISS E. H. KELLY, C.B.E., J.P.

Vice-Chairman: MRS. PHILLIPS, J.P., C.C.

Hon. Secretary: MRS. HOLMAN, J.P.

Hon. Legal Adviser: MISS BRIGHT ASHFORD, B.A.

Secretary: MISS FORSTER.

Addresses were given by the following:—

Mr. Albert Lieck, on the Report of the Departmental Committee on Courts of Summary Jurisdiction in the Metropolitan Area, and by Mr. Cecil Bigwood, J.P.; Miss Warner, (Children's Branch Home Office), on Training, Classification and After-Care in Approved Schools for Girls; Dr. Denis Carroll, Co-Director of the Institute for the Scientific Treatment of Delinquency, on the work of the Institute; Mr. Walter Adams, Secretary of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning, on the Refugee Problem and its International Character; Mr. R. H. Turton, M.P., on the Law regarding Prostitutes and Brothels at a Joint Meeting held with the Moral Welfare Committee.

Special attention was given by the Committee to amendments in the Children's and Young Persons Acts, and all the points forwarded to the Home Office by the Committee had been incorporated in the Lyons Bill, now an Act of Parliament. Discussion had taken place as to inadequate sentences for Sexual Offences against Young Persons. Endeavours were made to collect evidence as to Criminal Abortion for the Inter-departmental Committee on this subject, but it had been impossible to obtain sufficient facts to justify members giving evidence.

It was necessary to postpone the discussion on Penal Reform in view of the delay in the introduction of legislation. The Bill will be discussed by the Committee as soon as it is available.

Twelve new members joined the Committee during the year and there was an excellent attendance of members at all meetings.

Regional and Branch Representatives Committee.

Chairman: THE PRESIDENT, THE LADY RUTH BALFOUR, M.B., B.S.

Hon. Secretary for the Regional Committees: MRS. NOWELL WATKINS.

Secretary: THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

In addition to the Tea held in Bournemouth, the Committee met four times in London during the year, and there will be a special meeting on Thursday, October 11th, the day before the opening of the Representative Council. The average attendance was 32.

The Branches have all shown a great interest in the I.C.W. Golden Jubilee Conference held last July in Edinburgh, as evidenced by the large number of ordinary members who attended. Most of

In June, Mrs. Ernest James raised the question "Should Children be excluded from Licensed Premises?" As the law stands they are not permitted in Public Bars, but they may be found, often until closing time, in other parts of Public Houses, some most unsuitable and unhygienic. This matter is not merely a Temperance question, it is one of National Fitness. School teachers are pleading for "More sleep for Children."

Mrs. Goodyear tendered her resignation from the chairmanship, after ten years in office. She was elected Vice-Chairman, as Lady Horsley has resigned from that position. Miss Cecile Matheson has been elected Chairman, as the result of a Postal Ballot.

Women Police and Patrols Committee.

Chairman : MISS E. TANCRED.

Hon. Secretary : MISS M. COWLIN, J.P.

The outstanding event of the year has been the recognition by the Home Office of the Metropolitan and the Birmingham Police Forces as Training Schools for Women Police. In reply to a letter from the President of the National Council of Women asking for the recognition of Training Schools, the Home Secretary stated on 27th September, 1937, that Chief Constables had been circularised and had been informed that women police recruits could be sent by them for training to the Metropolitan Police Force for 10 weeks or to Birmingham for 12 to 15 weeks, for a preliminary training at a charge of 10/- a week. The Branches were circularised and urged to make this career for women known to suitable candidates. The Hon. Secretary was asked to get into touch with such candidates referred to her, and she now keeps a Register of women who fulfil the necessary conditions and who wish to take up police work.

In order to keep the work of Women Police before those directly concerned with it, a letter was sent from the Executive in January 1938, to the Home Secretary asking if a special paragraph could be given to the work of Women Police in the Annual Report of H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary. The Home Secretary has asked H.M. Inspectors to do this in future.

The Home Secretary hopes shortly to introduce a Penal Reform Bill to deal with Young Delinquents and Persistent Offenders. A joint letter has been sent by the National Federation of Women's Institutes and the National Council of Women asking that girls who are juvenile delinquents or the victims of sexual offences against them, may be dealt with by women police.

The year has shown an increase of propaganda on behalf of policewomen in rural areas. In Warwickshire, Bucks, Hants, East Sussex, Worcestershire, etc., social organisations, magistrates and others have held meetings and arranged for deputations to their respective Standing Joint Committees. The Women Police Committee feels strongly that the opposition to women police by

the Scottish Branches offered lavish hospitality to I.C.W. delegates; Cambridge, York, Carlisle, and Manchester entertained the members of a motor coach tour from London to Edinburgh and back, organised by Headquarters. Several Branches near London invited distinguished members of the I.C.W. to address their meetings.

Branches have co-operated with Headquarters on the following matters, which have often entailed a great deal of trouble and investigation :—

Mortuaries.
Patent Medicines.
Nutrition Questionnaire.
Nursing Questionnaire.
Films for Children.
Contraceptives Bill.
Milk Prices.
Inflammable Toys.
Status of Women Day.

British Empire Exhibition. Branches have contributed £114. 16s. 8d. to the cost of a panel representing Women's Work, which was in a conspicuous position in the Women's Pavilion at the Exhibition, and which will be the property of the N.C.W. after the close of the Exhibition. As the panel cost £150 the Council must still find £35.

One-Day Conferences, in the various Regions seem to be popular, successful ones having been held at Bristol (Western Region), Uxbridge (Home Counties), etc.

Temperance Committee.

Chairman : MRS. GOODYEAR.

Vice-Chairman : LADY HORSLEY.

Hon. Secretary : MISS NOEL NYE.

The Committee held three meetings during the year. In November, Mr. Charles Nye spoke on "The International Congress against Alcoholism" held in Warsaw, this being the 21st of such congresses. The President of the Congress had stressed the fact that the qualities demanded by modern life are incompatible with the use of alcohol, and said that "most civilised states close their saloons on election days, which require from their citizens a full control of their intellectual capacities and their conscientious responsibility."

Mr. Cecil Heath addressed the Committee on "The International Commission on Motor Traffic." He said that, in many countries, laws relating to the use of alcohol by motorists were much more stringent than those of England. In Scandinavia it was an offence for a professional to drive until eight hours had elapsed since his last drink.

members of the Standing Joint Committees is due to the fact that neither the higher officials appointed nor the members themselves have a direct knowledge of the duties that are assigned to women police by the Statutory Regulations, nor do they realise the injustice and harm done to women and children because women police are not available to serve them.

In November, Miss Tancred attended the Tenth International Congress in Paris for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children. Throughout the discussions the need for women police to deal with this problem was stressed. The Report of the Conference of Central Authorities in Eastern Countries, held in Java in 1937, showed the increasing demand for women officials to deal with women who come within the reach of the law.

The Committee feels that no efforts should be relaxed to secure the appointment of women police so that their services should be available in every Force. The Committee wishes specially to thank the voluntary speakers who have helped very considerably with the propaganda work throughout the country. The need for a Woman Inspector of Constabulary to co-ordinate the work of provincial policewomen appears to be the matter most needing emphasis at the present stage in the movement for Women Police.

MARJORIE WATTS,
General Secretary.

SEPTEMBER, 1938.

Report of the Regional Committees and of the Work of the Branches.

1937-8.

This Report covers a period of one year, and the main work done by the Branches is presented under the subject headings of the Sectional Committees at Headquarters, following short accounts of the Regional Committees. The aim has been to mention the work of as many branches as possible, but it is felt that those whose activities are mainly confined to discussions and addresses can only inadequately be referred to, owing to lack of space and the very great number of subjects covered.

EASTERN COUNTIES REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MRS. HARPER SMITH.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. HARTREE.

The Eastern Counties Regional Committee has met twice during the year, at **Norwich** in November and at **Peterborough** in July ; all present appreciated the help obtained in the pooling of suggestions and experiences.

At the Luncheon at **Norwich**, Miss Jackson, Matron of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, spoke on "Nurses and Nursing," and said she considered that the time had come to lay more stress on the advantages of the profession and on the good conditions in the well-run hospitals. She herself had always been in favour of the division of the Preliminary Examination, and had come to the conclusion that it might well be advantageous to have a 2nd grade of nurse for chronic cases requiring less skilled attention.

At **Peterborough**, Miss Hartland, J.P., spoke on Women Police in urban and rural areas, giving reasons for the necessity of properly trained and attested women.

HOME COUNTIES REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MISS CECILE MATHESON.

Hon. Secretary : MISS INEZ BLANCH.

Five meetings have been held during the year, one of which took the form of a One-Day Conference at Uxbridge, at which nearly 300 people were present. The Branches were invited to send in resolutions, excellent discussions took place, and a cordial Civic Welcome was extended by the Chairman of the Uxbridge Urban Council, Mr. H. A. Leno, J.P.

On the 1st December, Mrs. Gilham Bolus kindly entertained the Committee to tea at Murray House. Mrs. Maurice Bear spoke of the work of the Guild of Household Workers, which is attached to the Wayfarers Guild, and Miss Sutherland from the Safety First Association gave an address on Safety First in the Home. Both speakers offered to visit Branch meetings.

In May the Committee met at the house of Mrs. Roger Hetherington by kind invitation of the **Hornsey** Branch. Lunch was provided in the Old Kitchen of Ken Wood House, at which Councillor Mrs. Hill spoke of the work of the Hornsey Housing Trust, and Mrs. Hetherington gave a short account of the history of Ken Wood House.

On the 6th July, by kind invitation of Mrs. Panman and the **Watford** Branch, a Garden Party was held at Inwood, Grange Road, Watford. Interesting addresses were given by Fraulein Zellweger (Switzerland) and Mrs. Oberle (Hungary), who were on their way to the I.C.W. Conference in **Edinburgh**, and by Dr. Pinterovic, on Girls' Education in Yugoslavia.

EAST MIDLAND REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MRS. R. F. PERCY.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. W. S. ROTHERA.

Since the last Report was issued, this Committee has met four times. A well attended one-day Conference was held in **Nottingham**, at which Lady Ruth Balfour was present, both at the business meeting in the morning and the afternoon session, when the various questionnaires from Headquarters were discussed.

Equally successful was another one-day conference held at **Lincoln**, members being shown over the Cathedral Library. During the meeting £5 was collected and sent to the Markham Pit Disaster Fund. Informal meetings at the Chairman's and Secretary's houses were fully attended.

Vital social work of all sorts has been done by individual Branches, each of which report increased interest in the work of the N.C.W. in general and in their own Branch in particular. Details will be found under Committee headings, but interesting points are :—

- (1) **Lincoln** has an annual discussion on Bills before Parliament.
- (2) Two women magistrates have been appointed at **Newark and Southwell**.

- (3) The resolution sent in by **Chesterfield** Branch on "Dental Treatment for the Adolescent" was passed at Bournemouth.
- (4) A popular innovation at **Nottingham** is a "Members' Meeting" when reports are read and suggestions invited.

WEST MIDLAND REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MRS. EMANUEL.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. W. E. HICKS.

The West Midland Regional Committee has for some years now held two business meetings in **Birmingham** in February and October and a one-day conference at one of the Branches in May.

At the business meetings, members are invited to bring reports of the work of their branches and are requested to carry out enquiries on various subjects about which information is required from headquarters. The information received is tabulated and given at the meetings of the Regional and Branch Representatives Committee in London.

The One-Day Conferences, now held at a different branch each year, prove an excellent means of co-ordinating the work of the Branches and increasing social intercourse between them. The Hostess Branch naturally invites as many of its members as possible and spares no effort to make the Conference an interesting and enjoyable function.

This year the conference was held at **Malvern**.

NORTHERN REGIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT.

Chairman : MRS. ALDERSON.

Hon. Secretary : MISS TRUTTMAN.

During the year three meetings have been held at **Newcastle-on-Tyne**, with full representation at each. The various problems put forward by the London Executive were fully discussed, and in many cases direct action agreed upon. The Resolution to send a representative to each meeting of the Regional and Branch Representatives Committee has been adhered to.

A Panel of Speakers resident in the North was drawn up, and issued to each Branch. Social services in the different areas were usefully contrasted.

Miss Cowan made a Regional tour, visiting en route factories, ship-yards, social centres, and a trading estate.

The Branch Reports given regularly are of mutual benefit.

NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : LADY LAWSON-TANCREW, J.P.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. ANGELO RAINE.

This Committee has met three times during the past year when detailed reports have been given by representatives of the Branches.

A meeting in **Halifax** was followed by a luncheon, and visits were paid in the afternoon to (1) Flats for single women, (2) Bungalows for aged People, (3) The new Children's Home on the moors.

A new venture was tried at the last meeting held in **York**. In order that members should meet the National President, Branches were invited to send their members to attend a luncheon and an afternoon meeting which was addressed by Lady Ruth Balfour. This was crowded, as parties came from every Branch in the Region.

Two Sub-Committees have been set up. The first deals with the great need for *women Police* in the West Riding of Yorkshire. This sub-committee is sending out a questionnaire to organisations of women in the Region asking for information and help. It will, after collecting evidence, send a deputation to the Chief Constable of the West Riding asking for the appointment of more Women Police.

The second sub-committee deals with the *Pooling of speakers* in this region. Two tours have been arranged : one in October on "Recent developments of Child Guidance" ; the second in November on the "Significance of the International Council of Women." A list of local speakers was read at the meeting for Branch Secretaries. This sub-committee is proving to be of great use to the branches.

The work in this Region has grown during the last few years, and a close contact is kept with most of the branches.

NORTH WESTERN REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : THE LADY CAWLEY.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. STEWART BROWN, J.P.

The North Western Regional Committee met in **Manchester** in October 1937 and in **Wrexham** in May, 1938, and is glad that

the **Bangor** Branch has rejoined the Committee ; also that, through the energy and hard work of Miss Allington-Hughes and others, the Branch at **Wrexham** has re-formed and has a membership of 120 and 14 affiliated societies.

At the May meeting Miss Pugh Jones reported that the **Llangollen** Branch had suffered a severe loss in the death of its President, Mrs. Aikin, one of the founders of the Branch and the builder and donor of the Child Welfare and Maternity Centre which served as a Headquarters for the Branch.

Lady Cawley had been re-elected as Chairman of the Committee.

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MISS RUNDLE.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. R. WILLIAMS.

By kind invitation of the **Farnham** Branch, a meeting of the Southern Regional Committee took place at Farnham, on February 18th, 1938.

The chief subject discussed was the questionnaires from Headquarters : some points which aroused keen interest were :— the enquiry as to comparative prices and cost of living and the supply, or the lack, of suitable housing for the single person family.

The members present from each branch reported on the results of their investigations, which had already been sent in to Headquarters.

At the close of the meeting, the visiting members were taken on to the **Farnham** Branch Meeting, at which an excellent address on Psychology was given.

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MRS. GOODYEAR.

Hon. Secretary : MISS NORAH GREEN.

Mrs. Goodyear's resignation after three years as Chairman has been received with much regret ; Miss Milman (**Eastbourne** Branch) has been appointed as her successor. The serious illness of Miss E. C. Harvey has deprived the Committee of one of its most valued members.

Owing to the continued kindness of Mrs. Wilson Potter in lending her room for the meetings and giving the members tea, in addition to making herself responsible for getting the necessary typing done, it has been possible to make several contributions to N.C.W. funds,

Branches in this area have been very active, and full details will be found under separate headings.

SOUTH WESTERN REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MRS. LOVIBOND, J.P.

Hon. Secretary : MISS MARGARET SMITH.

The Committee has met twice, at the end of November, 1937, and early July, 1938, at the house of the chairman, at **Salisbury**. Representatives from the four branches in the Region attended both meetings, and various matters from the Headquarters Executive Committee and Regional and Branch Representatives Committee were reported and discussed.

In November much interesting and valuable information was gained on the training, work and duties of a Policewoman, from a talk by the one at Salisbury.

These meetings, especially of late, seem to be appreciated as a link between the branches and are found to be helpful.

WESTERN REGIONAL COMMITTEE.

Chairman : MISS E. H. SMITH.

Hon. Secretary : MISS C. L. MORANT.

The Western Regional Committee has met four times during the year.

A half-day Conference was held at **Bristol** at the beginning of the year when the President spoke of the work to be done at **Edinburgh**. At an open meeting which was held at the University, Lady Ruth spoke on the Empire Crusade against Rheumatism. This meeting was a very full one, the Conference was well attended and great interest was shown.

The branches each report on their activities at the quarterly meetings. Public Health and Education seem to have been the subjects in which all have been interested. Social Hygiene, Midwifery, Child Guidance Clinics, Local Government in relation to everyday life, and Borstal Institutes, are some of the subjects considered.

SCOTTISH STANDING COMMITTEE.

Chairman : EX-BAILIE ISABELLE KERR, J.P.

Hon. Secretary : MRS. DAVID PATERSON, M.A.

The Committee met in **Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth** and **Stirling**. The Divorce Law (Scotland), and Marriage Laws (Scotland), and the new powers for instituting Juvenile Courts in Scotland were specially considered.

The Cinema, Health, Finance, and Police Sub-Committees met three times.

The under-policing of the Empire Exhibition gave grave concern to the Scottish Standing Committee. At the end of April, a deputation was received by the Exhibition authorities, and a letter signed by the President, Ex-Bailie Isabelle Kerr, Mrs. Shaw Dunn (Chairman of the **Glasgow** Branch) and Miss Tancred, was sent to H.M. Secretary of State for Scotland. The result in both cases was unsatisfactory.

In June, a two-day Conference held in conjunction with the Scottish Council of Women Citizens' Associations at the Empire Exhibition, discussed among other subjects "Some Aspects of the Women's Movement," "The Fuller Contribution of Women to the Life of the Community" and "Problems in International Government."

I.C.W. Golden Jubilee Conference. At the Welcome Meeting of the I.C.W. Conference in **Edinburgh** on the 12th July, ex-Bailie Isabelle Kerr welcomed the delegates in the name of Scotland. Mrs. J. T. S. Watson, chairman of the **Edinburgh** Branch seconded. On the 20th July, 50 delegates were the guests of members of the S.S.C. at dinner. (For further particulars of Hospitality given to I.C.W. delegates see Annual Report).

Branch Work under Committee Headings.

ARTS AND LETTERS COMMITTEE.

Derbyshire helped to organise a concert in connection with the visit of a German Youth Orchestra. **Ealing** collected over £5 for a Trophy to be presented at the Ealing musical festival last Spring. The membership of **Mortlake's** Literary Society is rapidly increasing.

Several branches have had Book Discussions, and **Wolverhampton** arranged a musical programme at a social afternoon. Many branches invited distinguished authors to address the members on literary subjects.

BRITISH EMPIRE AND MIGRATION COMMITTEE.

The International Section of the **Birmingham** Branch chose "Native Races of Africa" to study this year. In view of the German demand for colonies, and the question of the transfer of the Protectorates to South Africa, this proved of timely interest. The section had six addresses on Empire subjects.

Mrs. Rama Rau, M.A. addressed **York** Branch on "Organised Indian Women Today," and several Branches had talks on Mui Tsai or child slavery.

CINEMA COMMITTEE.

Birmingham has written to the local Press regarding the unsuitable films still being shown at children's matinees, and calling attention to the list of "Films for Children" issued by the British Film Institute.

The **Manchester** Cinema Sub-Committee formed a Cinema discussion group to listen to a series of wireless talks on the Cinema. The **North Staffs** members have been investigating the seats allocated to children at children's matinees in relation to eye-strain.

The question of Children's Matinees and the recommendations of the B.F.I. have also been taken up by **York** (all picture theatres having been written to), **Malvern**, and a number of other branches.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

Branches continue to be interested in and work for Nursery Schools, **Middlesbrough** having raised £76 for their Nursery School; the local Education Authority has now taken over payment of the salary of the Superintendent and her assistant.

Child Guidance Clinics are very popular as subjects for addresses at Branch meetings. **Cheltenham** has raised £90 to help support the local Child Guidance Clinic, until it is fully recognised by the Education Authorities.

Birmingham Education Committee helped to arouse public opinion in the matter of organised Play Centres for children which have been open on certain evenings during the school term, and also during the August holidays, in two-hour sessions every afternoon and evening.

HOUSEHOLD SERVICE COMMITTEE.

Increasing interest is shown in Household Service, which is evidenced by the fact that a resolution sent in by **Farnham** urging the Board of Education to make Training in Domestic Subjects compulsory, found a place on the Preliminary Agenda.

A Sub-Committee of the Household Service League has been formed in **Birmingham** and **Hull** is interested in the Training of Domestic Workers. Many branches have had addresses on domestic subjects.

HOUSING COMMITTEE.

Bradford's Housing Sub-Committee has visited slum clearance areas and new Housing Estates, and has sent suggestions for improvements to the Housing and Parks Sub-Committee of the Council. **Bradford** reports that single-Person Housing is progressing well and that branch members will actively support a local community centre which is being started.

Chesterfield has taken up the matter of the local need for flats, has brought pressure to bear in various quarters, and reports that plans for flats have now been passed by the Council. The **Hornsey** Branch and the **Hornsey Housing Trust** Committee (carried on by members of the Hornsey Branch) gave a large New Year's party for lonely women in the district.

In **Leeds** the growth of local Housing Estates for slum clearance gives rise to an urgent need for social care of tenants, work which is done so well by Octavia Hill Trained women. The Branch is endeavouring to get this system tried out in one Housing

Estate as a beginning. **Wolverhampton** is to be congratulated on the appointment of a woman assistant in the local Housing Estate Department.

Stirling combined with the Thistle Property Trust and National Federation of Housing Societies to organise a conference on Scottish Housing Needs at which the subjects discussed were "The Need for Community Centres in new Housing Areas" and "the Provision of Houses for Aged and Childless Couples."

York House Improvement Society has acquired a large house and converted it into several flats and bed-sitting rooms for business women, which have been a great boon. **Perth** arranged a talk by the Town Clerk on "Housing in the City of Perth."

HUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS COMMITTEE.

Following on the resolution passed at Bournemouth concerning "Private Zoos," **Birmingham** wrote to a local store about the condition of animals in their Pets' Corner, and branches all over the country have investigated conditions in Private Zoos.

York passed a resolution in favour of making the selling of plumage illegal and members have actively supported the Docking and Nicking of Horses (Prohibition) Bill.

INDUSTRIAL AND INSURANCE COMMITTEE.

Aylesbury sent a deputation to the Bucks County Council Juvenile Employment Committee asking them to withdraw their sanction to girls *under* 16 being transferred from the "Distressed Areas." This has been done. Members of **St. Albans** have acted as "friends to juveniles" transferred to that area.

Leeds, St. Albans and **Oldham** have co-operated with the Ministry of Labour Enquiry into the Expenditure of Working Class Families. **Wolverhampton** has been interested in Juveniles in unregulated trades.

The new Factory Act and problems of National Insurance have been subjects for Branch Meetings.

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND FOR THE PROMOTION OF PEACE.

This year's reports of Branch activities showed a marked increased interest in International Affairs. **Aberdeen, Harrogate, Oldham, Southport** and **Glasgow** have supported Peace Weeks or the Peace Penny Scheme.

Birmingham International Section has had addresses on the Annexation of Austria and the International Situation. **Birmingham** has also sent an observer to the International Japanese Boycott Congress and helped to staff a shop run by the League of Nations Union for three weeks. **Birmingham, Chorley Wood,** and **Leicester** worked actively for the China Relief Funds.

Branches have had addresses on "India," and **Maidstone, Mansfield, Stirling, Worthing, Hull, Ealing** and others have supported peace propaganda by means of talks, etc. **Bristol** has been studying China for a year, the culmination being an address by Miss Chu Chen Koo (daughter of the Chinese Ambassador in Paris) on "Women of China." By invitation of the Lady Mayoress, this was held at the Town Hall.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN COMMITTEE.

The I.C.W. Golden Jubilee Conference in July has naturally been of immense interest to the branches. The total amount subscribed to the Lady Aberdeen Fund for the endowment of the I.C.W. by the N.C.W. of Great Britain was £574. 15s. 0d. and many branches have had addresses on the I.C.W. and have carried out investigations in order to fill in questionnaires preparatory to the work of the Standing Committees.

MORAL WELFARE COMMITTEE.

Birmingham Social and Moral Welfare Committee has been concerned with the question of children left outside public houses to wait for their parents.

Leeds appointed a sub-committee to make a full enquiry into conditions governing the advertisement and sale of contraceptives in the locality. Many branches took up the matter of slot machines for contraceptives, and have had addresses on Moral Welfare Work, Social Hygiene, etc.

PARLIAMENTARY AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE.

Branches have again co-operated fully with Headquarters in regard to the following Bills of Parliament, by writing to local M.P's, sending letters to the Press, etc.

Inheritance (Family Provision) Bill.
Contraceptives Bill.
Hire Purchase Bill.

Glasgow arranged to have the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1932 explained at a meeting and also arranged for an expert to speak on the Divorce (Scotland) Bill. **Manchester** sent information to Headquarters regarding alleged bogus charities,

which was forwarded to Lord Stonehaven for the Collecting Charities (Regulation) Bill, at that time before the House of Lords. **Manchester** also has appointed an Hon. Parliamentary Secretary.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE.

Branches have shown increasing interest in all matters that come within the scope of this Committee. The Commission set up in **Birmingham** last year to enquire into local Nursing conditions has now collected evidence which should prove of great value to all those concerned with recruitment and conditions in the Nursing Services. **Glasgow** is helping to collect information re Nursing Services in Scotland, and **Leicester** also has taken up this question.

Many branches support local hospitals and charitable institutions.

Aberdeen raised £31 and **Bromley** £111 for the Blind. **Hull** raised money for its Maternity Hospital. **Newark** and **Southwell** provided cots, layettes and money for the maternity wing of the local hospital. **Peterborough** raised over £700 for its maternity ward. **North Staffs** collected £39 for the Children's Convalescent and Holiday Home at Rhyl, and **Richmond** organised a flag day in connection with the cancer campaign, which brought in £137.

Greenock is interested in Child Adoption, and 63 children have been adopted in Greenock since the Child Adoption Act came into force. A member runs a post guide company of cripple girls.

Stirling sent 16 invalid children to a convalescent home. **Cheltenham** and **Maidstone** helped in the after-care of tubercular patients. **Cheltenham** is trying to get a voluntary association for Mental Welfare established in Gloucestershire. **Kings Lynn** has collected £50 for Colchester Mental Homes. **Spenborough** sent a subscription to York Children's Orthopaedic Hospital. **Mortlake** members continue to visit the Brookwood and Netherne Mental Institutions regularly. **Gloucester** was consulted by the City Health Committee concerning public conveniences for women. **Birmingham**, **Eastbourne**, **Leicester** and **Norfolk** have taken up the question of either the Basque or the non-Aryan Christian child, and **Bilston** has worked for the Children's Holiday Camp at Wombourne.

PUBLIC SERVICE AND MAGISTRATES COMMITTEE.

Cheltenham visits families of Borstal lads. **Colwyn Bay** is trying to get a Remand Home for Juveniles established in North Wales, the lack of which is seriously hampering the work of the Juvenile Courts. **Greenock** reports that Ayrshire has now set up Juvenile Courts under the Justices of the Peace.

Hull's Public Service Committee continues to do good work. **Manchester** has had five members appointed to the Bench of Magistrates during the last year. **York** asked the Lord Mayor to provide more police to patrol the riverside and this was done at once.

Branches have had addresses on Prison Reform, Borstal Institutions, Psychology in the Treatment of Young Offenders, Local Government and Free Legal Aid for Poor Persons.

TEMPERANCE COMMITTEE.

Eastbourne attended the Brewster Sessions to protest against the extension of licensing hours. **Gloucester** also successfully opposed the extension of licensing hours in the City.

Cambridge carried out a great deal of research before sending in a resolution for the Preliminary Agenda on the principle of blood tests in connection with road accidents.

North Ayrshire has a temperance Section.

WOMEN POLICE AND PATROLS COMMITTEE.

Bangor reports that attempts to obtain a policewoman have broken down, owing to the hopelessly antagonistic attitude of the Chief Constable. Now that **Birmingham** has a recognised training centre for Women Police, a letter is being sent to Headmistresses pointing out the advantages of this career for women. **Bournemouth** is renewing its agitation for the appointment of policewomen and **Harrogate** is working to get more women police in the West Riding.

A letter signed by the President, Ex-Bailie Isabelle Kerr, J.P., Miss Tancred, and Mrs. Shaw Dunn, was sent to H.M. Secretary of State for Scotland, protesting against the under-policing of the Glasgow Exhibition.

Two J.P. members of the **Hull** Branch have interviewed candidates who wish to become policewomen. **Mortlake** reports that a policewoman has been promised for Barnes Common every day during the holidays. She will continue to work there as often as possible afterwards.

Wolverhampton is to be congratulated on the appointment of a woman police Inspector. **York** has made application to the Watch Committee to consider the appointment of a policewoman.

"Women Police" continues to be a very popular subject for addresses at Branch Meetings.

OTHER SOCIAL WORK.

Bromley raised £42 for its Girls' Hostel. **North Staffs.** and **Oldham** also help to support such hostels. **Bedford** helps at a Community Hall to train children to value wholesome club activities and amusements. **Berkhamsted's** Girls' Club, owing to the Annual Sale run by the girls, is now self-supporting, and **Aylesbury, Cheltenham** and **Harrogate** run or help to run Girls' Clubs. Fifteen branches are sending clothes to distressed areas or running clubs for unemployed men and their wives. **Stirling** has a goodwill club where 80 women meet weekly to sew and talk.

A.R.P. work has already been taken up by 20 branches and 150 members of the **Nottingham** Branch have attended the A.R.P. lectures and taken the examinations. **Harrow** has undertaken to collect 100 women for A.R.P. work, and this group will be specially trained together, and it is hoped will form an N.C.W. First Aid Post.

Aberdeen is to be congratulated on the election of its Vice-President, Lady Lewis to be a director of the Royal Infirmary. She is the first woman to hold this position.

Birmingham branch has provided speakers for over 180 addresses. **Northumberland, Newcastle and Tyneside** and **Manchester** have drawn up a Panel of Speakers. **Manchester** decided to include a few advertisements in its printed Annual Report to lessen the expense and states that the cost of producing the report is now more than covered. **Richmond** celebrated its 21st birthday on 5th July.

As the result of an address on Vagrancy several members of the **Stockton and Thornaby** Branch "adopted" a tramp for Christmas. **Harpenden** undertook the work of transforming the local Mortuary (a depressing building) into a Tranquil Home of Rest. £20 was raised and used for re-decoration, etc.

London Branch has concentrated on offering Hospitality to branch members and delegates from abroad to the International Council of Women Golden Jubilee Conference. A member of the **Tunbridge Wells** Committee has contested and won a seat on the local Council. A member of the **Farnham** branch has been elected Chairman of the Farnham Urban District Council.

Llangollen held a successful two-day conference and has done excellent work, through its sub-committee of the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales.

A large proportion of the Branches have co-operated with Headquarters on the following diverse questions :—

Inflammable Toys.	Nutrition.
Hire Purchase Bill.	Children on the Roads.
Milk Prices.	Enquiry into Nursing Services.
Housing the Single Person	Contraceptives Bill.
Family.	Status of Women Day.
Station Waiting Rooms.	Women's Voluntary Services
Proprietary Medicines.	for A.R.P.

MARJORIE WATTS,

Secretary,

SEPT., 1938.

Regional & Branch Representatives Committee.

RESOLUTIONS

PASSED AT THE
REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING,
LONDON,

14th—16th October, 1938.

International Situation.

(a) The National Council of Women, in Conference assembled, desires to place on record its profound agreement with the pronouncement made by President Roosevelt in his message to Herr Hitler on 26th September :—

“That no problem is so difficult nor so pressing for solution that it cannot be justly solved by resort to reason, rather than by resort to force.”

and its recognition of the great personal efforts of the Prime Minister to this end.

Further, it fervently hopes that H.M. Government will endorse President Roosevelt's plea that a wide International Conference should be called to consider all outstanding problems endangering the peace of the world.

Carried, 12 dissentients.

(b) In response to an appeal made to this Council by the women of Czechoslovakia, the National Council of Women urges His Majesty's Government to instruct their representative on the International Commission to do everything possible to ensure the fair and safe transfer of populations.

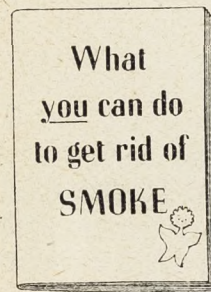
Carried unanimously.

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(c) While recognising that the immediate danger of war has been averted, the National Council of Women considers that the States Members should take steps towards the revision and reconstruction of the League of Nations, in the light of its successes and failures during the last twenty years.

Further, the N.C.W. urges that in this reconstruction the Covenant should be separated from the Peace Treaties.

Carried unanimously.

1. Offices Regulation.

The National Council of Women calls the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that the Public Health Acts fail to secure suitable conditions for those working in offices; and urges that the regulation of hours and conditions of work in offices, particularly with regard to the sanitary accommodation, cleanliness, light and ventilation should be administered by the Home Office, and that legislation for this purpose should be introduced.

Carried, 1 dissentient.

2. Clubs.

That the National Council of Women shares the concern of responsible authorities throughout the country regarding the continued delay in the introduction of the promised Government Bill to deal with the Club problem, and regrets that the Government could not after all introduce the Bill during this Session.

The Council, though aware of the extreme pressure of business, now urges H.M. Government to give an immediate assurance that the Clubs Bill will have a prominent position in the programme for the next Session of Parliament. It further urges the necessity of ensuring that the provisions of the Bill conform to the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission on Licensing.

Carried *nem. con.*

3. Mental Health and Local Authorities.

That the National Council of Women considers that Local Authorities should be strongly urged under the provisions of the Mental Treatment Act, 1930, to appoint a Mental Health Committee to co-ordinate all the Mental Health Services in their areas in order to prevent gaps and overlapping, and especially to extend the facilities for:—

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1. Child Guidance, in association with the Local Education Committee, and

2. The early and preventive treatment of nervous breakdown and incipient mental disorder.

Carried unanimously.

4. Women Police Surgeons.

The National Council of Women urges the Home Secretary to issue a Circular to all Police Authorities in England and Wales recommending the appointment of a Woman Police Surgeon for the examination of women and children especially having regard to the numerous cases of sexual assault which occur.

Carried unanimously.

*5. Abortion Laws.

The National Council of Women welcomes the action of the Government in setting up an Inter-departmental Committee to enquire into the prevalence of abortion and the law dealing with criminal abortion.

In view of the fact that the present wide disregard of this law causes incalculable harm to women who resort to illegal and dangerous methods of abortion, this Council begs to draw the attention of the Minister of Health to :—

1. The need for the legalisation of abortion under adequate safeguards ;

2. The need for the provision by Public Health Authorities of contraceptive information to all married women who desire it.

Carried : 236 for, 12 against.

* The Mothers' Union has written dissociating itself from this resolution.

6. Epileptics, Community Care of.

That the National Council of Women, recognising that no organisation exists for the after-care of the epileptic, is of opinion that such service should be provided, which should have as its chief concern the welfare of the adolescent boy and girl discharged from Residential Special Schools and Colonies for Epileptics ;

and further that, as epileptics are not included in the categories of physically and mentally handicapped persons entitled to the

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assistance of Local Authorities, this Conference considers that the Government should be urged to recognise that, in view of the difficulty of finding and retaining work for epileptics, their community care is as essential a duty of Local Authorities as are their maintenance and education in Residential Special Schools and Colonies.

Carried *nem. con.*

7. Hospital Pay Beds for all.

The National Council of Women begs to urge that immediate steps be taken to increase pay beds in large hospitals for the treatment of all classes irrespective of income.

Carried, 8 against.

8. Van Zeeland Report.

That the National Council of Women cordially welcomes the Van Zeeland report as offering a most valuable approach to the solution of international problems which are causing widespread unrest and may lead to war; and urgently requests His Majesty's Government to invite other nations to co-operate in seeking a peaceful solution of these problems along the lines indicated in the report; and, with this end in view, to set up without delay expert preparatory commissions to deal with the various questions involved.

Carried: 9 against.

9. Refugees and Stateless Persons.

The National Council of Women deeply moved by the distress of the refugees and stateless persons for whom assistance, the right to work and possibilities of rehabilitation should be assured and considering that the problems can only be solved internationally, expresses the wish that the humanitarian work carried on by the Nansen Committee and similar organisations be continued in some suitable form, under the auspices of the League of Nations.

Alive to the difficulties which the presence of immigrants creates in other nations, the National Council of Women:—

Supports the resolution adopted by the Evian Conference on July 14th, 1938 (which asks that involuntary emigrants be allowed to take with them their property and possessions) and urges that negotiations should be initiated on these lines; and that the Conventions concerning the International Statute of Refugees of October 1933 and of February 1938 be ratified and implemented.

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Further, the Council begs His Majesty's Government immediately to explore the possibilities of receiving Refugees within the Empire in consultation with the Governments of the Dominions.

Carried *nem. con.*

10. Physical Fitness.

The National Council of Women supports the work of the National Fitness Council which, under the Physical Training and Recreation Act of 1937, aims at the encouragement of voluntary physical training and recreation and the establishment of centres for social activities.

But the National Council of Women urges that wherever centres for recreational training are set up, due regard should be paid to the adequate training of all instructors and to the conditions under which training is carried on; to the suitability of any particular system of training to the individuals concerned; and to the factors controlling the development of the aesthetic, moral and spiritual as well as the physical powers of the individual.

To this end the National Council of Women would urge upon all Regional Fitness Councils and upon all Local Authorities the importance of the following factors in a physical fitness campaign:—

1. Adequate medical supervision of physical training.
2. Suitability of systems of training, those for women and girls being specially considered with a view to promoting easy childbirth.
3. The healthy development of the young child through ante-natal supervision of the mother and subsequent attendance of the child at Welfare Centres and Nursery Schools.
4. A knowledge of the basis of positive health, provision for character training and guidance in sex behaviour.
5. A balanced and sufficient diet including instruction on this and on the effect of alcohol on the body.
6. Sufficient rest and sleep.
7. A maximum of natural sunlight and of fresh air day and night.
8. Hygienic clothing and cleanliness.
9. The encouragement of practical and artistic hobbies at these recreational centres.

Carried unanimously.

11. Adoption Abroad of British Children.

This Conference, recognising the particular necessity for the protection of Children taken out of the country, urges the British

Government to give effect to the following recommendation of the Departmental Committee on Adoption Societies and Agencies:

"It should be an offence for an adoption society or any other body or person to arrange for a British child (a) to be taken out of the country for adoption by foreign nationals, or (b) to be taken out of the country for adoption by British subjects, without a licence from the Chief Magistrate of the Metropolitan Police Courts or any Magistrate of the Metropolitan Police Courts appointed by Order in Council for the purpose."

Carried, 1 against.

12. Domestic Science, Instruction in.

The National Council of Women welcomes the fact that the examining Boards in England and Wales have included Domestic Science in the subjects for the examination for the School Leaving Certificate, and urges that in all schools for girls and boys, instruction in housecraft, which is at present included under the term 'Domestic Science' should at some suitable time during their school life be a compulsory part of the curriculum.

199 for, 81 against.

13. Child Fitness.

Whereas the Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, whilst excluding children from the bar itself, does not exclude them from rooms, passages and gardens connected with licensed premises, it is known that children from a few weeks old to those of school age are often on the premises until and after closing time. Realising how detrimental this is to the moral and physical fitness of the children of our nation and having in mind the drive for National Fitness being made by His Majesty's Government, the National Council of Women urges that the law be altered concerning this evil and legislation be secured to exclude all children from the vicinity of licensed drinking bars after seven p.m.

Carried *nem. con.*

14. The National Council of Women urges that representations should be made to the Government and to all public authorities pointing out the obvious importance of ensuring that the staffs of all public services should normally include an adequate proportion of those not liable for other service in posts of direction and in a consultative capacity so that in time of emergency any necessary withdrawal of members of those staffs would not cause undue dislocation of the services.

With this in view an immediate policy should be adopted of recruiting, training and promoting competent women to fill a number of such posts in the ordinary course, it being necessary in the interests of men and women alike that pay and conditions should be the same for both sexes. In order to ensure that women found to be suitable should be encouraged to retain the posts for which they have been fitted by training and experience the rule that women should retire on marriage should be abrogated.

And further that every effort should be made to call the attention of all private employers of labour to the fact that the interest of the country as well as of their own business calls for a similar policy.

Carried, 16 against.

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