

Although Canada did not participate in the Commission on the Status of Women, whose deliberations produced the draft declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, we have followed the progress of their work with deep interest and close attention. We regard this draft as a salutary step in the direction indicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The draft declaration sets forth, with precision, a set of standards for equality between men and women. In the view of my delegation its great importance, as it now stands, is to establish goals that should, and we hope, will, determine a course of action towards equality of status, on the part of all member states in the United Nations.

It is with regret that we must recognize that full political, civil, economic, cultural and educational equality between men and women has not been realized throughout the world--even in those countries where historically, acceptance of the principle of equality is relatively long standing. It is to be hoped that the adoption of the draft declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (though it imposes no binding obligations) might prompt all member nations to give this particular aspect of human rights closer scrutiny than has hitherto been the universal case.

In my own country, women have long enjoyed political equality and equality of educational opportunity--and an increasing degree of economic equality. There are, however, social and cultural attitudes that seek to perpetuate subtle barriers to completely equal status (in all spheres). (It is something of a paradox that women by their own attitude may jeopardize full attainment of status they seek.) It is true also in Canada as may be so to varying degrees in other countries that legislative changes may be required to remove whatever may remain of discrimination against women. At a time when women are an increasing factor in the economy of our country there may be need for new legislation and governmental responsibility. For these and for many other reasons a Royal Commission on Status of Women is at present investigating in Canada these particular areas, and consequently the draft declaration is of particular interest to Canada.

In this matter there are constitutional considerations that arise out of the Canadian federal system of Government. Division of jurisdictional powers necessitates that findings of such a Commission or in fact any commitment undertaken by the Federal Government be submitted to Provincial Governments for implementation of those provisions which fall within their field of competence. My delegation views the declaration, however, as being a very valuable contribution which