TRUSTEESHIP

Petition from St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance, London, W.1., England

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has received the following communication in the form of a petition concerning Article 76 (c) of the Charter and submitting a copy of the Questionnaire drafted and sent by the Alliance in 1937 to Government officials, missioners of various denominations, doctors, nurses, social workers etc. in different territories. This communication is herewith transmitted to the Trusteeship Council for its consideration in accordance with Article 87, paragraph (b) of the Charter of the United Nations.
ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE
(Nor.-Party)

55, Berners Street,
LONDON, W.1.
ENGLAND

25th March, 1947

The Chairman,
Trusteeship Council,
Lake Success, N. York
U.S.A.

Sir:

Our Alliance has for many years taken a keen interest in the position of women in Dependent Territories and in this connection, frequently made representations to the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. We venture therefore to submit this brief Memorandum to the Trusteeship Council.

We are confident that in conformity with the equality of the sexes laid down in the Charter, more specifically in Chapter XII, Article 76 which states that one of the basic objectives of the trusteeship system is "to encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion", there will be no sex discrimination under the International Trusteeship System.

We stress this point because we note that in the Draft Convention concerning Social Policy in Non-Metropolitan Territories, under Non-Discrimination, Articles 14, 15, 16, and 17 the word sex has been omitted and women workers are thus excluded from the legal safeguards accorded to all male workers under this section.

In connection with item (8) on the Trusteeship Council Agenda - "Formulation of questionnaires on the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of each Trust Territory, in accordance with Article 88 of the Charter", may we suggest certain questions concerning the women in these territories.

For the sake of brevity and clearness, may we submit for the consideration of the Council, a copy of the Questionnaire which our Alliance sent in 1937 to Government officials, missioners of various denominations, doctors, nurses, social workers etc. in various territories and from which we were able to compile the Memorandum published by the League of Nations (Document A.14.1937.V) a copy of which I also enclose. Though conditions are rapidly changing in many of these territories, notwithstanding we feel that these questions are still relevant, and that they may usefully be incorporated in the Trusteeship Council's questionnaire.

* Sending by ordinary mail.
We realise that there are many other important questions affecting the position of women in Trust Territories, but we would stress particularly those which would elicit information regarding child marriage; forced marriages; lending out of wives; inheritance of widows; the right of woman to contract, etc.

These matters are frequently overlooked but they vitally affect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of a large number of the inhabitants of Trust Territories.

May we ask you kindly to bring this Memorandum to the notice of the Members of the Trusteeship Council.

We are sending a copy to the Status of Women Commission, and to the Secretary-General.

I am, 

Yours faithfully,

/s/ Florency Barry

Hon. Secretary
T/PEI/General 2
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ST: JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE
(Non-Party)

55, Berners Street
LONDON, W.1.
ENGLAND

STATUS OF NATIVE WOMEN IN MANDATED AND OTHER TERRITORIES

QUESTIONNAIRE for use in connection with the world wide enquiry into the Status of Women now being conducted by Government and International Women's Organizations at the request of the League of Nations.

TERRITORY: ........................................ TRIBE: ..................................................

NAME AND ADDRESS OF CORRESPONDENT: .................................................................

.................................................................

1. What facilities are there for the education of girls?
2. Is there any compulsory education for girls? If so, up to what age?
3. What facilities are there for the training of native women (as teachers, nurses, midwives, etc)?
4. What legal enactment are there regulating marriages? Are any marriages registered (Christian, Mohamedan, Native Custom, Civil)?
5. Is it impossible for marriage contracts to be made for a girl under 14?
6. Is there a legal age for marriage (a) for girls (b) for boys?
7. Is consent required for marriage (a) of girls (b) of boys?
8. In the case of coercion is there any right of appeal? Is this right easily accessible to women?
9. Does polygamy exist? If so, to what extent is it systematically discouraged?
10. Does any system of "Dowry" (bride-pride) obtain? If so, what form does it take?
11. Is a widow allowed to dispose of herself and her children as she thinks fit (remain with her husband's family, return to her own family, or remarry)? Can she keep her young children, and to what age? If not, to which family do the children belong?
12. What are the laws governing prostitution, brothel keeping and the procuration of women in your territory?

/13. Is there any
13. Is there any form of legal or administrative control of prostitution?

14. Do you know of any attempt to introduce regulations providing for medical and police control of prostitutes, or for the prevention of venereal infection among men?

15. What facilities are there for free treatment of venereal disease?

16. Is there any traffic or lending of wives? Any traffic in concubines or temporary "wives"?

17. What, if any, paid work is available for women? Have they control of their wages or agriculture earnings?

18. Do law and custom affecting property and heritage work out unfavourably to women?

19. What provision is made for maternal and infant welfare?

20. Are recent decrees and ordinances which aim at improving the position of women applied? Are they interpreted in the most favourable sense (to women)? By native courts? European courts?

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM NOT LATER THAN MARCH 25th, 1937, TO THE HON. SECRETARY, ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE, 55, BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1., ENGLAND