

# THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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Daughter of the ancient Eve,  
We know the gifts ye gave and give;  
Who knows the gifts which you shall give,  
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

*Francis Thompson*

## TELEGRAM FROM THE HOLY FATHER

**President St Joan's Alliance**

Holy Father sincerely grateful devoted expression homage cordially imparts officers members St Joan's Alliance commemorating Golden Jubilee paternal apostolic blessing implored.

**Cardinal Tardini**

**Vatican, 25th May, 1961**

## A Joyous Occasion

**By Luise Bardenhewer**

I believe there is not one among the participants of the eighteenth Council Meeting of St. Joan's International Alliance who will not remember with happiness this Golden Jubilee of St. Joan's Alliance in London, May 1961.

Crosby Hall, erected on the site where St. Thomas More's house once stood, was a most stimulating meeting place, and even if we are too modest to compare our meeting with the "platonic academy on Christian basis", as Erasmus called More's household, the discussions were on a high level and we did very good work.

The Council Meeting was honoured by the personal attendance of the representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Miss Aline Fenwick (herself a member of St. Joan's Alliance in Australia) who brought greetings from the Secretary General and gave the Council a detailed account of the Fifteenth Session of the Status of Women Commission.

The Hon. Secretary reported on the work of the Alliance in connection with the Status of Women Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Addis Ababa Seminar, the I.L.O., F.A.O., and Unesco. Mademoiselle Archinard reported on her work for the Alliance in Geneva and Miss Retchford on the Liaison Committee of Women's Inter-

national Organisations. On the basis of these reports, new resolutions were passed and former ones were confirmed or brought up to date. (For the text of the resolutions, see page 54.)

A proposal of the French Section to change the name of "St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance" to that of "St. Joan's International Alliance" was adopted. The word "political" had caused misunderstanding in some countries. National Sections had of course the right to retain their national designations.

The Council agreed unanimously to the affiliation of the *Centro Femenino de Cultura Civica* of Argentina, represented by its efficient and charming president, Señora C. de Martinez.

A most interesting item was the question of the apostolate of women in the Church. In view of the encouragement given to the laity to take a more active part in the work of the Church, the Council expressed its desire that women, equally with men, should participate more fully in the apostolate of the laity.

The elections were carried out with acclamation. Madame Leroy-Boy was re-elected President, Madame Marthe Gouffé, Hon. Treasurer and Miss Barry, Hon. Secretary. It was highly appreciated that Miss Barry agreed to take the work



upon herself for one more year, but it was felt very decisively that the secretariat must be provided with more assistance and that the national sections would have to be asked for a voluntary financial contribution for this purpose beyond the affiliation fee.

On Saturday evening, May 27th, the President gave a delightful reception at Crosby Hall with invitations to distinguished guests, delegates, and representatives of women's organisations. Brief speeches were made by the President, by Miss Fenwick on behalf of the Secretary General of the United Nations, by Miss Retchford on behalf of the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations and by a member of each country represented at the Council Meeting: Madame Pesson-Depret (France), Mademoiselle Baetens (Belgium), Dr. Bardenhewer (Germany), Mademoiselle Archinard (Switzerland), Mrs. de Silva (Ceylon), Madame Moghaizel (Lebanon) who expressed at the same time greetings and good wishes on behalf of the International Council of Women, Señora C. de Martinez (Argentina), Mrs. Dixon (Ireland), Signorina Sacchi (Italy), Mrs. Curnow (Queensland) and Miss Challoner (United Kingdom). We heard about the position of women in the different countries and above all, felt in each speaker, the same outlook which constitutes so great a bond between the members of St. Joan's.

Among the social events in connection with the Council Meeting there were two dedicated particularly to the celebration of the Golden Jubilee. On May 30th, a Mass of thanksgiving was offered at Westminster Cathedral by the Reverend Christopher Laughton Mathews. After Mass a visit was paid to the Dame Vera Memorial in the Cathedral with its wonderful mosaic representing St. Nicholas, patron of seafarers. It is needless to say that the memory of this great woman was present during the whole Council Meeting.

On the evening of May 30th, a Jubilee Dinner united the delegates with distinguished guests of honour at St. Ermin's Hotel. Grace, with the prayer for the Pope was said by Monsignor George Tomlinson from St. Patrick's Soho, the parish Church of the Alliance. Dr. Shattock, the British chairman, presided, and after the loyal toast, she read out the telegram from the Holy Father and a message from Cardinal Godfrey, assuring members of the Alliance of his heartfelt blessing and good wishes for the Golden Jubilee. Dr. Shattock welcomed the representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations Madame Leroy-Boy, president of St. Joan's International Alliance and Miss Joan Vickers, M.P., and greeted members and delegates from overseas. She made special mention of those guests, our colleagues from the former suffrage societies with whom we have worked in such harmony since the days

of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. Miss Philippa Strachey (The Fawcett Society), Miss Marion Reeves (The Women's Freedom League), Miss Pierotti from the National Union of Women Teachers and Miss Chave Collisson for so many years our colleague from the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene.

At the appropriate moment, a magnificent bouquet of the most beautiful roses was presented from Mrs. Dwyer, the Federal President of St. Joan's Alliance, Australia.

The Toast Master, Dr. Isabel Powell Heath then read telegrams including messages from Australia, Ireland, Sweden, and U.S.A., all bringing good wishes and congratulations.

Miss Joan Vickers, M.B.E., M.P., combined wit and charm in toasting St. Joan's Alliance with which she felt she must couple the name of Florence Barry whose service to the Alliance was barely a year short of the half century of its existence. Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell in response, paid tribute to the work of Miss Vickers and went on to give a most interesting survey of the development and the achievements of the Alliance in the last fifty years. The toast of the guests was proposed by Madame Leroy-Boy, who stressed the international character of the celebrations and said how happy she was to see Miss Fenwick from the United Nations and guests from so many countries also representatives from the Auxiliaires Féminines Internationales Catholique, the International Alliance of Women, the International Council of Women and the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organisations.

The response to this toast was given by Dame Vera's son, the Reverend Christopher Laughton Mathews. He spoke as one of "us", as he had "been brought up on the bosom of St. Joan's Alliance", and thus he gave expression to the friendship and family feeling which gave the celebrations its atmosphere.

Two delightful excursions brought us into the lovely English countryside. Dr. Shattock kindly invited us for a coach ride via Runnymede, Windsor and Eton to her charming picturesque home at Wargrave and gave us a sumptuous tea at a riverside hotel. Another wonderful experience, especially for the non-British participants, was a visit to Hatfield House, one of those magnificent ancestral homes of England, filled with historic memories and works of art. We admired the beautiful park and had lunch in the hall of the Old Palace, childhood home of Elizabeth I.

We took leave full of gratitude for our British friends who had so lovingly arranged the meeting and its delightful frame-work of social events.

And now we are looking forward to the Council Meeting in 1962 which will take place in May at Orleans, following the kind invitation of the French Section.

## Notes and Comments

### GREETINGS FROM THE UNITED NATIONS

At the reception given by the International President at Crosby Hall on May 27th, Miss Aline Fenwick brought the congratulations of the Secretary General on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of St. Joan's Alliance. Miss Fenwick said that the work of the Alliance was well known and appreciated at the United Nations, especially the contribution which the organisation has been able to make in connection with the International Conventions on the political rights of women, nationality of married women and the draft Convention on consent to marriage, age of marriage and registration of marriages.

The Alliance had always been concerned with the status of women not only their political and economic status, but also with the preservation of their physical integrity. The co-operation of the organisation, which enjoyed consultative status, was always most useful and members of the United Nations Secretariat looked forward with confidence to future relations.

Miss Fenwick also brought to the gathering the greetings and good wishes of Madame Grinberg Vinaver, chief of the Section on the Status of Women.

\* \* \*

We have received many kind jubilee gifts from members and friends ranging from \$500 from a generous friend in the U.S.A. to donations of £50, £10, £5, £1 and ten shillings. Once more we express our gratitude and deep appreciation to the donors.

We should like also to thank all those who helped to make the Jubilee celebrations so happy and so successful; a special debt of gratitude is due to Councillor Miss Barbara Hulme for the splendid way she organised the social events.

\* \* \*

Matters relating to the status of women in family law were considered at a two-week United Nations seminar held in Bucharest from 19th June to 3rd July. The meeting covered such aspects of the subject as marriage laws, parental authority, the legal status of married women, and women's inheritance rights. The Roumanian Government acted as host to the seminar, which is the latest of a series being held in different parts of the world under the programme of advisory services in human rights established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1955.

St. Joan's International Alliance was represented at the seminar by Madame Leroy-Boy and Madame C. de Martinez.

We send our best wishes to Miss Barbara Salt for her work at Geneva where she has been appointed United Kingdom representative on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Miss Salt is the senior woman in the Foreign Service and is at present deputy head of the British delegation to the nuclear test talks at Geneva; she formerly served in Washington and Moscow and was Consul-General in Tel-Aviv in 1957.

\* \* \*

There is still a hard road to travel before equal pay is achieved. In the Ministry of Labour Gazette of June 29th, we note that forty-three per cent of the male workers in industry earn, on an average £14 17s. 0d. or more, while women workers' pay averaged £7 16s. 8d. The actual earnings included overtime.

\* \* \*

Lord Pethick-Lawrence will be ninety years old in December this year and it has been suggested that this should be made the occasion for paying tribute to him for his very many years of work in support of the woman's cause.

The outstanding part that he took in the fight for votes for women is well known to us all. Since those days he has continued to work for equality between men and women and he has always been ready to help and advise women's organisations in a variety of ways.

The Status of Women Committee of which the Alliance is a constituent organisation, has undertaken the responsibility of organising a Dinner in honour of Lord Pethick-Lawrence and this will take place at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, W.C.2 on Wednesday, 18th October. Tickets will be 35s. each.

We are sure that many of our members will want to take this opportunity of thanking publicly a man who has given so much devoted work to the woman's movement. Further particulars will be given later but please book this date now.

\* \* \*

A broadcast, recorded during the Council Meeting, was relayed in Germany on Sunday, June 11th. It was arranged by Frau Strecker, who is in charge of the women's department of Radio, Frankfurt. It took the form of interviews between Frau Strecker, Dr. Bardenhewer, President of the German Section of the Alliance and Miss Pauline Brandt on the subject of the work of St. Joan's Alliance and a short memoir of the late Dame Vera Laughton Mathews.



## ST. JOAN'S ALLIANCE

AND  
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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

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## The Jubilee Dinner

*Points from the Speeches*

The Jubilee Dinner on May 30th, which was to have taken place at the House of Commons, by kind invitation of Miss Joan Vickers, M.P., had to be transferred, at the last minute to St. Ermin's Hotel, owing to the Government's unexpected curtailment of the Whitsun Recess. Presiding, was the chairman, Dr. Mackenzie Shattock.

Miss Vickers congratulated the Alliance on its courage and the many high achievements to its credit and stressed the value of its support in all matters affecting the status of women. There was still much to do and the work for the next twenty years would be just as important as in the past. Women still suffered from inequalities in income tax laws, guardianship of their children, in opportunities in Universities and in hospitals. In the Foreign Service we had not yet had a woman ambassador. We only asked to be accepted on the same terms as men, we wanted no privileges.

Women could have no equal status without education, we must strive for equal opportunities in education, parents should give their sons and daughters equal opportunities for education.

Miss Vickers spoke of the great value of religious faith—this was something which distinguished the Alliance from other organisations. She urged the Alliance to continue and prosper.

On a lighter vein, Miss Vickers mentioned a book of etiquette of 1870 which described the mode of eating a dinner and said that however beautiful and well dressed a woman may be, her manner of eating a dinner would betray her. She hoped she had passed muster! She expressed her great hope for the Alliance for the next fifty years and asked it to accept a gift of £50.

Madame Leroy-Boy, president of St. Joan's International Alliance, spoke of her delight that the occasion had been recognised by the United Nations and by many international organisations. She warmly greeted Miss Vickers who had so ably

represented the United Kingdom on the Status of Women Commission and was glad that her appointment was to be till 1963. She expressed the pleasure of the Alliance on the affiliation of a new society, that of the Centro Femenino de Cultura Civica of Argentina. As to the British Section, she queried whether she should call it "mother", rather, she liked to think of it as the elder sister in the family—a sister of whom the other members of the family were so very proud.

Miss Nancy Stewart Parnell, whose history of the Alliance will shortly be published, paid tribute to the fine work done by Miss Vickers nationally and internationally. She spoke of the foundation of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society by Gabrielle Jeffery and May Kendall and of its development from small beginnings to the widely known and influential body it was today. She explained the symbolism of the badge with the fleur-de-lys and the colours blue, white and gold, and drew the attention of the guests to the two historic banners of the Society which were displayed in the hall of banquet, that of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, the work and gift of Miss Gadsby, and the banner of St. Joan on horseback, designed by Edith Craig, the gift of Miss Christopher St. John. Finally she spoke of Dame Vera and of her outstanding work for the Alliance.

The Reverend Christopher Laughton Mathews said he was wrongly classed as a guest. He recalled the many occasions on which at garden parties and sales he had been sent round with two-penny dips! He expressed appreciation of the references made to his mother. Father Christopher said there must be no more talk of closing down, ways and means must be found to carry on; we must take in hand the future which is most important. A great deal of work was done by a very few people, but the rest of us must do more and by recruiting new members and publicising

ourselves must make ourselves known. There was a feeling perhaps among the ignorant and uninstructed that a feminist was a cold career woman, selfish and proud and with no feeling. We may, said Father Christopher, be formidable *en masse*, but it is for St. Joan's to show how wrong was this idea, we know that our hearts are in the right place, that we have great love and charity and that our hearts are warm, friendly and loving.

## AT THE CATHEDRAL

Delegates to St. Joan's International Council Meeting and many members of the British Section were present on the morning of St. Joan's Day at a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Golden Jubilee of St. Joan's Alliance offered in the Lady Chapel of Westminster Cathedral by the Reverend Christopher Laughton Mathews.

In a short sermon Father Christopher said that the growth of the movement from its beginnings in a tea-shop in Oxford Street to its present position as an international organisation with members in countries as far apart as Australia, the Lebanon and Argentina would have appeared to its founders as "fantastic". He offered for consideration the thought that the work of the Alliance was primarily a work of charity—charity towards individual women by fulfilling their personalities, particularly women in undeveloped countries who could not speak for themselves, charity therefore to nations and through them to the world. Finally charity towards the Church. The Church exists to spread the means of salvation through grace to all. But grace builds on nature and if the nature is apathetic, frustrated and oppressed there is little for grace to build upon. However if through St. Joan's the nature and personality of women become more fully integrated and developed then grace has a much better foundation on which to build. Grace also perfects nature and a fully developed nature should be capable of greater perfection. Therefore the aim of the Alliance in helping the natural development of women should lead to greater scope for the action of divine grace and result in women becoming greater saints. In this work members of St. Joan's can find the means of their own sanctification. "You are all called to be saints."

Together with thanksgiving for the past goes prayer for the future. With courage, a missionary spirit strengthened by the Blessed Sacrament, and a "soupçon of humility", this unique work of charity must continue.

After Mass, Father Christopher led us to the memorial to Dame Vera where, remembering her great work for St. Joan's and the feminist movement, we said a prayer for the repose of her soul.

## FEMINISME DANS L'EGLISE?

A l'occasion du prochain concile on reparle beaucoup du rôle des laïcs. *Dans ce domaine, il y a également une promotion féminine dont il faut tenir compte.* Il y a un demi-siècle, les "œuvres" féminines étaient beaucoup plus qu'actuellement dirigées par des aumôniers. Depuis quelques années, un réel effort a été fait pour donner davantage les responsabilités des mouvements de jeunes aux "chefs" laïcs, même dans les sections féminines. Dans l'Action Catholique en Belgique, par exemple, dans les patros et le guidisme, les mouvements ont eu l'avantage d'avoir comme dirigeantes et comme cheftaines de vraies personnalités. La collaboration avec les aumôniers s'en est très bien trouvée.

Or, c'est de cette jeunesse féminine ainsi formée que sortent beaucoup de nos actuelles religieuses. Là également une évolution se produit. Grâce aux diverses "unions", religieuses enseignantes, hospitalières, et jusqu'à l'Union des Supérieures majeures, nous assistons à une prise de conscience des responsabilités, à un désir de se rencontrer, d'échanger ses expériences, de collaborer. On ne peut que s'en réjouir? C'est un signe de vitalité. *Mais ne faut-il pas aller plus loin encore?*

Les contemplatives notamment se plaignent (oh! avec respect et prudence, mais d'une manière assez générale et avec une insistance croissante) de ce que leurs constitutions et règlements soient réglés par des hommes qui eux ne vivent pas cette vie et ne la connaissent donc pas de l'intérieur?

Prenons, entre plusieurs autres le cas des carmes. Leur vie n'est que lointainement semblable à celle des carmélites. Ils vont, ils viennent, ils sortent pour des motifs apostoliques. Ce sont cependant les supérieurs des carmes qui régissent l'ordonnance de vie de ces religieuses strictement cloîtrées. Sans doute elles peuvent exprimer leurs souhaits, leurs désirs. Elles peuvent aussi créer des "Fédérations", c'est même dans les souhaits du Saint Siège. Mais il faudra attendre encore un moment avant que tout cela ne donne son plein fruit. On a créé un institut de formation théologique, Regina Mundi, pour les religieuses. *Mais nous avons déjà entendu des supérieures émettre un souhait plus audacieux: "Quand donc aurons nous une femme dans la sacré congrégation des religieux pour aider à comprendre et à résoudre les problèmes de la vie des religieuses?"* Et pourquoi pas? Ne trouverait-on pas les compétences voulues? Cette idée serait-elle si étrange? *"La Revue Nouvelles, Brussels"* (15th May, 1961).

At the Assembly of the Union of European Women held recently in Helsinki, it was decided to set up a permanent headquarters in Basle. Madame Freuler-Bühler will be in charge.



# ST. JOAN'S INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE 18th COUNCIL MEETING, LONDON, 1961.

## Change of Name

That the name of St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance be changed to that of St. Joan's International Alliance.

## Political Rights

St. Joan's International Alliance calls upon those Governments which have not yet granted equal franchise and eligibility to women with men to do so without delay.

## Marriage

St. Joan's International Alliance believes that the Sacrament of marriage entails an indissoluble monogamous union entered into with the full consent of both parties; with a full sense of responsibility and in full conformity with the teaching of the Church.

- (a) It demands that those laws which still impose a measure of civil incapacity upon the wife and married mother must be rescinded.
  - (i) A married woman should have the same rights as other citizens:
    - (a) regarding nationality and domicile;
    - (b) to contract, earn and to exercise rights over her own earnings and property.
  - (ii) A married woman should exercise equal rights with her husband over the children born of their marriage or adopted by them.
  - (iii) There should be no legal bar to a married woman undertaking work outside the home.
  - (iv) The economic status of the housewife should be raised. It should be legally recognised that husband and wife are partners, and each of them is entitled to share in the family income.
- (b) The Alliance welcomes Articles 1 and 3 of the draft **Convention** and draft **Recommendation** on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age of Marriage, and Registration of Marriages, which clearly lay down that no marriage shall be legally entered into without the full and free consent of both parties, and the necessity for registration of marriages.

The Alliance regrets that Article 2 of the draft **Convention** lays down no specific minimum age of marriage, believing that inclusion of a specific minimum age would go far towards setting a standard; believing also that to ensure free consent, the spouses must be of an age mature enough to realise the implications of their actions and to withstand the pressure of interested third parties.

The Alliance welcomes the fact that a specific age of marriage has been included in the draft **Recommendation**, while regretting that the age of fifteen, rather than sixteen, was accepted.

The Alliance notes with satisfaction those Articles in the draft **Recommendation** which provide for regular reports by Member States to the Secretary-General on action regarding measures taken pursuant to the Recommendation.

## Maintenance

St. Joan's International Alliance urges Governments to alter their legal systems where necessary in order to make it possible for them to sign the United Nations Convention on the Recovery Abroad of Maintenance, adopted in June, 1956.

## Ritual Mutilations

St. Joan's International Alliance expresses its satisfaction that the Commission on the Status of Women is

continuing its efforts to secure the elimination of those customs which were so emphatically condemned by the African women delegates at the seminar at Addis Ababa.

The Alliance trusts that the Economic and Social Council will adopt draft Resolution 11 contained in the Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its 15th Session (document E/3464) concerning "customary practices" and expresses the hope that States Members of the Council will request the World Health Organisation to supply information on the effects of the practice of ritual mutilations on physical and mental health.

## Equal Moral Standard

(a) In reaffirming its belief in the same high moral standard for both sexes, St. Joan's International Alliance deplores the fact that the pernicious system of State regulation of prostitution persists in many countries. It calls upon its National Sections to urge their Governments to ratify the Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.

(b) St. Joan's International Alliance reaffirms its belief that laws to safeguard public order should apply equally to men and women and that all measures taken to prevent the spread of venereal disease should be free, voluntary and confidential.

## Equal Pay and Opportunities

St. Joan's International Alliance calls upon National Sections to urge their Governments and all appropriate bodies to ensure as rapidly as possible the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work without discrimination based on sex.

It further urges National Sections to press for the same opportunities for education; for vocational and technical training; for employment and promotion for both sexes; also to ensure that any Government requests for assistance from the United Nations and Specialised Agencies shall be for women equally with men.

It further urges that in all labour legislation equal protection shall be given to men and women against exploitation, industrial accident or disease.

## Age of Retirement and Right to Pension

St. Joan's International Alliance urges its National Sections to redouble their efforts to ensure that the age of retirement and right to pension shall be the same for men and women workers.

## Education

(1) St. Joan's International Alliance believes that the aim of education is the full development of the human being both as an individual and as a member of society and reaffirms its belief that education should be based on religious and spiritual values.

(2) The Alliance urges all Governments to ensure that in all schemes of education, the same opportunities shall be available for boys and girls, men and women, irrespective of religion or race.

## Apostolate of the Laity

In view of the growing desire for the fuller participation of the laity in the Apostolate and in view of the dedicated work done by so many women for the Church, their work would be more firmly based if they had some outward sign of the official support and blessing of the Church.

"As a concrete suggestion St. Joan's International Alliance submits that if in future diaconal duties are to be entrusted to laymen as an independent ministry, this ministry be open to both men and women."

# The Month in Parliament

During the month of June much of parliamentary time was taken with the completion of the committee stage of the Finance Bill and the third reading of the Licensing Bill.

The Licensing Bill was generally regarded as a liberalising measure, in that it allows for some extension of opening hours in public houses, and the more widespread granting of licences to restaurants and boarding houses. At the same time it includes measures to prevent the sale of alcohol to persons under the age of 18, but only on off-licence premises, to discourage the continuation or formation of clubs which are merely drinking places, and forbids the sale of intoxicants on motor-ways. It also includes provision for the inspection of club premises by the Fire authorities. The Bill also increases the penalties for offences in connection with the sale of liquor to young people. An amendment was moved by Mr. Fletcher to include among reasons for refusing registration the fact that a club was used for "any purpose conducive to the corruption of public morals". He referred to the increase in strip-tease clubs, and also to the recent increase in sex crimes. Mr. Cordle supported him, saying that our affluent society had brought "a gust of lust" such as we had never witnessed before. Although, as the Solicitor General pointed out, the existing law is not powerless to deal with some of these evils, he implied that consideration would be given in the House of Lords to the general feeling of the House in these matters.

On June 5th Miss Joan Vickers asked the Lord Privy Seal if he would advise the United Kingdom delegate to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations to support the resolution passed by the Status of Women Commission in Geneva in March to the effect that the membership of this Commission should be increased. Mr. Godber replied: "Her Majesty's Government voted in favour of this resolution in the Status of Women Commission, and I have no reason to believe that there will be a change in our attitude when this matter is voted on in the Economic and Social Council." To a reminder by Miss Vickers about the desirability of including African and other non-Western representatives, the Minister replied: "Yes. We will, of course, take note of that. Her Majesty's Government takes great interest in the status of women in all matters."

Miss Vickers had another question for the government on June 15th: this time for the Secretary of State for the Home Department. She wanted to know how many girls under 21 received sentences of imprisonment of less than six months during 1960, and for what offences. Mr.

Vosper's written reply was: "In 1960, 133 women and girls under 21 were sentenced by magistrates' courts to terms of imprisonment of six months or less without the option of a fine. Fifteen women and girls under 21 were sentenced to imprisonment, without the option of a fine, by the higher courts, but information about their offences and the terms of imprisonment imposed is not readily available."

The list of offences of which they were convicted shows that there were 88 offences by prostitutes, five for brothel keeping, 23 for larceny, and 17 various other offences.

Consideration of the Finance Bill on June 7th continued into the early hours of Thursday morning. Dame Irene Ward, apologising for speaking at 5 a.m. criticised Clause 13 (Income Tax Relief for National Insurance Contributions).

"The position is," she said, "that the people who pay Income Tax gain considerable reliefs amounting to more than £50 million in a full year, and the effect is that those who pay Income Tax get their retirement pensions more cheaply than those whose incomes are too small to be taxed." She suggested that the £50 millions should be used to reduce weekly contributions. She also was puzzled because in a letter written last December the Financial Secretary had stated that the National Insurance Fund was expected to have a deficit of £94 millions in the period 1960-1961, and yet tax reliefs were to be granted to the highest paid workers. Miss Herbison pointed out that some of the lower wage-earners and some widows now come within the Income Tax paying group. She suggested that if the Government had £50 million to give away there were ways of helping the poorer workers that Dame Irene and her colleagues had not thought of. She said that when the Government brought in "the vicious measure" of increasing National Health contributions and prescription charges Dame Irene had not opposed it. But Dame Irene did support the Opposition later (June 14th) when she went into the lobby with them in support of Mr. Houghton's unsuccessful attempt to introduce a clause raising the income limits for tax exemption so that the increase in Old Age Pensions would not be greatly reduced by taxation.

On June 19th the debate on the adjournment was devoted to a discussion of the problems of the district nursing service. Mr. Percy Browne complained that the average age of midwives in his county was over 50, to which Miss Pitt answered, "District nursing is a profession which appeals to the older woman. The Whitley Council rules do not stipulate any retiring age." Miss Pitt described the national standard of train-



ing that has been established, and mentioned recent salary increases. She praised the work that has been done by these women, and ended the discussion by saying, "We will continue to do all we can to support and strengthen this service."

As the Committee stage of the Finance Bill neared its close some questions on various types of personal allowance were raised. Sir Edward Boyle assured the House (on June 20th): "When a further general relaxation of taxation becomes possible the whole field will be reviewed and the claims of the main personnel allowances—for married and single persons—and the claims of the child allowance will be taken into account, along with all the other claims.

**C. M. Cheke**

#### TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "The Catholic Citizen", July 1936

With great joy we welcome the good news from Melbourne of the foundation of the Australian Section of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, which received the blessing of His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne on May 30th, St. Joan's Day. This happy achievement is in great measure due to the energy and initiative of the Section's valiant hon. secretary, our good friend Miss Margaret Flynn, who on her arrival home in Melbourne last March, lost no time in calling a meeting of the Australian members of the Alliance for March 25th. As the meeting was about to open a telephone call arrived from the Rt. Hon. J. A. Lyons, C.H., sending good wishes also from Mrs. Lyons, who regretted her inability to be present. An executive committee was appointed with Mrs. Lyons as president, Miss K. M. Walsh as vice-president and chairman, Miss Margaret Flynn hon. secretary and treasurer. On the first Sunday in May the committee received Holy Communion in a body. With such an auspicious beginning and such officers we cannot but feel confident of the success of the Section under the protection of our Patron, St. Joan. The foundation of two new Sections of the Alliance, as far apart as Australia and Brazil makes a fitting celebration of our Silver Jubilee year.— *Notes and Comments*

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Organ—"The Catholic Citizen," 6d. monthly.

#### OBJECT

To band together Catholics of both sexes, in order to secure the political, social and economic equality between men and women, and to further the work and usefulness of Catholic women as citizens.

#### MEMBERSHIP

All Catholic women are eligible as Members, who approve the object and methods, and will pay a minimum annual subscription of £1 which includes *The Catholic Citizen*. Men are invited to join as Associates, on the same conditions, with the exception that they may not elect or be elected to the Executive.

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