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# UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

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United Nations Fourth World Confere...

HEARINGS  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS  
FIRST SESSION

JULY 18, 1995 AND AUGUST 2, 1995

Printed for the use of the Committee on International Relations



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# UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

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TUESDAY, JULY 18, 1995

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN  
RIGHTS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:07 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. The subcommittee will come to order. And good morning. Today's hearing is to consider the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women, which is scheduled to be held in Beijing this September.

We will have three panels to address three distinct sets of issues. The first panel will address the question of human rights in the People's Republic of China. In my view, human rights policies of the host government are highly relevant to this hearing. This is true for at least three reasons. First, because holding the conference in a nation that violates human rights and particularly in a nation that systematically oppresses, exploits and devalues women, might signal acquiescence in such conduct. Second, as a practical matter the success of any such conference depends on the free exchange of ideas, and therefore on political conditions in which such genuinely free exchanges can take place.

Finally, the recent arrest and continued detention of U.S. citizen, Harry Wu, dramatically illustrate what can happen to those who attempt to exercise freedom of inquiry in a totalitarian dictatorship. The Wu case raises profound questions about whether any free nation—and the United States in particular—can conduct business as usual with such a regime.

The second panel will address the question of fair procedures at the conference. This question has already arisen in a number of contexts. Some of the problems identified so far include:

1. Arbitrary exclusion of women's groups from the nongovernmental forum for the conference, apparently based on identification with Tibet, Taiwan or various points of view that are displeasing to the Beijing government.
2. Banishment of the nongovernmental forum to a location many miles distant from the conference center which could effectively cut off access to the conference.

3. Obstruction of the planned conference newsletter. This was to have been one of three newspapers at the conference. There are two that are organs of the Chinese Government.
4. Refusal to allow fund-raising efforts that would have allowed poor delegates from developing countries to attend.
5. A recent prediction by representatives of the U.S. Government that the internationally recognized human rights of delegates and nongovernmental organization representatives, including the right of free expression and freedom of religion, including even such basic exercises of these rights as the right to carry a Bible, may be violated by the host country.

According to recent articles in the Washington Post and elsewhere, these and other indications that the Chinese Government will obstruct freedom of expression at the conference had led some women who have been involved in the conference preparations to propose moving the conference to some other location, for example to Australia.

The Post article predicted that, "without the threat of such relocation, the Chinese Government will not change its position." The Harry Wu case raises, again, the question of a possible relocation. At this point, a relocation might also necessitate a brief postponement.

It should be emphasized that talk of relocating a conference from Beijing to a free country or of insisting on fair procedures at such a conference, is not anti-woman in any sense of the word. On the contrary, it is carefully crafted to achieve fairness for women, especially those from Tibet, from Taiwan, and developing countries whose voices will otherwise not be heard at the conference. And if the United States should consider it inappropriate to attend a human rights conference in a country whose government holds an American hostage, it would be reaffirming human rights by emphasizing that they are sacred and indivisible, to be recognized and acted upon even when such recognition is inconvenient.

Our third panel will raise the question of substance. How do we ensure that the conference and particularly the U.S. delegation will represent an authentic range of women's perspectives? Again, the preliminary indications have not been encouraging. The Prep Comm for the conference refused to accept the proposition that, "motherhood is entitled to special care and assistance." It refused to acknowledge that the family is "the natural and fundamental group unit of society."

It refused to define the word "gender" to make clear that this word refers to the two sexes of the human being, man and woman, rather than to a more complicated and far less traditional meaning that it has acquired in certain radical feminist circles. And it refused to issue a clear condemnation of sex selection abortion directed at reducing the number of baby girls, or even of forced abortion.

I was shocked to see in the Prep Comm document that forced abortion was bracketed, and therefore in contention. This ought to be something that no one disagrees on, perhaps except for the Chinese. Nor does it even squarely reject the concept of an internationally recognized right to abortion. It also endorses a slogan, "equal pay for equal work of equal value," that has been regarded in the



United States as a code phrase for the discredited idea of government-mandated "comparable worth" schedules for various jobs typically held by men and women respectively.

It is important to recognize that the draft document has strengths as well as weaknesses. It condemns pornography, violence against women, female infanticide and trafficking in women and girls for the sex trade. It recognizes that 80 percent of the world's refugees and displaced persons are women and children. They require special attention and protection. It calls for speedy and dramatic reductions in the rate of female poverty and female illiteracy. These are points on which a conference representing the whole range of women's perspectives might reach consensus and produce a valuable plan of action. This will only be possible, however, if the conference is not perceived as excluding the views and devaluing the experiences and choices of many millions of the world's women.

On behalf of our subcommittee, I would like to welcome our witnesses and I would like to yield to my good friend, Mr. Tom Lantos, the Ranking Member of our subcommittee.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me commend you for holding this important hearing. And in view of the fact that in my judgment the panel of witnesses and organizations invited appears to be enormously lopsided, I request unanimous permission that all organizations have a full week to submit whatever statements they choose for the record.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, of course.

Mr. LANTOS. I need not point out that, of course, during the course of the last decade and a half, as one of the founding chairmen of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, and subsequently as the chairman of the subcommittee dealing with human rights and now the Ranking Member, I have probably been one of the most persistent critics of the appalling human rights policies of the Chinese Government. And I fully concur with many of the condemnations and criticisms in your opening statement.

Clearly, the arrest of Harry Wu is only the most recent of Chinese assaults on civilized conduct. The arrest of an American citizen by the Chinese Communist Regime, raises the outrage and the in-your-face quality of Chinese human rights violations to a new high or a new low, as the case might be. But of course, the issue we are dealing with today is not whether China is guilty of human rights violations. From the abominable practice of forced abortions to the total suppression of political and civil rights, China obviously is guilty beyond words of human rights violations.

What we are dealing with today, and I trust we will do so in a nonpolitical context because human rights certainly ought to rise above our own partisan politics, what we are dealing with today is whether, in fact, at this stage participation by the United States in the Beijing Conference is appropriate. That is the issue I intend to address.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, one of my efforts earlier was directed at preventing China from having the privilege of hosting the Olympics in the year 2000. Hosting the Olympics is not only a signal honor, because the Olympics brings together men and women of all nations in a free and open and fair athletic competition, but

the host nation invariably benefits by basking in the glory of the spectacularly telegenic events that unfold.

I felt when I introduced my resolution calling on the International Olympic Committee to reject Beijing's determined and spectacularly financed effort to hold the Olympics in China, on the grounds that China was not fit to hold the Olympics until it honored human rights. And I was delighted that with the overwhelming support of colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats in both the House and the Senate, my resolution passed and played a role in the decision of the International Olympics Committee in choosing Sidney, Australia, an imminently free venue, over Beijing, China, as the location of the Olympics for the year 2000.

I serve notice now that unless human rights conditions improve, I shall fight just as vigorously in preventing the holding of the Olympics in China in the year 2004. The timing of the Olympics in Beijing will be determined by the quality of human rights in China and nothing else.

Now this conference, of course, is very different from the Olympics. It is very different because this conference will not provide the spectacular constant global television coverage of an athletic event. It will be a gathering of concerned people from all over the world, people concerned with women's rights. And I opposed, as you will recall, the designation of Beijing as the location of this conference.

May I point out, since a member of this subcommittee in the press this morning criticizes the Clinton administration for proceeding with preparations for the conference and the participation of the U.S. delegation, that the decision on the part of the United States to participate in the Women's Conference was undertaken during the Bush administration, and both Secretary of State Baker and President Bush personally signed off on Beijing as the locale of the Women's Conference.

I opposed that decision, but since we have only one President at any one time, I clearly recognize that it was the right of the President and the Secretary of State to agree to this location. It would be difficult to argue that human rights conditions at the time of Mr. Baker's and Mr. Bush's decision in China were any better than they are today. So I think it is important to keep the partisan politics out of this dialog.

It was a Republican Secretary of State, it was a Republican President, over the objections of some of us in the Congress, some Democrats and some Republicans, which agreed to have the United States participate at this conference in Beijing. So let the record be straight at the outset.

The reasons that many organizations and our government have decided at this stage that, on balance, it would serve the interests of the United States and interests of women's rights globally for us not to exclude ourselves from this conference would have, of course, been most eloquently presented by our singularly distinguished ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright.

Ambassador Albright will lead the U.S. delegation to the conference, and my understanding is that she was invited informally to attend this hearing last Thursday. Let me point out to everybody in this room that committee rules require at least 1 week's advance notice to all members of the subcommittee about a subcommittee

hearing, and it strikes me that an invitation to a member of the President's Cabinet ought to be extended more than 5 days in advance of a scheduled hearing. I profoundly deplore that this courtesy in failing to extend a reasonable notice to our singularly effective ambassador, Ambassador Albright, to make her case and the Administration's case at this hearing—

Mr. SMITH. Will the gentleman yield on that point?

Mr. LANTOS. Not at the moment. I would like to finish my thought on this subject. The State Department indicated that Ambassador Albright would be ready to testify on this issue, but she could not do so today due to urgent business connected with the collapse of the U.N. peacekeeping operation in Bosnia.

I think it would have been unreasonable and irresponsible for our ambassador to leave her post as the human tragedy is unfolding in Bosnia. Ambassador Albright's place today is at the United Nation Security Council and General Assembly, and not here testifying to a congressional committee.

I should also note that Cabinet level testimony before this subcommittee happens rather infrequently. But because of the importance of the subject, Ambassador Albright offered to appear at another time. I think it is singularly unfortunate for this subcommittee to go ahead with this hearing without hearing the testimony of Ambassador Albright, who is clearly in the best and strongest position to explain the rationale for U.S. participation in this conference.

I would like to hope, Mr. Chairman, that the subcommittee will accommodate Ambassador Albright at a time feasible for her so she will be able to appear here and present the Administration's position on this critical issue. I also would like to suggest that it is important for us to take action in the human rights field that does not isolate us from all the other nations that are democratic in character that have no intention of canceling their participation at this conference.

It is important for us to add our strength and our weight and our influence, and I have tremendous faith in all the American women who will participate at this conference, of whatever persuasion, because their presence will be perhaps our most effective tool for focusing attention on Harry Wu's outrageous detention, focusing attention on the full range of preposterous human rights violations by this regime.

Now, the agenda of the conference is a very ambitious one. It is to enhance the status of women, including achieving advances in women's economic, education and health concerns, and promoting women's human rights. I think it would be a serious mistake and merely an emotional outburst to jettison our opportunity to influence the plan of action that will be adopted at the conference just because of the current status of U.S.-China relations. To boycott the conference and silence the most critical voice of American women, plays into the hands of the Chinese regime.

We would hurt ourselves and we would diminish the effectiveness of our effort to improve human rights conditions for women across the globe, were we to refrain from participating at this conference.

Our target should always be to fight for justice and to point out the outrageous character of the Chinese Communist regime. That was my intention, Mr. Chairman, when several months ago I introduced the resolution which was approved unanimously by this subcommittee, subsequently by our full committee unanimously, and then the House of Representatives unanimously, demanding that the President of Taiwan, a distinguished alumnus of one of our great universities, Cornell, be allowed to attend an important meeting at his own alma mater.

This Democratic administration, like the earlier Republican administration, in my judgment, mistakenly opposed the issuance of a visa to Taiwan's distinguished President. But powerful bipartisan congressional pressure prevailed. The President of Taiwan was issued his visa, attended the event at Cornell, and the Chinese Communist regime was climbing the walls. That was an effective exercise of congressional power in making the case that China will not be allowed to impose its perverse values on the free world.

As we all know, the conference in Beijing will take place. It will be attended by an impressive array of women committed to women's rights and human rights from Australia to Norway. The place of American women is shoulder to shoulder with the women of all the free and democratic societies on the face of this planet. I think it is absolutely critical that we explore this issue impassionately and with a degree of seriousness that the topic merits.

I think it is absolutely critical that no attempt be made to exploit this controversy for partisan political advantage. If attempts are made to so exploit this debate, it will be met with a very firm rebuff. You will be reminded time and time again that Bush and Baker signed off on the location at a time when China's human rights record was not one iota better than it is today.

This is not the time to deal with location. Location has been determined. It has been determined, in my judgment, mistakenly. That is why initially I opposed Beijing as the location of the conference. But at this stage, the notion that a new venue will be found, that countries across the globe, that thousands of women from all over the world who are planning to attend this conference, will yield to our petulant desire because an American citizen has been illegally detained, reveals a degree of narcissism which I consider somewhat dangerous.

I am just as concerned with the tens of thousands of Tibetans and the hundreds of thousands of Chinese women whose rights are persistently violated by the Chinese Communist regime. I think it is as dangerous to focus on the plight of one individual in China as it is in recognizing that the Bosnia crisis does not relate only to the American pilot who was downed by Serbian weapons. The Bosnian crisis is much bigger than that and human rights violations in China are far bigger than that.

I want to thank you for giving me this time to express my views, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lantos appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Tom. And let me just say, before yielding to the distinguished chairman of the full International Relations Committee, Mr. Gilman, that we have invited members of the Administration. We did so last week, and we have again is-

sued an invitation to Madeleine Albright or whoever the Administration would deem the appropriate person. I think she would be the most appropriate, to appear before this subcommittee to give a full and complete accounting as to what the Administration has been doing at Prep Comms, as well as what they plan on doing in Beijing, if they do, indeed, go. So no one is being stifled at all. That is a matter of record and we had hoped that she would be here today.

Yes, Bosnia is something that we are all concerned about. As my good friend knows, I have been working on that issue along with him and others for many years. Yes, that does take precedence, but hopefully by next week she will find sufficient time to come here and testify.

Let me also point out that in highlighting the case of Harry Wu, an American citizen who is a true human rights activist in the best and finest sense of that word, he stands not just for Harry Wu, but for every person anywhere in the world who has ever spoken out and endured and suffered because of their human rights advocacy.

He is a very special person. He is more than a symbol, he is one who has suffered immeasurably, and I think it is very, very appropriate for us to suggest that going to Beijing in 1995 is analogous to going to Hitler's Germany in 1939 for a human rights conference. There is ample precedent, I would submit, for not attending conferences on human rights when the host country is an egregious offender. The PRC is an egregious offender. They have gotten worse in the last year with regards to human rights.

The exploitation of women by way of forced abortion has gotten worse. They have a new eugenics law that went into place on June 1st across the entire country. The handicapped now are being singled out for exploitation and destruction by the government of the People's Republic of China. So I would hope that when we are talking about Bush and Baker—they were wrong, and I would have agreed with my good friend from California, that they were wrong in selecting Beijing, and I said so at the time. And hopefully we can see a change of venue and that is what my hope is. I would like to yield to the distinguished chairman, Mr. Gilman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Smith, for chairing this meeting and for arranging it along with the Ranking Minority Member, Mr. Lantos, at our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights. I think it is an extremely important session and extremely important oversight. It is vital that the Congress exercise its oversight role and look into the problems surrounding the proposed U.N. World Conference on Women.

Last week, I joined in a request along with Chairman Smith, Speaker Gingrich and the Senate Majority Leader, Senator Dole, to President Clinton urging him, and I quote from our message, "to announce that the U.S. Government will not participate in any level or in any fashion in the upcoming conference as long as Harry Wu is detained in China." Anything less, I think, would send a tragic signal of disregard for the human rights of an American citizen.

Our joint letter also stated that, and I quote, "It is unconscionable that an American citizen traveling on a valid passport with a valid Chinese visa was arrested, detained and charged in violation of ac-

cepted international law." And while the proposed International U.N. World Conference on Women is vitally important, and we all recognize that. I believe it would be a mistake to hold it at this time in Beijing, China.

The Communist government in Beijing has not only illegally imprisoned an American citizen, it has also barred the participation in the conference of several American women organizations representing Tibetan women and American Taiwanese women. I want to commend the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and I know we are going to have a representative of the commission here today to testify, for their recent statement conditioning participation of a U.S. delegation, conditioning it on the release of Harry Wu and assuring that the religious rights of all visitors in China will be respected.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today and hope that we can work together to find either an alternative site for the important conference or to convince China to change its mind about their respect for human rights. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. The Chair yields to Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me congratulate you on having this very important hearing. And I also concur with the remarks of the previous speaker on this side, who made a number of very excellent points, Mr. Lantos. I do concur that the question of the Bush administration agreeing to the venue and for us to be discussing 2 months from the venue that perhaps it should be postponed, I think is a little ill-timed.

I think that the fact that I did, too, oppose MFN for China, have supported Nancy Pelosi and others who have fought to keep that status, and was very disturbed that MFN was delinked from human rights as relates to our dealings with the People's Republic of China, I also opposed the Olympics being held in China because I think that the whole spirit of the Olympics and what it stands for is totally different.

I support, though, the continuation of the fourth U.N. Conference on Women being held in China. I think that, as indicated, it is kind of late to turn things around at this time. I think that as long as our delegates are able to express themselves and are able to speak freely, I think then that we should certainly continue to move forward.

I have spoken to some very vocal women in my district, a lady, Maria DiSolta Visca Rando, who has been to every one of the conferences up to now, and although she is a very strong advocate of human rights, said that she feels that they should be able to attend this particular conference.

I hear you mentioning now about the singling out of the handicapped in China, which is really unfortunate, but we are finding some of the similar things are happening here right in the United States where we are seeing an attack on the Americans With Disabilities Act. We are finding there is a new spirit that we should defund programs that assist the handicapped, that assist the elderly in this country.

We are finding there is a strong move to cut funds from areas that protect the handicapped, and I think that we ought to fight for the handicapped and disabled people in China, but also let's not

allow the right to start to take away a lot of the benefits that we have seen built up over the years for handicapped and disabled people right here in the United States. And so although I think that we should continue to put pressure on the People's Republic of China, we should finally get our citizen, Harry Wu, from detention, I think that the conference should go on and I would support that at this time. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Salmon.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your willingness to put this hearing together. I think it really shows your commitment to human rights in that section of the world and in the world at large. From the start it has been more than a little strange to be planning a Conference on Women's Rights to be held in the People's Republic of China.

After all, the People's Republic of China has a sorry record on women's rights, or men's rights for that matter. The former Administration was wrong to concur with the China location. But two wrongs don't make a right, and we have an opportunity right now to assert ourselves on this vital issue.

I think the Harry Wu issue has crystallized the debate. It shows that they have no concern and they think that we are a paper tiger. I know that we have heard that phrase before, that we are not willing to stand up and be counted. We can't repeat too often the horrors that occur in PRC and the facts are these.

China has coercive population control policies that target children, both born and unborn, and target women. Through sex selection abortions, China has skewed its population so that it has statistically unnatural numbers of males at the expense of millions of aborted females. Imagine, females are routinely aborted, specifically because they are female. That is the ultimate denial of the rights of the women, the denial of the right to life and the crime of being female. And of course this policy will make Chinese women a minority in their country for decades to come.

Women are also targeted in China by being forced to undergo abortions. As a father of four, I grieve for the mothers who have had their children literally torn from their wombs, and I grieve for the fathers. Imagine a nation in which a mother cannot even protect her child from harm, even while the child is still in her womb. Women and men are also violated through forced sterilizations. Against their wills, many Chinese have had their ability to produce offspring surgically destroyed at the hands of their government, all of which makes China, China's choice as a site to honor women's rights, a cruel irony.

Yet, the United States has proceeded with the conference despite these crimes against basic human decency, and at every turn Chinese officials have heaped scorn upon the women hoping to participate in the conference. They have denied or delayed accreditation to groups whose policies the Chinese government opposes. Exceptional groups like Concerned Women for America, have been mistreated. And NGO's from Taiwan and Tibet have not, surprisingly, faced roadblocks.

That is reason alone, in my view, to make China an unacceptable location for a conference designed to promote the rights of women,

unless your goal is actually to promote some twisted notion of women's rights. But the Administration has proceeded still.

Then last month, China seized American human rights crusader, Harry Wu. Harry Wu has fought valiantly to promote the rights of women and men of China. Now he sits in prison, a political prisoner who could face the death penalty for exposing the truth. Yet, we remain poised to participate in a publicity stunt with the oppressive government in Beijing. We must not reward China with our participation.

We must also as a Nation demand that any U.N. Conference on Women reaffirm the truth stated in the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that motherhood is entitled to special care and assistance. And such a conference must uphold the declaration's affirmation. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection.

After all, what is the most important in life is what one does within the walls of their home. As the President stands idly by, far left elements within his Administration are poised to use the U.N. Conference to attack the nuclear family. But that would be an assault on women, and it is wrong.

In fact, participating in this conference in China, particularly while American human rights crusader, Harry Wu, is a political prisoner would be a grave error. That is why I am pleased to join Representative Smith in sponsoring your bill to set parameters that must be adhered to before we participate. And I think it is finally time that we stop being a paper tiger, that we stand up for rights, that we exercise some modicum of decency on this issue. And I appreciate the opportunity for speaking. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much.

I yield to Mr. Moran.

Mr. MORAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, I share with you your concern and the panel's concern about the situation with regard to Harry Wu. And it is not just Harry Wu, as you know. So many people have gone before him whose rights have been taken away. People have been abused physically and in every other way that a dictatorial Communist government can impose its control over people. So this is symptomatic of a greater underlying situation in China that we cannot stand idly by and accept as the way things are.

I do think we have a responsibility to try to change it and I think we have an opportunity to do so. In fact, while I have always voted for MFN status for China, I will vote against it because—well, Nancy tells me that is not the case. When I first came into the Congress, Nancy was one of the first people I met and this was one of the first subjects she broached with, and so I voted against it then. But more recently, I have voted for MFN. I will not, because of the Harry Wu situation. It is symptomatic of so many other problems we have with China, even though I strongly support an economic trade relationship with China. But the United States should and I think must participate in this international women's conference.

In fact, because of Mrs. Clinton's eloquence on the issue of women's rights, I think she is this country's ideal representative on this



issue. I also have a very, very high regard for Mrs. Albright. I wish she was testifying today. I hope she can represent our point of view at this conference. Because she does so, so ably, within the U.N. structure.

Six hundred million women live in China. And they are the ones who have the most to gain by this conference. There are few other countries on earth where women have been as oppressed as they have been in China, through much of its history. But the human race is still evolving. We are in a process of evolution, political and economic evolution, as well as social evolution, particularly evolution with regard to the role women should and were intended to play in our society. In fact, one of the areas where we have lagged the most seriously in this evolutionary process is with the empowerment of women, economically, socially and politically.

Part of that process is enabling women to gain greater control over their lives through economic and educational opportunities and by controlling the size of their families, by controlling their own bodies. By the same token, we need to give more protection and importance to the role of childbirth, of nurturing, of family stability, that women should be able to choose to devote the better part of their lives to, through rational, responsible, governmental policies of good health care, housing, economic security.

I think those are the goals of this international women's conference, and I support those goals as I do the conference itself. And ironically, because it is being held in China, it may, in fact, do more to enhance this evolutionary process of which we are all a part, than if it were held in a country like the United States or Western Europe where these issues are not so intensely debated and are not so critical within the lives of the people in what are still Third World countries.

I just hope that what transpires at this conference reflects the very highest nature of mankind, and not the transitory divisions that oftentimes divide good people whose objectives are held in common and, in fact, are the ultimate goal of our U.S. policy and of world policy on this issue. So I think it is an important issue, I think we ought to probably get on with the hearing. I am glad you are having the hearing, but I hope that we have a balanced perspective that is shared with us by the witnesses today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Moran. And just again to advise members, we have invited the Administration. We offered Madeleine Albright any day this week. She was preoccupied, as one might expect, with the situation in Bosnia. So we suggested any day next week. So our hope in this subcommittee and the Chair's hope is to hear her, because I have a number of questions I would like to pose to her, so I am looking forward to her testimony.

Mr. MORAN. That seems fair. The issue was whether we should delay it. But that is fine.

Mr. SMITH. The Chair recognizes Ms. Ros-Lehtinen.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I congratulate you for your continued leadership on this very crucial issue concerning the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing especially, but on Most Favored Nation status to China.

For many years, since I have been in Congress, I have repeatedly voted not to grant this favored status to China. Certainly, granting it has not helped move that country anywhere toward any freedom whatsoever. Thus, I think it is a shame to delink the human rights issues from the trade and economic issues.

But I am also a proud cosponsor of your bill, Mr. Chairman, setting forth the conditions on the expenditure of funds for travel to this conference, and the bill is very clear. It says that no funds shall be expended for travel by any U.S. official or delegate to this conference, unless the Secretary of State certifies to Congress that certain conditions have been met, including that the process of accrediting nongovernmental organizations has been conducted fairly, with the opportunity to have appeals of denials; that no NGO that has sought or seeks accreditation be denied this accreditation based on political orientation; that accreditation has been granted to a group from Taiwan, a group from Tibet; that China would be granting visas in a timely fashion to representatives of NGO's; that China will give free access to the main conference site; that China will respect internationally recognized human rights, including freedom of religion, freedom of speech and freedom of the press; and that China has released Harry Wu and has allowed him to return to the United States.

It also has a sense of Congress in the bill, saying that if the United States sends a delegation to the conference, that the delegation should, in accordance with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, protect values related to motherhood, to family, to religion, and should oppose abortion, et cetera. I congratulate you on this resolution regarding the expenditure of public funds to this conference, and I hope that we can move that bill through. Again, I congratulate you for your leadership on this issue, Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. I thank the Chair of the African subcommittee for her kind remarks and for her leadership on women's rights and human rights especially over these many years that she has been a Member of Congress, one of the consciences of the Congress, and I do thank you for your leadership.

The Chair is very pleased to welcome our first witness, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi from California, who has been very active on human rights in China, particularly as it relates to Most Favored Nation Status and Harry Wu.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. LANTOS. May I be permitted to make a statement before Mrs. Pelosi begins?

Mr. SMITH. Sure, be happy to yield.

Mr. LANTOS. I have the privilege and pleasure of sharing representation of San Francisco with Congresswoman Pelosi, and I want to state for the record that there is no more courageous, effective, indispensable fighter for human rights on all issues than Congresswoman Pelosi. She has dedicated her distinguished congressional service to preserving and enhancing the arena of human rights, and all of us on this side are immensely proud of her efforts and her leadership on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. PELOSI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Lantos, for your very generous remarks. May I say that it is a privilege to share the representation of San Francisco with you. I accept your compliment on the priority that I have given to the fight for human rights throughout the world, and in this case particularly in China.

And may I say that any courage I have demonstrated is strictly involuntary. But as Harry Wu will be first to tell you, to be a champion of human rights does take a great deal of courage. And that is why I am so pleased his name was mentioned here today.

Harry Wu is from our area. Mr. Lantos and I, as well as Congresswoman Eshoo, who represents Stanford University, and Mr. Pete Stark, who represents Milpitas, where Mr. Wu lives with his wife, all are so very proud of Harry Wu and all very concerned about his welfare and, indeed, his release.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lantos, distinguished members of the committee, I am pleased to report that this Sunday we had a demonstration in San Francisco in support of Harry, which was very successful, very well-covered by the media, and in addition to the fact that his family—in his home town of Milpitas on the Fourth of July, celebrated the Fourth of July by having a yellow ribbon day for Harry Wu, an all-American hero.

He is, as you know, a distinguished scholar at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. He is an American citizen. His welfare is very important to all of us, and I think we can stipulate that we want anything that we do, any actions that we take in this Congress legislatively or otherwise, to be in furtherance of his release. But that has to be in keeping with Harry's fight. I believe the Chinese have taken Harry hostage.

They want to set terms now for his release that even Harry would not want. So that is separate from the reason that I am here to testify, but certainly because he has been mentioned so many times, nothing that we do about China in this Congress until he is released can be separated from the fact that he has been arrested for telling the truth about human rights and slave labor camps in China.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for allowing me to appear here today to discuss the upcoming Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. I have long valued our working relationship together, and indeed with all of the members of this committee and now Mr. Salmon joins us in bringing his particular expertise on China, indeed his knowledge of the Chinese language, which hopefully will hold us all in good stead.

I think that we can stipulate that we all respect each other as supporters and advocates for human rights throughout the world, and a great deal of the focus we have had working together has been on China. I think we can all stipulate that Beijing is a very bad place to have been chosen to have this women's conference. I think you could have knocked us over with a feather, some of the women, that they gathered in the room to tell us that the conference was going to be in Beijing, the weekend after The New York Times had the big exposé about female infanticide in China.

I think we can also stipulate that China's human rights record is abominable. But the fact is, the conference will be held in

Beijing, despite efforts that we have tried to make to change the venue. I wanted to just say that some of the atrocities that go on in China do relate to women. And, Mr. Smith, Mr. Chairman, you have been a very important advocate to reveal some of these atrocities in terms of female infanticide, forced abortion, sex selection abortions, et cetera. And that makes a mockery of having an international conference on the status of women in Beijing.

Yet once again, Beijing was chosen, despite our objections. Since it is going to be held there, I believe that a U.S. presence is warranted. And I will tell you why. Throughout the past months, I have been actively involved with members of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues. I do not come here and speak for the caucus. I am speaking as an advocate for human rights in China, a person who has worked on this issue for a long time. But I have been actively involved with the Women's Caucus on this issue. And we have had Ambassador Albright visit with us and representatives of the Administration on a number of occasions to respond to our concerns about accreditation, the venue for the NGO conference, freedom of expression while in China, the list goes on, in fact, mentioned by the distinguished members of the committee and you, Mr. Chairman, this morning.

I cochair the International Task Force in the Women's Caucus with Jan Meyers. We have been working together to see if it is appropriate for us to have a delegation of women members, and if, indeed, some of the concerns that we had were being addressed by the Administration. And I am here to say to you as an individual that the Administration has been very responsive to our concerns. In fact, they weren't only responsive, they had been taking initiatives. But we were pleased to receive the confirmation that actions were being taken to make sure that all otherwise qualified non-governmental organizations would be able to attend the conference, that every effort was made to make sure there was an appropriate venue.

I am still not satisfied that the venue is good enough and is not an obstacle to participation, but certainly it is better than what some of the possibilities were. I do not believe that representatives from Tibet and Taiwan will be given the access in Beijing that they would have been given had this conference been held in any other country of the world. These are qualified NGO's who should be represented there, and I hope that they will be.

But recognizing China's attitude, and I think arrogance in this case, I can say clearly, it may be that many of those organizations will not be there. But the Administration, the Clinton administration and Ambassador Albright, fought very hard, and Secretary Wirth as well, as well as the other Administration representatives, fought very hard to get the most that we could from that. And, therefore, I believe that, because of the issues that are being discussed at the conference, because of the progress that was made, because of the Administration's intervention, to add to the satisfaction of many of us who started out very, very tough on the Administration in terms of sending a delegation to the conference, I believe that from their standpoint, U.S. participation is warranted.

I don't think that this conference should go on without us, frankly. As our colleagues have mentioned, this is a very important con-

ference for women. And I think it would be in some ways a victory for the Chinese hard-liners if we weren't present. I think the American delegation, wherever it goes, brings the bright light of democracy and free expression that cannot be ignored. And I think that that is worth balancing other concerns that we have.

As far as what that delegation should be, I believe that it should be appropriate. And that means, and I beg to differ with our distinguished colleague from Virginia, that I do not believe it is appropriate for the First Lady to lead the delegation to Beijing.

If Harry Wu were never arrested, I still don't think the First Lady should be leading the delegation in light of all of the issues that the gentlemen and gentlelady from Florida have expressed about human rights in China, about, in the past few months, the recent arrest of dissidents and rearrest of leading dissidents in China.

I think, in light of the fact that even people that we don't know have been arrested for a long time and there hasn't been a reversal of the Tiananmen Square judgment, that these people would be imprisoned. So I have thought from the start that it would be inappropriate for the First Lady to give face to the Chinese regime by showing up there.

The position of First Lady is a very special one in the hearts and minds of the American people. That position has been enhanced and indeed Mrs. Clinton has given a luster to it in her service as First Lady. I would hate to see that prestige squandered in giving prestige to the Chinese regime.

So I came to that conclusion long before Harry Wu was arrested. I also believe that even if Harry Wu is freed, we should still have a delegation that is not of the highest level. We do not reward an arrest, indeed, a taking of hostage, by when the ransom is paid, sending a high level delegation.

I think, however, that Ambassador Albright, in her position as ambassador to the United Nations from the United States, is the appropriate person to attend and lead our delegation. It is the work she does. It is the forum in which she represents us. And I think that the issues that were mentioned here today are very well served by her participation and her leading the delegation.

In the Women's Caucus, we are talking now about whether any women Members of Congress should go, and there are some who are interested and we have these same—it is all a balance. Do we want to enhance it with the presence of women Members of Congress, and we believe that we have something to offer in our official capacity, or do we want to stay home?

I come down on the side of those that think it is important for us to be there, those who are committed to these issues, and indeed, Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that you be there. And I hope that after you hear the testimony and the rest, and I have the highest regard for the witnesses that you have, I hope you will expand that universe as well, but I hope that you will conclude that if this event is taking place anyway, that it should take place with your presence. And I hope that we could be a part of a delegation, or I think it is more important that you are there than I, that you will be participating with some of the women Members of Congress and other men who wish to go.

We have yielded on so many scores to the Chinese that I would hate to see us yield again and have the First Lady be there. On the other hand, I would hate to see the women's concerns be the only place that we did not yield and therefore have this important conference where serious issues of substance are being discussed.

I disagree with the gentleman from New Jersey, the Chairman of the committee, on many of the issues of substance, and that is the beauty of our democracy, that we can. And I think it would be a very wholesome endeavor for us to participate in that conference and have our disagreements, but there are so many areas of agreement, especially your leadership in child survival and all the other issues that relate to the well-being of children throughout the world, in which you are a champion in this Congress and in this country. So I think your presence there is important. I know you know that they are addressing health and education and economic needs and poverty and literacy rates and mortality rates and the list goes on and on and I don't have to go into it in any detail because these are issues which you are most familiar with. But I do think that there is a chance that this could work, that this conference could have a beneficial effect on freedom of expression in China. And if it does, all the better. And if it does not, if it demonstrates to the world how really abominable human rights are in China, that in spite of themselves they couldn't behave in front of guests, then our issue will be clearer and the bright light of freedom and the media will be shed on China, enhancing our arguments for why the world should condition its relationships on the respect that the Chinese authorities pay to the people who live there.

And so with that, I would like to say just in closing, talk about Harry Wu for 1 second. To the women who are going to the conference, with or without an official delegation, and I think it is in the interest of safety for the women who are going, it is important to have an official delegation there. Please take heed of the precautions that the State Department has promulgated. It is a very different atmosphere. And if they said if you are carrying a Bible or gathering in small groups or criticizing anything that the government does, you may be arrested, you may.

I speak with some authority on this subject, but I ran faster than the people in back of me, so I don't speak with complete authority on the subject. But it is important. And Harry Wu was arrested. Not for stealing State secrets or anything else or for breaking China's law, but for speaking the truth.

The Chinese, a police State, will always say that whatever you say that they don't agree with is a State secret. They can determine what the law is on the spot and the verdict, too. So this is not—this is not frivolous, when the State Department presents these precautions. And I hope that those attending will take heed.

In any event, I hope that our friend Harry Wu, whom we pray for every day and are very, very concerned about, and many of us have been praying for him the whole time he was there, I hope that he will be freed long before this conference. But I will end as I began in saying if Harry Wu were never taken and detained, the First Lady should never go to this conference in the first place. And that even if he is released, that doesn't change that dynamic.

But I do think that the committee will consider the appropriate representation to be Madeleine Albright, as well as perhaps some representation from Congress, representing our different points of view on the substance that will be discussed there. And with that, Mr. Chairman, once again, I salute you for all that you have done on human rights.

It has been one of the privileges of my service in Congress to work on an issue that enjoys such bipartisan cooperation and I commend you for your leadership on that and to my colleague, Mr. Lantos. Thank you for your successful advocacy for human rights in China. You seem to be the one with the resolutions that win, so keep up the good work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Pelosi appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. I want to thank the gentlelady for her comments and for being here and for her very brave fight on behalf of Harry Wu and joined by Congressman Frank Wolf, who is a co-laborer in that very, very important work.

Let me just make a couple of points. I think you hit the nail right on the head, Congresswoman Pelosi, when you said going does make a mockery. You know, I think that is the exact word. You know, I made the statement a moment ago and I will repeat it, going to Beijing in 1995 is analogous to going to Hitler's Germany in 1939.

We are dealing with a regime that has gotten demonstrably worse in the last couple years. It was already bad, we know that, but it has gotten worse in a myriad of areas including religious freedom, the Li Peng declarations of last January, the attempt to snuff out the house church movement, to completely dismantle the Catholic church, not the official, but the underground Catholic Church; the obfuscation of the whole gulag labor issue which continues to be—I mean you and I both know, the MOU with the U.S. Government is—

Ms. PELOSI. It is a joke.

Mr. SMITH. Is a joke. So we know that gulag labor continues unabated and it is probably on the rise. And of course, the exploitation of women by way of forced abortion.

I would like to read, very briefly, and then ask a question. I got a letter handed to me, hand delivered to me by a person 2 days ago. The person carried this letter from a woman in China. And this is just excerpts.

"I have been hesitating to write you until today. At the end of May, I heard a report on VOA about your concern over China's cruel policy of forced abortions." The letter is addressed to me. "As a Chinese woman who has just been forced to have an abortion at that time, I really agree with you. What is a real woman without the personal right to have one more child, especially when she was expecting a baby and is obliged to kill it, no matter how unwilling?"

"Considering human rights in China, we suffer more than any other country. If we don't have the right even to give birth to a baby, what is the use of any other rights? Please don't mention my name in public, since I could be severely punished. I wish your career is always smooth."

And this is a letter from a woman who has been forcibly aborted. She is one of millions in the People's Republic of China. I think all

Members should know that the host of the Chinese delegation, the person that our delegation and other delegations will be clinking glasses and toasting and having very cordial conversations with, is the Chairwoman, the woman who ran the People's Republic of China's forced abortion program. I saw—and this is one of my concerns and this will be my question.

I was in Cairo for about a week during the Conference on Population. I was appalled at how the Chinese delegation, at a Population Control Conference run by the United Nations, had *carte blanche*. Peng Peiyun walked around as if she was a human rights advocate and she currently is the leader of the coercive Population Control Program in China.

Every delegation, while it may pay lip service or may have paid lip service to coercion in the abstract, refused to mention China specifically. And my question to you, if our delegation does go, do you admonish them, do you encourage them to be country-specific? Because again, at U.N. fora in the past, everyone is nice, everyone talks around issues, talks in the abstract about freedom and rights and this and that, and yet when it gets down to saying who is violating on a massive scale, in this case the People's Republic of China, do you believe Madeleine Albright and our leaders, if they do go, should raise this in the strongest possible terms right in Beijing?

Ms. PELOSI. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do. And I also wanted to, if I may, just respond to something else that you said there. I think we should—I think there shouldn't be any clinging of glasses, by the way. I think that this is a meeting about substance. The justification for going is the substance.

Certainly women from all over the world will network, but I don't think it should be the occasion for any celebration with the Chinese regime that they were able to coax a high level delegation.

I want to make another point, because I think that you hit right on to a very crucial issue. Why are we here in the first place? How did China get this conference? Some will tell you that it was that region of the world's turn, so it had to be in the Pacific. But they will say nobody else wanted it so it went to China. And that is not necessarily so.

But every aspect of the U.N.'s activities, whether it was the 50th anniversary in San Francisco, which I was proud to participate with Mr. Lantos, or whether it was the vote in Geneva on human rights, or whether it was the meeting you reference in Cairo, or whether it is this hosting of the women's conference in Beijing, there is an economic intimidation that China exercises.

How do you think we lost the vote on sending a rapporteur to China to look into the human rights? Do you think that that was a vote on human rights? The Chinese work those countries over and over, and as much as they like to say you shouldn't mix economics and politics, you shouldn't mix trade and human rights, MFN, they do it every single day in every vote.

In San Francisco, there was a forum which was lovely. Many of the Nobel laureates for human rights were there. In the interest of time, I won't name them all. And then they did a presentation of Nobel laureates who weren't there. And then they had a report



listing Nobel laureates for human rights. And not one place was His Holiness, the Dalai Lama mentioned. I wonder why.

And in the book which was supposed to be the book for the occasion, the Chinese insisted that His Holiness' remarks be expunged from the text. So they do this all the time. They run—they, by dint of size and maybe veto power and economics, the ability to go shopping every time there is a problem, they will go shopping in some of these countries, the United Nations, I think, is—I don't want to say discredited, but certainly has some questions to answer about how decisions are made and why China can throw its weight around so often.

So if another country wants to bid for the Beijing Conference, they have done their shopping already. And in closing, I will say I think it is a disaster that the Chinese came so close to the Olympics. Yes, on the basis of human rights, but also on the addition—in relationship to the facilities for holding the Olympics. They were completely inferior, and they came one vote away from getting it because of this issue that I think you touched on. They throw their weight around at the United Nations and they get what they want.

Mr. SMITH. I believe the gentlelady makes an excellent case why we need a change of venue. They are using their economic might, coercion, if you will, to get these other nations to cower and to back off. And I do think, you know, the Chinese propaganda machine for the average Chinese, this would be the greatest thing that has ever happened.

I would remind Members, that we did not go to the Moscow Human Rights Conference because of the invasion of Afghanistan and egregious human rights abuses that continued in the U.S.S.R. in 1980. Thus, by us not going and insisting on a change of venue, the enormous loss of face for the Chinese Government I think would send a clear message to every dissident that we mean business. We need boldness when it comes to human rights and again even when it is inconvenient. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I want to commend my friend and colleague for a powerful and eloquent statement, and I fully associate myself with her views. I have an observation and I would like to raise a question of Mrs. Pelosi.

Symbolism is very important. Denying the right to China to hold the Olympics in the year 2000 was important. Giving the right to Taiwan's distinguished President to visit his alma mater was important. But clearly, what is most important to the Chinese is to continue to enjoy a trade surplus of over \$30 billion with the United States. That is really their fundamental concern.

It is my judgment, and I would like to ask my colleague to respond to this, in addition to another question, isn't it the ultimate hypocrisy for some people to proclaim their commitment to human rights by voting against U.S. participation at this women's conference in Beijing, while voting to continue the granting of Most Favored Nation treatment to China, which provides the economic resources for this despicable regime to engage in human rights violations?

It seems to me that this hypocrisy is so thick you could cut it with a knife. It is reasonable to argue that we should go because it is in our human rights interest to make our case and we should deny trade privileges to China. But the reverse, it seems to me, is so fundamentally hypocritical as to boggle the mind.

The second question I would like to ask my colleague to respond to what the Chinese Government really would like to see the U.S. Government do with respect to presence at this conference. I am convinced that there is nothing the Chinese Communist regime would love more than no official U.S. participation. Because there is no doubt in my mind that if people like Madeleine Albright and you and Connie Morella and other distinguished women who are in public office are in China, you would be able to focus attention on the full spectrum of outrages and the Chinese Government would love to see nothing more than Madeleine Albright and Nancy Pelosi and Connie Morella and others absenting them from this enormous opportunity.

They will not be able to arrest you on Tiananmen Square because the scandal that that would create would far exceed the scandal of Harry Wu's arrest. I understand earlier episodes and I am fully familiar with earlier episodes, but I think it is self-evident that if the Chinese Communist regime would like to see this conference unfold with the minimum of controversy and disturbance, their most fervent hope would be to see the U.S. official delegation stay away, official delegations from democratic countries in Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand, elsewhere come, and the whole world's women representatives, with the exception of the United States, participate at the Beijing Conference.

I am suggesting, therefore, and I would be grateful for your view, that my colleagues like Mr. Smith and the others who are cosponsoring this legislation, with the best of intentions, are playing directly and naively into the hands of the Chinese Communist regime. There is nothing they wish more fervently than to have eloquent and powerful spokespersons like Madeleine Albright be 5,000 miles away, rather than at the very heart of the Beijing Conference.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. If the gentleman will yield a second—

Mr. LANTOS. I will be happy to yield.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN [continuing]. Since I am one of those sponsors. I think my record, unlike so many other eloquent speakers on this issue of China, is very clear. I have always voted against granting MFN status to China. I wish other eloquent speakers would have as clear a record as I have on this issue consistently.

Mr. GILMAN [presiding]. Since there are several votes on the floor, we will try to be brief.

Ms. PELOSI. I will be brief. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I agree with the gentlelady, her record is clear on her advocacy for human rights throughout the world and in this case, China. As far as your question is concerned, I do, without associating myself with your characterization of the attempt as naive, because I don't think it is. I think it is bringing pressure and I think that is appropriate what our colleagues are trying to do with their legislation, but I do agree with you completely that the Chinese

Government is looking right now for any scapegoat that they can find for their own failure in terms of this conference.

So they would love for us not to come and then they could say to the women of the world, we wanted to enhance your efforts, but they didn't. Now, you know that is not what the case is. But that is how they would characterize it. And it would give them, not that they have need of justification to misrepresent, but it would give them the justification to misrepresent.

As far as your first question is concerned, while I think it would be very hypocritical for someone to vote to not send the delegation to Beijing, but vote for MFN for China, I don't see anybody on this panel who would fall into that category. But I will say this, that fig leaves of this kind, where people will hide behind some rhetorical or hortatory measure, whether it is advocacy for human rights as opposed to revoking MFN, is normal and customary in the Congress of the United States.

And so while I think it is wrong and I think it gives people a way out and they will say, well, I voted against you where it really counted, but my heart's in the right place so I voted for this other thing over here, this other resolution over here, in the interest of human rights, Mr. Chairman, as you know in your leadership as Chair with Mr. Porter of the Human Rights Caucus, that happens around here all the time. That doesn't make it right, and it is hypocritical.

And I would just like to say in closing, because I know we have a vote, Mr. Smith mentioned Mr. Wolf. He is the closest friend Harry Wu has in the Congress. He is the relentless advocate for human rights in China. It is his issue, prison labor exports to the United States, that is Harry Wu's main issue. And it is because the people in the United States, many of whom fit the description you made, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lantos, wish to ignore the fact that products made by slave labor are constantly being exported to the United States, in violation of U.S. law, it is because there is this looking the other way on that issue that Harry is now in prison because he has taken extraordinary efforts to make it something that no one can ignore.

Slave labor in China exists, nearly 2,000 gulags that Harry has identified where people are arrested for many reasons, including their political and religious beliefs, as well as the fact that their organs are transplanted involuntarily, obviously. So this atrocity is Harry's message, and that is why Harry is arrested. And Frank Wolf is the unmatched, unsurpassed leader in the Congress on that issue.

Mr. GILMAN. Congresswoman Pelosi, we thank you for your testimony today and we give you a great deal of credit for your continual fight. You mentioned your regret that women from Tibet and Taiwan were not granted access to the conference.

Well, I would like my colleagues to note that these women are Americans of Tibet origin and Taiwanese origin. So in addition to illegally holding an American citizen, Harry Wu, the government of Beijing has also rejected participation of American citizens in an international conference.

Accordingly, if there is another factor to consider before we rush off, we should consider this. Now, I understand there will be an

NGO conference in Australia. Why not just expand that? They tell me the Chinese don't have sufficient accommodations now to take care of this conference. Since there are so many human rights issues prevailing, why not give serious consideration to going to the NGO conversation in Australia, expanding that and making that the international conference?

Ms. PELOSI. Well, I agree with you and I have supported that position from day one. I am just saying, if it is held in Beijing, I think a U.S. presence is important and warranted. I think that we should exhaust every avenue, every remedy that we have to insist that qualified women's groups representing the concerns of women in Taiwan and Tibet should be accredited. And I don't think that fight is over yet.

The Chinese have added obstacles there which are unfortunate, and as I said before, any NGO that would be received in another country should be received in China. That makes the conference legitimate. But I think—I think I have to run to vote.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, once again, for your leadership on human rights issues. I hope that you will choose to go to China and that we can have a delegation that will make its mark there.

Mr. SMITH [presiding]. Thank you, Mrs. Pelosi. We appreciate your testimony very much.

I would like to ask the first panel if they would come to the witness table. First, we have got Nina Shea, who has been an international lawyer for 15 years, now Director of the Puebla Institute, an international human rights group that defends religious freedom.

She is coauthor of Human Rights Report on El Salvador, published by Random House in 1993. This past May, she organized a hearing on how American businesses can support human rights in China. It was at this conference that Harry Wu made his last public appearance prior to his arrest in the People's Republic of China.

Louisa Coan serves as China coordinator for Amnesty International. She graduated magna cum laude from Cornell in Asia studies in 1987 and did graduate work at Johns Hopkins Neijiang University in Neijiang, China. Ms. Coan witnessed pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square and has been active with Amnesty International on behalf of human rights in China ever since.

And finally, Carl Anderson, a member of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, holds a B.A. from Seattle University and a law degree from the University of Denver. In 1990 he was appointed to a sixth term—six-year term, I should say, on the U.S. Commission on Human Rights. It is in that capacity that he appears here today.

Nina, if you could begin the testimony.

#### **STATEMENT OF NINA SHEA, PRESIDENT, PUEBLA INSTITUTE**

Ms. SHEA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Puebla Institute has defended human rights and religious freedom in China since 1989. I first wish to state clearly the position of the Puebla Institute regarding the U.N. Beijing Women's Conference.

Puebla urges the U.S. Government to completely withdraw from participating at the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September, 1995, unless Harry Wu is freed and allowed to return home. And please note we are not advocating a boycott by NGO's, women's groups or congressional delegations.

There are three main reasons for our position. First, Harry Wu is a U.S. citizen. He is one of us. This distinguishes him from all the untold numbers of political prisoners in China. He resides and works in California, where he is a scholar at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

Mr. Wu carried a valid U.S. passport and entry visa into China. In every U.S. passport, it is written: "The Secretary of State of the United States of America hereby requests all whom it may concern to permit the citizen national of the United States named herein to pass without delay or hindrance and in case of need to give all lawful aid and protection."

This is, in essence, a contract of responsibility between the United States and the passport bearer. The United States has a responsibility to see that Harry Wu's fundamental rights are observed.

Second, Harry Wu is a human rights defender. He survived 19 years in the laogai. He is now being charged with espionage and faces a possible death sentence. But Mr. Wu is not only a human rights victim. He is a human rights defender of the stature of Andrei Sakharov, Vaclav Havel, Anatoly Shcharansky and Nelson Mandela. Mr. Wu is a bold critic of the repressive human rights policies of Beijing and the Chinese fear nothing more than the truth he witnesses.

I do not need to reiterate the seminal work Mr. Wu did in exposing to the world the atrocities of the Chinese laogai. This committee, above all, knows of Mr. Wu's courageous efforts. He risked everything to give relentless voice to others who are victimized into silence. He knew the risks that were involved in his work, and he felt morally compelled to assume them.

In returning to China this June, he was no fool, he was a hero. International law recognizes the importance of human rights defenders like Mr. Wu and accords them special protections. The U.N. Human Rights Commission has a separate agenda item under which the world community studies and develops protections for human rights defenders.

The 1993 Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights also pays tribute to human rights defenders and calls for their special protection. As the world's leading democracy, we are morally bound to press for Mr. Wu's freedom.

Third, it would be wrong to confer human rights prestige on China at a time when our own citizen is stripped of all human rights. The Beijing Women's Conference, like the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, which I attended and know about, will be a celebration, a veritable festival of rights, and will result in a "Beijing Declaration". Forever more, Beijing will be associated in international law as the place where human rights were advanced.

It will be impossible for the United States to separate China from this conference. The Chinese will be the hosts of the conference and will be giving the opening welcome. As hosts, they will be thanked in turn by each of the official delegations. It will be an

event that will confer great prestige and legitimacy on the Chinese regime. It will signal that the international human rights community has conferred membership within its ranks to the government of China, a privilege that was denied them by the Olympic Site Selection Committee in 1993.

Harry Wu's arrest, detention and possible death sentence forces the United States into a confrontation over human rights. China's treatment from beginning to end against Wu is a deliberate act of provocation against the United States. Because of who Wu is and what he dedicates his life to, China's treatment of Wu shows contempt for U.S. human rights standards.

China's capricious legal and penal systems, its total lack of the rule of law, are now directly affecting the United States, for one of its own citizens has been taken a political prisoner. This is the wrong time for the United States by its presence to pay tribute to China as an honored member of the international human rights community.

The United States is to be represented in Beijing by the First Lady, two Cabinet members and an Under Secretary of State, one of the most prestigious delegations assembled by the United States for any U.N. world conference in recent years. Even without the First Lady, this remains a very distinguished delegation.

To remove only Mrs. Clinton from the delegation in protest of Mr. Wu's arrest would be a trivial gesture. No official delegate of any rank should be placed in the position of toasting China over human rights or celebrating the development of human rights standards while guests of the Chinese at this time.

Pragmatically speaking, withdrawal of official U.S. participation from the Beijing Women's Conference is one of the few points of pressure that can be applied by the United States taking principled rights—principled positions on human rights can be inconvenient. Human rights advocates, including the Puebla Institute, have advocated that athletes boycott contests and business executives forgo profits and deals in countries that seriously abuse human rights.

Though much has been invested in preparing for this conference by the United States and NGO's and others, we should now be prepared to give up official U.S. participation in the women's conference unless Mr. Wu is freed or the conference is moved. Without active U.S. participation, the Beijing Conference will suffer. Let history record why.

In conclusion, I urge the Congress to pass legislation banning official U.S. participation in the U.N. Women's Conference until Harry Wu is released. U.S. participation while Mr. Wu remains a political prisoner would be nothing less than coddling a dictator. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Shea appears in the appendix.]  
Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Ms. Shea. Mr. Anderson.

#### **STATEMENT OF CARL A. ANDERSON, COMMISSIONER, U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS**

Mr. ANDERSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the invitation to testify before the committee this morning. I do so not on behalf of the Commission, but on behalf of the statement unani-

mously adopted by all eight members of the commission at its meeting last Friday.

I am here in my capacity as an individual commissioner who was the sponsor of that statement. It is entitled, "Statement of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on the U.N. World Conference on Women in Beijing, China," and it reads as follows:

"According to the State Department, the Chinese Government may restrict the right of Americans and other foreign nationals to religious expression and the free exercise of religion during the U.N. World Conference on Women scheduled to take place in Beijing in September. We believe that our government should not agree to send a delegation whose participation is conditioned on the relinquishment or attenuation of the right to religious freedom, including religious expression or the right not to be discriminated against based on religion or any other status included in this commission's statutory mandate.

"In addition, the Chinese Government has arrested an American citizen, Mr. Harry Wu, apparently because of his laudable record in the field of civil rights for Chinese nationals and Chinese Americans. Since June 19th, he has been detained apparently without benefit of counsel. We believe Mr. Wu's rights to due process of law and in the administration of justice have been grossly violated and he should be released immediately.

"The participation of the U.S. delegation in the Beijing Conference should be conditional on the release of Mr. Wu and on credible assurance that the religious rights of Americans in China will be respected. If the government of China rejects these conditions, we urge the Administration to withdraw its delegation and we urge Congress to cancel funding for American participation in the conference."

Mr. Chairman, I believe this to be a defining moment for our government in the cause of civil rights and human rights. In my opinion, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights took this virtually unprecedented action to protest the treatment of an American citizen held by another government and of that government's perceived potential threat to the civil rights of other American citizens, because as I stated at the time of the statement's adoption, we cannot as a nation become entangled in such gross violations of human rights as are now occurring in China without it having serious implications for civil rights within the United States.

How is it possible for the government of the United States to participate in a world conference ostensibly devoted in large measure to civil rights, when a condition for our participation is the relinquishment of the civil rights of the members of our own delegation and their acquiescence to a gross denial of fundamental civil rights to another American citizen?

I believe that as officials charged with ensuring the equal protection of the laws and the administration of justice, we cannot pay that price even if that price is the civil rights of only one American citizen.

In 1992, the Commission on Civil Rights issued a report on civil rights issues facing Asian Americans in the 1990's, which found in part that many Asian Americans suffer from false stereotypes. It is especially important that our government proceed in a manner which will not promote even indirectly such stereotypes.

America must show as much resolve to secure the release of Harry Wu as it did to rescue Captain Scott O'Grady. Moreover, in my opinion it is particularly important that such resolve be demonstrated in a case where the American at issue is an American by choice, that is a naturalized American citizen.

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by thanking you for holding these hearings at this particular time.

Mr. SALMON [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Coan. I am sorry, thank you, Mr. Anderson. We will go ahead and move on to Louisa Coan now.

**STATEMENT OF LOUISA COAN, CHINA COUNTRY  
COORDINATOR, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

Ms. COAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify today about human rights in China. Because this testimony is being given in the context of a debate about whether the United States should go to the U.N. World Conference on Women, it is relevant to state that Amnesty International does not take a position on whether the conference should be held in Beijing, or whether the United States should boycott the conference.

Amnesty International does wish to go on the record to reaffirm its support for the conference. As our board Chair, Mary Gray, said recently, the U.N. Conference on Women is an important event in its own right. It is not a Chinese conference, it is a world conference addressing a most important issue.

This will be a venue at which key standards for the protection of women's human rights must be upheld. Many governments are attempting to challenge the universality and indivisibility of human rights. There is a challenge to the principle that women's human rights are an inseparable part of human rights as a whole.

State-sponsored violence against women and many other grievous issues do require further commitments from the governments who will be attending this conference. Therefore, the conference will be a vital forum for Amnesty International and other groups to uphold and strengthen international standards for the protection of human rights. Therefore, we are going to the conference, urging all governments to make commitments to address these issues.

With your consent, Mr. Chairman, we would like to submit for the record with this testimony a document entitled, "Equality by the Year 2000," Amnesty International's recommendations for the platform for action.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. Do you have further comments?

Ms. COAN. If I have permission, I would like to submit that.

Mr. SALMON. Without objection, so ordered.

[The material submitted for the record appears in the appendix.]

Ms. COAN. For the human rights situation in China, we have a dismal record before us. There are thousands of political prisoners who remain in detention after unfair trials, including many political prisoners of conscience.

The police continue to use various forms of preventive administrative detention. The most notorious of which are the famous re-education through labor camps. Dissidents and other political opponents of the government are sentenced to hard labor by government committees without trial.

We fear and we are quite concerned that this is a deliberate policy to stifle and silence outspoken and even potential critics. Free exercise of religion, a value heralded around the world, is brutally trampled in China. Police raids on independent religious gatherings have continued. Scores of Protestants and Catholics have been detained or placed under restriction, including 30 to 40 Roman



Catholics arrested just in April of this year during Easter celebrations.

Repression of dissent has increased in Tibet during the past year. At the end of 1994, at least 628 political prisoners are recorded to be held in Tibet, most of them Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns detained solely for their peaceful investigation of their views on the independence of Tibet.

Trials continue to fall far short of international fair trial standards, with extreme limitations being placed on the right to even mount a defense and verdicts in political cases are often usually decided before the trial. There was a particular concern with the ability of people charged with this charge of stealing State secrets, to get—the ability of those people to get a fair trial.

Journalist Gao Yu, arrested in Beijing, received a 6-year sentence. Journalist Xi Yang, working for a Hong Kong paper, received a 12-year sentence under a charge that covers many documents and information not considered to be essential to a State's security in other countries, and yet receive unfair trials and long sentences in China. This, of course, is the same legislation under which Harry Wu is now charged.

In addition, the Chinese Government's policy of compulsory birth control results in serious human rights violations affecting women in particular. Amnesty has confirmed cases of forced abortions and forced sterilization. Women have been detained in storerooms or offices, sometimes for days or even weeks, until they agree to have an abortion.

We even have reports of pregnant women being rounded up in the middle of the night by local militia and family planning officials and taken in trucks to have abortions or to be sterilized. Sexual abuse and rape by government agents in detention centers is a serious problem.

Women in detention have also been beaten with electric batons, subjected to electric shocks on the breast, thighs and sexual organs, and in some cases dogs have been unleashed on naked women. Women have also been severely beaten by prison guards for failing to complete forced labor quotas.

We are concerned that U.S. policy toward China is one of confusion and weakness. Only three of the eleven steps President Clinton promised to undertake as a substitute for the previous policy of linking human rights with MFN status have been implemented, and then only partially.

Furthermore, the Administration has recently lifted at least one of the sanctions banning export of military technology to China that was imposed following the 1989 Tiananmen massacre. The sanction was imposed as part of a U.S. concern about human rights and its lifting was conditioned on progress in human rights, in the human rights situation on the ground.

Given the deterioration of the human rights situation, we are concerned that this lifting of the ban sends a mixed signal at this time. It is imperative that the Administration construct a clear and coherent human rights policy where actions follow words.

The failure to do so does send a powerful message to the international community about the seriousness of U.S. human rights policy. We will undermine our ability to be credible when we say

to the Chinese Government, human rights is not simply a tool we are using to keep you weak, as the Chinese Government asserts we are doing, and in fact reflects an underlying commitment to a universal principle of human rights. And indeed, this inconsistency in our policy does undermine our ability to be credible in human rights policy in our relations with many countries around the world. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Coan appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH [presiding]. I thank you, Ms. Coan. And I would like to ask a couple questions of our panel.

I wonder if you could address what you think the similarities and differences between holding a human rights conference in, say, in Beijing, or a place like Iraq or South Africa 10 years ago, or a human rights conference like we did not go to in Moscow in 1980.

Ms. COAN. I can certainly give you a view of how Amnesty International views these U.N. conferences. They are always a venue at which voices, strong voices for human rights and against the excuses of governments that do not want to address these issues need to be heard.

In fact, many conferences have been held in places where Amnesty International has serious human rights concerns. It is very difficult to rank these questions. Amnesty refuses to do so, in fact, on principled grounds, and therefore we always view that our place is to be at U.N. conferences as an advocate for our principles.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Shea.

Ms. SHEA. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it is a travesty. There is no doubt that there will be prestige conferred on China. China desperately wanted this conference, and there will be prestige accorded from hosting it. They will be thanked and complimented by every delegation there in the opening ceremonies. And this is at a time when it is well-documented that human rights across the board are denied and in particular women's rights are denied.

The right to be a mother is denied, one of the most basic women's rights, I would think. And we have a number of religion cases, of cases concerning religious political prisoners, one where a Christian woman is in prison right now for having "propagated the Book of Genesis", and also we are told that the delegates to the conference and the participants cannot bring Bibles into the country as well.

We have another case, by the way, of a Christian who is in prison—who is under house arrest simply because her son is a pastor in the underground Protestant church there. Because she happens to be the mother of this other prisoner, she herself is unjustly imprisoned. And if that were not enough, there are new revelations, a British television crew just came back and aired their documentary showing that orphanages across China are filled with unwanted baby girls as a direct result of their one-child policy, and there are dying rooms, they are called "dying rooms", in these orphanages, where the children are abandoned in murderous neglect. And 90 percent of them die in the orphanages. All this is very well documented.

So I think of it as a travesty. It should never have happened. We did not take the position, though, that the U.S. Government should

withdraw simply because it is taking place in China. It is a terrible situation and the United States should work even now to get it changed. But I think that it is important that we find a lever to help free Harry Wu. And this is a possible lever. This is one of the few in our arsenal.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Anderson.

Ms. SHEA. Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit this article, if I may, for the written record, about the orphanages.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, the article will be included in the record.

[The material submitted for the record appears in the Appendix.]

Ms. SHEA. Thank you.

Mr. ANDERSON. Mr. Chairman, in my opinion, particularly since you see that the director of the government's one child per couple program is now one of the top authorities for the Beijing government's participation in this conference, that the one child per couple policy is directly aimed at the autonomy and dignity of women, to hold this world conference on the status and civil rights of women hosted by a regime that is doing this, is the single most important way to validate that repressive regime.

Mr. SMITH. You know, just a comment on that. Twice the House of Representatives has condemned the use of the Coercive Population Control Program in the PRC, pervasive forced abortion and forced sterilization, as crimes against humanity, recalling that at the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal, those kinds of forced abortions on Polish women was construed to be, and rightfully so, to be crimes against humanity.

Therefore, it remains inconceivable to me that our delegation, if it goes, will be there toasting, as Ms. Shea pointed out, and feting the Chinese leadership, and then perhaps in a muted way raising these issues of concern.

I raise this as a particular concern, having been, as I said earlier in Cairo, when I was one of the few voices that was country-specific, that would say—and I was there as an observer, not as an official delegate of the U.S. Government. And our government, you know, while it said they were against forced abortion, the proof is in whether or not you are willing to do something and tie any policy with that and the proof is also whether or not you are willing to look at the country, look them eyeball to eyeball and say you are the offender.

I have been at work, working human rights for the 15 years that I have been in Congress, and I will never forget leading delegation after delegation with Christian Solidarity International, I know they are here in the room, and others, when we would go to Romania and we would see one delegation after another talking to Ceausescu, that brute, that dictator, as if he was some kind of special privileged person, trying to curry favor and trying to appear moderate and temperate and everything else.

We do human rights and the cause of those who suffer each and every day not one iota of good when we hold hands with the oppressor rather than standing arm in arm with the oppressed. Again, the reason why I asked Ms. Pelosi earlier, and she did use the word, "mockery", and I thought that was a very well chosen

word, in terms of going, even though on balance she thinks we should go.

When crimes against humanity are being committed with impunity, when the U.N. Population Control Fund looks at this and whitewashes these heinous crimes each and every day, has its people on the ground when these crimes against women, when this heinous exploitation of women occurs every day, for us to go and for these toasts and for the message to go out to the Chinese people as it will go out—they control the entire propaganda machine, and Voice of America, notwithstanding the message, will not get through to the average Chinese that the world is concerned, and that is to say if they actually speak up while they were in Beijing.

And if past is prologue, when we were at these international fora, some of the NGO's are absolutely great, they speak out boldly. The delegates themselves speak in muted tongue when in public and perhaps raise these issues occasionally behind the scenes.

I yield to Mr. Salmon.

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Chairman, I will ask a question, but I would like to make a little bit of a statement as well. Earlier, Ms. Pelosi made the observation that anybody that would support the MFN and then oppose the women's conference in China would be somewhat of a hypocrite.

Well, I am that person. I am supporting MFN because I believe that our presence over there gives them the only opportunity that they get for a western influence and I met with several folks that I consider to be very, very good Christian people from China that have jobs in American companies over there, that believe that that influence is a good one and a lasting influence.

In spite of the fact that there have not been tremendous changes since MFN was granted, I don't believe, to coin the phrase, "throwing the baby out with the bath water" is always a good thing. But it mystifies me. I am a person that has strong ties with Taiwan.

I served a mission for my church in Taiwan from 1977 to 1979. And I got to know very, very many people that escaped from mainland China before the Communist takeover, who watched their family many times brutalized and killed before their very eyes. I watched that nation through the Tiananmen Square incident perpetuate the violence against humanity, the violence not only against women, but against men and children as well.

And I would contend that there is a little bit of an element of hypocrisy of those that are against MFN who would support this travesty of allowing the conference in Beijing to still happen in spite of all of the grievances against human rights and women's rights especially at this time. And I know that many of us understand our culture and we understand the importance of human rights across the globe.

But let me tell you how important the idea of saving face is. I know that Mr. Smith has mentioned that a couple of times, but how important that is to the Chinese culture, and how important it is for us to make a stand at this critical time to stand up and be counted, to say that we are not going to participate in this mockery, which it is, by sending people over to advocate human rights, when in essence it doesn't exist there.

I would also say that my own recent experience with China, I was going over with Christian Solidarity International on a human rights mission as a member of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, as also a member of the Helsinki Commission, to go over there and express my views in a strong way and to look at the situation and to assess for myself what the status of events is in China. I was not afforded that opportunity.

In fact, after 6 weeks of deliberation with China, I was stonewalled and told that it was "bu fon bi en," which in English means not convenient. And let me tell you, that if we think that we are going to get a real opportunity to go over and convince people the merits of our ways, if we really think that we are going to get an opportunity to go over there and express truth and justice and the American way as it relates to human rights and women's rights especially, I think we are really kidding ourselves. And I am curious, those human rights organizations, specifically Amnesty International, I am not understanding of how you could take a neutral position on this issue.

Can you explain that a little bit further to me?

Ms. COAN. Yes. In 35 years of international advocacy, Amnesty has maintained a very strict policy of neutrality on all forms of sanctions. Particularly in the cold war it was very important and continues to be so that we not favor one government over another.

The Cairo meeting, meetings in Kenya, meetings in Mexico, where do we draw the line? Are we comparing one country and saying, well, you are bad, but it is OK, we will condone it?

We just view these as an international fora where we want to participate and we think it is very important for international voices to be heard, and we separately air our views and our criticisms of human rights violations in those countries as a separate issue.

Mr. SALMON. So your policy is a long-standing policy of not ever advocating for policy?

Ms. COAN. That is exactly right.

Mr. SALMON. OK. I would also like a comment then—

Mr. SMITH. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. SALMON. Yes, sir.

Mr. SMITH. Again, if a U.N. forum were to be something that everyone could freely attend, if there is found to be the lack of timely issuance of visas by the Chinese government, would that—and even certain perspectives and people from certain countries were permitted to come in, would that in any way alter your view that this is—before you answer, my hope would be that the women's conference would go on, but with a change of venue, and that when it goes on there would be a robust, full and complete airing of all perspectives, not a railroading of a certain perspective to a certain end. I'd be happy to yield.

Ms. COAN. Absolutely. Amnesty International is very concerned about the questions of access and is on the record to advocating full participation of nongovernmental organizations in all aspects of the process and access to all the information. We certainly would raise any concerns that arise and, you know, in many years of working within the United Nations have done our utmost to use the mechanisms of these U.S. conferences to ensure that principle.

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH. Just let me ask one general question. With respect to the case of Harry Wu, is there any known precedent for the U.S. attendance at an international conference, hosted by a nation that actually holds a U.S. citizen hostage?

Ms. SHEA. I cannot recall any, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. ANDERSON. I cannot recall any, either.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Coan.

Ms. COAN. I don't have any information about that.

Mr. SMITH. If any of you do, please provide that for the record.

Let me just ask one final question. If the United States chooses to send a delegation, what steps might be taken to ensure that our presence is not interpreted as acquiescence to the arrest of Harry Wu in particular, but more importantly in terms of the general human rights situation, that they will not then use that as a public relations cue to again broadcast to their own citizenry the fact that the United States is here and everyone is here and, as you pointed out, Ms. Shea, there will be a Beijing declaration, putting one of the most egregious violators on the map as how—I mean we are talking about something that seems to me to be Orwellian for this conference to be called the Beijing Conference.

Ms. SHEA. Yes, that is why I reluctantly came to the position that the United States should just completely absent itself, the U.S. Government, that is, from this conference. Because there is no way of getting around it. It will lend prestige through this document in the annals of the United Nations forever.

There are some token measures the United States could take if they went forward with a delegation. For example, the American delegation could wear yellow ribbons in honor of Harry Wu. Again, this is a token. They could put Harry Wu on the delegation as an honorary member, and keep a chair empty with a nameplate at all times on their table.

The United States could and should, if it goes, hold forums on democracy, women's rights in China and elsewhere, outside the main conference arena. That is, as a side show, basically. Again, I don't think this is adequate, but it could be done. There are some steps like that that could be done. And I think it is very critical that VOA, you read a very moving letter of someone, it proves that people do listen to VOA. I have heard it the world over, from Cambodia and some others, that people go to great lengths to listen to VOA, and I think the VOA should be very active in broadcasting in Chinese, into China what is going on.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you. Would either of you like to answer?

Ms. COAN. Yes, I agree that the fullest support for the human rights issues that, you know, Amnesty International and many other people have raised should continue throughout the time of the conference. There is no need for any pulling back on statements of concern for human rights.

In fact, of course, it is all the more important that that voice—that that aspect of U.S. policy be clearly heard. And in fact, we have been advocating a much more forceful statement of human rights importance in the statement of U.S. foreign policy.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Anderson.

Mr. ANDERSON. Mr. Chairman, I think the situation in China is so bad, their actions regarding Mr. Wu so egregious, that there are no cosmetic steps that can be taken by the U.S. delegation to not give credence and validation to the regime as it is now constituted.

Mr. SMITH. Has the U.S. Civil Rights Commission ever taken a position similar to what you have done?

Mr. ANDERSON. To my knowledge, no, and I think its action is a result of the severity of the situation.

Mr. SMITH. How would the three of you describe the human rights situation in China, across the board, religious freedom, political prisoners, repression, forced abortion? Is it improving, about the same, or getting worse?

Ms. SHEA. Well, in our estimation, it is getting worse. I would like to quote Freedom House's global survey on human rights for 1995. They call it one of the worst places on earth, "one of the most repressive places on earth".

Ms. COAN. Yes, our June 1995 update report on human rights in China is subtitled, "Increased Repression".

Mr. SMITH. So it is getting worse as well?

Mr. Anderson.

Mr. ANDERSON. Well, Mr. Chairman, the Commission doesn't study the situation in China, but obviously from these kinds of reports, I don't see how it is possible to say that the situation is getting any better in any of these areas.

Mr. SMITH. If delegates have contact with the average person in Beijing, or should they have contact with a dissident, does that put the delegate themselves at risk and the Chinese person with whom they have contact?

Ms. SHEA. Well, certainly, Mr. Chairman, you know from your own experience in China that any Chinese citizen who speaks with a Westerner is in danger of being accused of espionage, passing State secrets to the West. That is quite common in our cases.

And there were two—a Catholic bishop, I believe, who got himself in trouble because he spoke with you. And now after Harry Wu, I think that is an important point that you brought up. No American citizen is safe.

The system over there is completely arbitrary and they do not recognize due process. So, yes, it puts at risk every American citizen who has contact with any Chinese citizen, and it also has repercussions for the Chinese citizen that are very severe, of course. I would also like to make one other point, Mr. Chairman. That is there is some serious consideration of whether Mrs. Clinton should withdraw from this delegation in protest of Mr. Wu or the general human rights situation. And I think it would be a disaster if she went.

But I don't think that this is enough. This is a very high level delegation that is going anyhow, with two members of the Cabinet and an Under Secretary of State. So it is an extremely prestigious delegation, even without the First Lady.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Coan.

Ms. COAN. There are certainly a number of cases, particularly a number of them in Tibet, but also a number of them in China where you also have a situation where you have cultural consider-

ations coming into it of particularly the Chinese citizens getting into trouble because of this charge of passing State secrets.

As far as we are aware, this is the first time that an American citizen has been detained in this way, in this arbitrary way, but certainly there have been huge repercussions that Amnesty has reported on for a number of Chinese citizens involved in discussing the situation with foreigners.

Mr. ANDERSON. Mr. Chairman, I think the case of Harry Wu certainly has had a chilling effect on what Americans, either as delegates or as NGO representatives, will be engaged in. We heard Congresswoman Pelosi say a few minutes ago that Americans who are NGO's should heed the warning of the Department of State regarding bringing Bibles, regarding meeting in small groups.

Certainly, American participants may put at risk any Chinese citizen that they speak with. Now, I would ask you, Mr. Chairman, to sit back for a minute and just see what we are talking about. Americans going to a U.N. conference, being warned not to speak with the nationals of the host country and not to bring with them religious articles or religious materials. It is absurd and degrading that Americans who are going to an international conference to speak on behalf of civil rights are being told they must go under these conditions.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you for your comments and I yield to Mr. Gilman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the conference is still going to be held in Beijing, would your respective organizations attend and participate?

Ms. SHEA. Mr. Gilman, no, I do not think it would be safe for me or a representative of the Puebla Institute to attend the conference because our primary interest is human rights in China. The reason why we would go would be to bring in materials and talk about the situation inside China. This has been a part of the State Department warning not to do this, not to bring in anti-Chinese materials. So it would not be safe for us to do this any more.

Mr. GILMAN. Would you favor that the meeting, the conference be held in Australia?

Ms. SHEA. Very much so.

Mr. GILMAN. Our good Civil Rights Commissioner.

Mr. ANDERSON. Well, the Commission, as far as I know, has no plans to attend or send representatives. Obviously, I think that, speaking as a personal matter, the issue of moving the conference to a site whose host has shown some interest in human rights and civil rights, is a good one.

Mr. GILMAN. Ms. Coan.

Ms. COAN. As I stated in the beginning of my remarks, Amnesty International has no position on where the conference should be or who should attend in terms of a U.S. delegation and whether the U.S. delegation should attend.

Certainly, Amnesty International regards this as a key forum in which to advance the human rights protections for women that we have been working on for decades, and so we will be attempting to be a voice there and to oppose moves by governments to try to roll back human rights protection.



Mr. GILMAN. If there were a choice in the site for this conference, would you prefer it be in Australia rather than Beijing?

Ms. COAN. Part of Amnesty's long-standing policy, we simply don't take a position on the site.

Mr. GILMAN. I would think that Amnesty's long-standing fight on human rights, that you might want to have a policy on this one. I hope you might take another look at all of this.

Yes, sir, Mr. Anderson.

Mr. ANDERSON. If I could say, I think the issues that are at this conference in terms of education of women, women's health concerns, women's economic and employment problems, are tremendously important, particularly in the Third World. I think the site of a Third World country could be very beneficial, and I would hope that if it were moved it would not be moved to a country like Australia, although that might be the most convenient and easiest, but I hope it would be moved to a country in Asia perhaps like the Philippines or in Africa in which we could see a real improvement and effect of the conference delegations along the lines that Mrs. Pelosi was talking about earlier.

It could have a tremendous effect in a region of the world open to the kind of recommendations that will come out of this conference.

Mr. GILMAN. That is certainly a meritorious consideration. However, there is an NGO conference that parallels this conference. It is already being planned and under way in Australia. I thought we might want to take advantage of that planning, especially since they say that the accommodations in Beijing are not going to be the best and not probably going to be able to take care of all of the requests for people who will be attending. But we thank you for your thoughts and, Mr. Anderson, I want to commend you for your very strong statement on behalf of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission.

Mr. SMITH. I thank the distinguished chairman. I want to thank the panel for their expert testimony and on behalf of the subcommittee, you are dismissed. Thank you.

I would like to call the second panel to the witness table. John Ackerly, the director of the International Campaign for Tibet. He has published numerous articles and reports, including *Forbidden Freedom*, *Beijing's Control of Refugees in Tibet*. Mr. Ackerly has also conducted four fact-finding missions inside Tibet.

Laurel Heiskell is legislative coordinator for Concerned Women for America. She is a graduate of Washington & Lee University, holds a master's degree in public policy from Regent University.

Margie Joy Walden is the Executive Director of the Taiwan International Alliance in New York. She graduated magna cum laude from the State University of New York in 1974, and has worked extensively on economic development for indigenous peoples. In her 2 years at the Taiwan International Alliance, she has worked to increase Taiwan's participation in the international community.

And Mercedes Arzu Wilson, a dual national of Guatemala and the United Kingdom, is founder and President of the Family of the Americas Foundation. Since 1980, she has organized 18 international congresses on the family in 16 countries and has been a

leader in education for young people. Mrs. Wilson holds an honorary doctorate in humanities from the University of Puerto Rico.

I would like to ask Mr. Ackerly if he could begin the testimony.

### **STATEMENT OF JOHN ACKERLY, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET**

Mr. ACKERLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the committee for providing me this opportunity to testify before you regarding China's campaign to keep Tibetan women from attending the U.N.'s Fourth World Conference on Women.

My name is John Ackerly. I am the director of the International Campaign for Tibet, an American nongovernmental organization dedicated to promoting the Tibetan people. Rachel Estumbe, who is my colleague, the Director of Governmental Relations, would have testified today, but she is in London this week.

The International Campaign for Tibet, along with every U.S.-based Tibet organization, has been denied accreditation to the Fourth World Conference on Women. Initially, we were denied accreditation because the U.N. Conference Secretariat determined that the International Campaign for Tibet did not meet the requirement for accreditation of engaging in activities and objectives clearly relevant to the conference.

This is patently false. We appealed the U.N. decision on the grounds that as a human rights organization, the International Campaign for Tibet has done extensive work on torture against female prisoners of conscience in Tibet and, of course, on birth control measures.

In our appeal, we provided the United Nations with a detailed description of our work on behalf of Tibetan women, copies of which I am glad to make available to the committee. The Conference Secretariat at the United Nations rejected our appeal, once again, on the grounds that our work is not relevant to a global conference on women.

China has a history of effectively pressuring the United Nations to bar Tibetans and Tibet organizations from U.N. conferences. And the conference in Beijing is no exception. In 1993, ICT was initially given official accreditation to the United Nations Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. When our representative attempted to enter the conference, however, she was stopped at the door and told that her accreditation had been canceled. A black line had literally been drawn through her name on the list, indicating that China had put sufficient pressure on the United Nations to keep us out.

We are concerned that China is now pressuring the United Nations to prevent the International Campaign for Tibet from participating in the Beijing conference because of our high profile work on behalf of the people of Tibet. To allow China to exclude us is to reinforce the idea that people and organizations can be excluded based solely on political ideology.

If this is truly to be a global conference on women, all organizations engaged in work relevant to the conference must be allowed to participate. China must not be allowed to dictate to the world which individuals can and cannot attend. I would add that the

pressure China exerts on Tibetans and Tibet organizations is much greater than what I have described so far.

The fact is that many Tibetan women in exile do not even dare try to attend the U.N. conference for fear of the danger of being in Beijing. China's brutal legacy of invasion, occupation, cultural genocide of the Tibetan people continues to this day. Women in Tibet are routinely tortured and imprisoned.

According to Amnesty International's most recent report "...by far the largest group of female political prisoners known to Amnesty International in China is imprisoned in the Tibet Autonomous region."

Since 1991, five Tibetan women have died in custody or shortly after being released from jail. One example is a woman named Phuntsog Yangkyi. She was 20 years old. She participated in a very brief, nonviolent demonstration for independence in Lhasa. She was sentenced to 5 years in prison. She would have served but half that amount by this summer.

In 1994, she was found singing nationalist songs in prison with fellow inmates and was beaten severely, lost consciousness and died several months later. It is not surprising, given China's treatment of Tibetans, that many Tibetan women fear for their safety should they attempt to attend the U.N. conference in Beijing.

In closing, I would add that with China preventing Tibetan women and Tibetan organizations from attending the official women's conference in Beijing, the International Campaign for Tibet is making every effort to attend the parallel forum for nongovernmental organizations.

We are concerned that China's next step in this campaign to keep Tibetan women and their supporters from participating in the women's conference will be to deny them visas even to attend the NGO forum. In May, officials from the All China Women's Federation were quoted as saying that those in support of Taiwan or Tibet independence would be forbidden from entering Beijing.

We urge the U.S. administration and the Congress to do all that they can do to ensure that those who want to attend the women's conference in Beijing are allowed to do so. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ackerly appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Ackerly, thank you for your testimony. I would like to ask Margie Joy Walden if she could testify at this point.

#### **STATEMENT OF MARGIE JOY WALDEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TAIWAN INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE**

Ms. WALDEN. Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, recently six organizations from Taiwan with expertise in the advancement of women and women's rights were denied accreditation to participate as nongovernmental organization observers to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women. The names of the NGO's under discussion are the Awakening Foundation, Modern Women's Foundation, National Organization of Women in Taiwan, Women's Ministry Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, the Young Women's Christian Association of Taiwan, and Taiwan International Alliance.

These organizations provided the U.N. Secretariat all the necessary documents that demonstrated their competence and relevance with regard to the advancement of women. NGO's from Taiwan were told that they were denied accreditation because they were not incorporated in the country where their headquarters are located.

Because the People's Republic of China claims that Taiwan is part of China, the Taiwanese NGO's are being required to incorporate their organizations in the PRC in order to participate in the women's conference. In actuality, the PRC has never, even for 1 day, held jurisdiction over Taiwan.

As a result of the U.N.'s compliance with this PRC manipulation, the PRC is using the United Nations as a cover in an attempt to extend its jurisdiction over Taiwan. Using an international organization dedicated to peace for imperialistic aims is unjust, inappropriate and unacceptable.

Last year, Taiwan International Alliance attended the high level segment of the European and North American preparatory meeting. At this meeting, China pressured and protested to the General Secretary to have our accreditation withdrawn. It became clear how far the pressure tactics would be applied when Taiwan International Alliance and the Tibetan Women's Organization of Switzerland were not included on the official list of participants.

Upon investigation, it was revealed that someone had tampered with the computer files to remove the names of these two NGO's. Under pressure from the United States and the Swiss delegations, the original list was reprinted. Even though Taiwan International Alliance was accredited to this U.N. regional preparatory meeting, we have been denied accreditation for the Beijing meeting. Why? Despite the fact that we are U.S.-NGO registered in New York State and have submitted our New York State incorporation certificate numerous times, the United Nations has bowed to PRC pressure and said that we must be incorporated in Beijing.

The United States, as the world leader of democratic ideals and as an avid defender of human rights, has supported Taiwan's participation in international fora. This support is in full accord with the Taiwan Relations Act, Public Law 96-8, H.R. 2479, passed on April 10th, 1979, which specifies that it is U.S. policy to preserve and to promote extensive and close ties with the people of Taiwan.

It also affirms that preservation and enhancement of the human rights of all the people of Taiwan are objectives of the United States. The Taiwan Relations Act is further enhanced by the recent Taiwan policy review which states that the United States "will support opportunities for Taiwan's voice to be heard in organizations where its membership is not possible".

The recent unofficial visit of President Lee Teng-hui to the United States has touched off a fire storm of protest from China. Some experts have suggested that relations between Washington, China and Taiwan are terribly adrift, and blame Taiwan. However, preserving unofficial and cultural relations is settled policy.

President Lee's unofficial visit to an American university did not violate agreements between the United States and China. The storm of protests has not stopped China from accepting large humanitarian donations from Taiwan and Taiwan NGO's for vast

flooding that recently devastated the southern coastal provinces. Government officials and the Congress of the United States are mandated to ensure that progress concerning Taiwan's participation in international fora continues and is not reversed.

At the United Nations Charter Celebration in San Francisco, in an exhibit of the 50 original signatory flags, the Republic of China on Taiwan flag was removed because of PRC protest and replaced with a PRC flag. But the PRC did not even exist in 1945 when the United Nations was founded. Moreover, the Taiwanese press has been denied United Nations press credentials, although the Serbian news agency, which is controlled by the Bosnian Serbs, has been accredited by the United Nations. The Bosnian Serbs are currently holding United Nations staff hostage and are responsible for the tragedy in Srebrenica and Zepa.

The Serbian News Agency's accreditation was only revoked by the United Nations after it was compared with Taiwan by the president of the United Nations Correspondents' Association. It is clear that as the United States pursues a policy of constructive reengagement with mainland China, that we also need to simultaneously move forward in supporting the human rights of the 21 million people on Taiwan. The Taiwan Relations Act says so.

Unfortunately, legitimate nongovernmental organizations from Taiwan are being denied accreditation to represent their nations as NGO observers to the official conference for governmental delegations. Some progress can be reported since a number of individual women from Taiwan have recently received letters of acknowledgment required to attend unofficial NGO forum. Although this is an important step forward, there are still a number of hurdles that remain for Taiwanese women's participation to be realized.

First, the women from Taiwan are still waiting to receive confirmation of their hotel reservations from the China organizing committee. This letter is required. Second, they need to be granted special visas to travel to Beijing upon receipt of their hotel confirmation letters.

Mr. Chairman, the conference is 6 weeks away. These letters need to come in the mail. We hope that the United States and the international community will strongly encourage China to quickly actualize this next phase.

Finally, in light of unanswered questions surrounding the Qiandao Lake murders, where 24 Taiwanese tourists are tragically killed, the frequent incidents of airplane hijackings on flights from mainland China to Taiwan, and the arrest of Harry Wu, we hope that the United States and the international community will pressure China to ensure the safety and security of the participants during their stay in China.

Chairman Smith, we are asking you and the members of this subcommittee to take all these matters under due consideration. Thank you for the invitation to share these thoughts with you today.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Walden appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you for your very eloquent statement. And I would like to ask Laurel Heiskell if she would speak.

**STATEMENT OF LAUREL HEISKELL, LEGISLATIVE  
COORDINATOR, CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA**

Ms. HEISKELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me to speak today to you and to the subcommittee. My name is Laurel Heiskell and I am the legislative coordinator for Concerned Women for America. I am here today on behalf of Doctor Beverly LaHaye, our president and founder, and on behalf of CWA's over 600,000 members here in the United States and in 48 nations abroad.

In December 1994, Concerned Women for America applied for official United Nations NGO status, nongovernmental organization status. We were turned down for that status and told that we were, "not relevant to women's issues." That coming for the largest pro-family women's organization in the Nation.

Unsatisfied with that answer, I called an individual who works for the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations in New York and said, "Hey, why were we not accredited?" And he said, "Let me get the list." He came back to the phone and said, "Well, gosh, CWA is on the no-no list." I said, "No-no list?"

Turns out over the months we have discovered that the "no-no" list was primarily composed of organizations who were not only turned down for accreditation, but who were pro-life and pro-family.

Last April, Senator Jesse Helms began to make inquiries on behalf of CWA. Suddenly, the office that had previously denied our accreditation changed their story. They claimed that our original paperwork had not been complete and cited a letter that had never arrived at our office. When we asked for a copy of that letter, they were not able to produce one.

Beverly LaHaye then had a personal meeting with Senator Helms and asked him how CWA was placed on a United Nations no-no list. Soon after that meeting, we received another letter from the United Nations telling us that our file, with no changes, was complete, and the Secretariat was recommending us for accreditation pending approval by the Economic and Social Council, which did not meet until late June.

Finally, 2 weeks ago in July, Concerned Women for America received its formal notification of NGO accreditation. The United Nations changed its mind three times, and then forced us to wait 2 months until the Economic and Social Council met in Geneva. That created huge financial constraints.

So the question remains, why? Why was Concerned Women for America turned down for accreditation when our original application clearly demonstrated our relevance as one of the largest women's organizations in the United States? The answer is quite simple.

CWA was not originally accredited because we do not fit the radical feminist agenda that this conference hopes to further. Let me give you some examples. At the last pre-conference meeting held in March in 1995, former Congresswoman Bella Abzug spoke to the delegates as the official representative of NGO's. She said that women will, "not be forced back into the biology is destiny concept" and that women should not be defined by their "physical sexual characteristics."

So how should women be defined in an official platform document? The current draft of the document rarely mentions women's rights. Rather, it talks about gender rights, such as gender equity programs for all children, and gender sensitivity training for all teachers, judges, lawmakers, and employers.

If, as Bella Abzug claims, a woman's destiny should not be linked to her biology, would she agree with a paper that was circulated at that March meeting, a paper that defined gender five ways, as male, female, homosexual, bisexual and transsexual?

Ultimately, the most important question is: Where does the U.S. delegation stand on the gender issue? At the March meeting, some nations who were concerned about this five-gender paper that had circulated asked that the word "gender" be bracketed in the platform so that it could still be dealt with in Beijing. They also wanted assurances that "gender" meant men and women only.

Yet, I have attended meetings where officials from our own State Department said that they knew which countries bracketed gender, and would try to apply diplomatic pressure to make those nations remove the brackets.

If our government is pressuring foreign nations because of the word "gender", then our government and its delegation should be required to define the word "gender".

There are other issues where CWA differs with the apparent goals of this conference. I have also attended meetings where powerful American NGO's, like Fund for Feminist Majority, have voiced their desire to see abortion-on-demand policies expressed in this document. And I have heard officials from our State Department say that they believe that such language, which was not added at the Cairo conference, should and will be added to this document. Is the exportation of abortion on demand to every nation of the world truly the No. 1 priority of our State Department?

Is that what America stands for? Above all, CWA believes that God created both men and women with certain inalienable rights, rights mentioned by our Declaration of Independence as bestowed on mankind. And our Senate must never ratify the U.N. Women's Treaty, which would put the radical objectives of this Beijing Conference into U.S. law.

True womanhood finds security and empowerment in celebrating the differences between men and women. Most men are not abusers of women and children as this document tells us. Real women know that strong men and strong families are vital to our culture if America is to survive.

God intended for women to be treated with dignity and respect. CWA joins you in abhorrence of true abuse. We join you in desiring literacy and betterment for the women of the world. But this document has been sold out to one voice, the voice of radical feminism. That is not the voice leading most American women, and that is not the voice that we spend our tax dollars to support.

Members of Congress, ask President Clinton *who* will be representing the United States of America on the official U.S. delegation. Senator Helms asked Ambassador Albright to include Mrs. LaHaye on the delegation, since many of America's official delegates are NGO representatives. Senator Helms was told that the White House makes those decisions. So ask President Clinton if the

voices of ardent feminists will be balanced by the voices of pro-family Americans like Beverly LaHaye. We still do not know, but I fear the answer is already clear. The true beliefs of citizens of this nation will not be officially heard in Beijing. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Heiskell appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much for your fine testimony. And I would like to ask our final witness today, on this panel, Mercedes Wilson, if she would give us her remarks.

**STATEMENT OF MERCEDES ARZU WILSON, PRESIDENT,  
FAMILY OF THE AMERICAS**

Ms. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a privilege to be able to address your hearing. I have served as a Guatemalan delegate at the United Nations and president of Family of the Americas Foundation. Having participated in each of the current series of U.N. Conferences on Women, I have witnessed an attack on traditional moral values, that if allowed to continue, will ultimately destroy the family as the basic unit of society.

There exists among some delegations to these conferences, an extreme element of hostility toward those who disagree with them, and a desire to divide men and women by driving a wedge between them over the issue of the traditional vocation of marriage and the beauty of the family.

The Platform for Action rightly calls the attention of governments to many important topics, among which are poverty and illiteracy, problems primarily facing women and children, as well as those of prostitution, pornography, and physical and mental abuse. However, this document puts pressure of an ideological nature upon women all over the world and advances a social philosophy that is prevalent in particular sectors of western countries, and does not represent the views of the rest of the world.

I find it disturbing that, what should have been a truthful effort to enhance respect and dignity and dignify the beauty of being a woman in today's society, has become a tool for advancing an elitist population agenda and draconian ideology. I say that not only because of my experience as a delegate from Guatemala to the Conference on Social Development in Copenhagen and the Prep Comm meeting for the Beijing Conference, but also because of my own personal concerns as a woman and a mother.

I recommend that the Beijing Conference be canceled, and if it is not canceled, that the United States boycott the event. There are several reasons for this recommendation. The Beijing document is a disgrace. No matter what paragraphs or sentences, or even words, the western delegates may allow pro-women, pro-life, pro-family delegates to incorporate, the document is still fundamentally flawed. It is like a rotten apple. It cannot be made ripe again.

The programs proposed would be so calamitous to the rest of the world, that whatever little good the document could do, would be destroyed by the evil effects it would produce. For instance, there is no question that women have been deprived and unfairly treated, and that they continue to be deprived in certain parts of the world. However, the actions being proposed to correct these are like a deadly trap which would imprison parents, families, and even



women themselves in a vicious cycle of selfishness and unhappiness.

We can easily see why there are western statistics of high divorce rate, venereal disease in epidemic proportions, abortion on demand, increasing violence, euthanasia, population decline below replacement level, teen pregnancy, and so on. It is a fact that such anti-life, anti-family policies are not embraced by the majority of people of the world. In particular, we are referring to the families of the developing world.

Furthermore, we know that even in the western countries, in the United States itself, the majority of its citizens would be appalled to know what their delegations are negotiating and attempting to force on the rest of humanity. A document of this magnitude, which will dictate policies and mandates well into the next century, should have been written by the most highly respected religious and civil leaders from the various continents. It should be thoughtfully authored by those well-known for their moral ethics and concern for justice, as well as the religious and traditional values they practice. Instead, the document has been written by gender feminists who believe that everything we think of as natural, including manhood and womanhood, femininity and masculinity, motherhood and fatherhood, heterosexuality, marriage and family, are only culturally created "fixes", originated by men to oppress women.

These feminists profess that such roles have been socially constructed and are therefore subject to change. Another serious reason for demanding a cancellation of this conference is that it is being held in China, a country that subjects women to forced abortion, forced sterilization and forced family planning.

Worst of all, the United Nations in Cairo gave the People's Republic of China a special award and praised China for having the most effective population control program in the world. The clear message is that countries will be rewarded with loans and assistance or *Most Favored Nation* status if they implement similar coercive population control programs.

Mr. Timothy Wirth, Cochairman of the Clinton administration delegation under the U.S. Department of State, held a special session June 19th with the delegates at the United Nations who belonged to the group of 77. There are 143 countries who belong to this group, most of them from the developing countries.

A strong pressure was exerted on those delegates so that the special meeting of informal consultations, as they call them, to be held the 31st of July to the 4th of August in New York, will remove most of the bracketed language in the document. Mr. Wirth also indicated that a few days before the June 19th meeting, he had met with the president of the World Bank, who expressed his interest and commitment, and stated that the bank would be able to provide the financial means for the implementation of the Beijing platform for action.

This gives a clear signal to the poor countries that the World Bank is also supportive of the prompt removal of the bracketed sections prior to the Beijing Conference. The exertion of this subtle intimidation upon the poor countries will be as effective as the May 31st meeting was on the gender issue. There is no doubt in our minds, that the Clinton administration is using everything in their

power to make sure that by the time the delegates arrive in Beijing, the document will have very few sections left to be negotiated.

Most of the treacherous provisions that will force all the countries to accept programs that are against human nature, will be incorporated, and our recommendations to protect the family will have been deleted. The powerful western democracies, through the U.N. system, are violating democratic principles by forcing their will upon the weaker and less developed nations.

Their agenda to deconstruct the natural order seems to have begun already, when we read that two male homosexuals have been given permission by the DC Court of Appeals to adopt a 4-year-old little girl. Surely we don't want a world where children will grow up with no idea of what it means to be a man or a woman, doing away with everything which recognizes the differences between the two sexes, where gender is regarded as a socially constructed role rather than as a biological fact.

If we foresee the danger to our children, grandchildren and the future of humanity, then we must join together to stop them. There are very few Davids willing to confront the Goliaths of this world in spite of pressure. What is needed now is not words of praise and sympathy, but active support and voices raised in protest. We must stand up, speak up, and be counted.

Any agreement made under coercion or duress must be considered illegal and nonbinding. It is on this basis, that we request that the whole conference be canceled. The future of mankind is being decided by the anti-woman, anti-life, anti-family delegations, supported by western governments with total disregard for the culture, religion and traditions of their own people. I am talking about the United States, which as a majority, would support what I am saying right now, and those peoples of the developing world.

I am appealing to you from my heart. I appeal to your wisdom and common sense, to stop the pressure from the delegation of the United States upon the developing countries. We do not want to barter our beliefs for food and loans. Don't force the poor countries to trade their traditional family values and morals. Lift the pressure so we may all answer with one voice; values and morals are not negotiable. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wilson appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much for your statement. And I would like to yield to Mr. Rohrabacher for some comments.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Just for one moment. I appreciate this opportunity just to express myself after hearing your testimony, because I was inspired by it and, no. 1, I think that this women's conference reflects values and ideals, Mr. Chairman, that are contrary to the intellectual trends that are going on in the United States of America and the western world today, and the values of the American people.

So I would agree 100 percent with this idea that we at the very least shouldn't participate in it and should actually be trying to see that this conference does not go forward with any type of sanction from the U.S. Government or the American people.

Second of all, it was a horrible choice, but I guess it was a choice consistent with the whole concept of this conference. China is one

of the biggest human rights abusers in the world, and whereas the female population of the world is half the population of the world, China is the biggest abuser of women's rights on this planet, and yet we have a Conference on Women's Rights in China.

In terms of human rights, in terms of the fact that China has just arrested a saint, a human rights saint in our time, Harry Wu, I think that the United States should pull out of this unworthwhile endeavor and I appreciate all of your comments today and they have helped me a lot to formulate my opinion. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Rohrabacher.

I just want to make one brief statement, and then we will recess for about 10 minutes because there are two votes pending on the floor. But I think all four of you have provided some very, very eloquent testimony that members who are here and those who will read the record, I think, will gain a great deal from. You are speaking to the disenfranchised women, from Tibet, from Taiwan, women who happen to have a view different from the prevailing view at the United Nations. And I think it is outrageous that it took pressure to get at least some of the organizations accredited. It should have been a no-brainer. I mean it should have been so—because you represent women, because you do a job that needs to be done, that there is no reason why you should have been blackballed by the United Nations.

And I think the thing, and I have been in Congress 15 years, that I find most disturbing about this work, is the hypocrisy that I see day in and day out. And nowhere is it more apparent than at the United Nations.

For it to give sanction to a certain viewpoint perspective and to disenfranchise another, or because of place of origin and because of pressure by the PRC, disenfranchise those women, to me is very cruel. And the United Nations should have no business. They have those lofty words and statements and conventions, and yet when it comes to adhering to them, they fall far short.

Let me also suggest that the United Nations take a page out of the OSCE, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. When it talks—there have been statement after statement in concluding documents from Vienna to Madrid, and one of the hallowed principals of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is that, and I quote from it, these practices, talking about the host countries, there needs to be access to the venue, open sessions, representatives of NGO's and religious groups, private individuals, nationals and foreigners, unimpeded contacts with delegates, citizens of the host country, and so on and so forth.

The United Nations buys into, I think, a very bad situation when it says a conference to occur where mere contact with host country citizens can lead to arrest of that individual delegate, but more likely the Chinese national. And again, to blackball organizations because they happen to believe that unborn children are precious and valuable, when the preamble of the convention on the rights of the child itself recognizes the child by reason of his or her immaturity is deserving of special safeguards and protections, which some have called the Magna Charta of children's rights, while that very document recognizes the unborn as being precious, to turn

around and say that organizations that likewise see birth as an event that happens to all of us and not the beginning of life, to turn around and blackball them certainly brings shame and dishonor to the United Nations.

I do have a few questions I would like to pose, but for a very brief moment, about 10 minutes, we will be in recess.

[Recess.]

Mr. SMITH. The subcommittee will reconvene. We would like to ask Mr. Ackerly and Margie Joy Walden, if you could—in your view, do you think the People's Republic of China has had a kind of veto over, you know, just to put it into one brief sentence, over the credentialing of people that you would like to see go to Beijing?

Mr. ACKERLY. Yes, it does. In fact, they have exercised that veto. It doesn't seem that any country or body within the United Nations can override that.

Ms. WALDEN. The veto power is a very important issue. It is my understanding that a resolution has to be proposed in the General Assembly in order to move this conference to another venue. Presently, because China holds the veto power, I do not think that there is any country in the General Assembly who really wants to raise this issue. Consequently, the veto power and how it is used, should be examined.

Mr. SMITH. Do you fear, say, some of the Tibetans and some of the Taiwanese are permitted to go, is there any fear that once in the country that their lives, their safety, might be at risk?

Ms. WALDEN. I think that security is an issue for everyone who is going. I don't think it is a particular concern of Taiwanese or Tibetan women. I think the security of all women traveling there needs to be reviewed.

Mr. ACKERLY. I think security of all women is very important, but there are some differences for Tibetans. For instance, well, Tibetans are refugees. And there are some Tibetans who naturalized in other countries, and those are the only ones who dare to go to Beijing, who hold a foreign passport.

However, we have just seen with Harry Wu that the Chinese consider you Chinese, regardless of holding a foreign passport. Also, it says regulations say that you are not allowed to bring any anti-China material. China may well regard any written material brought by Tibetans as anti-China. And in fact there is very little material Tibetans could bring. Discussing the plight of women in Tibet, that would be deemed acceptable. So they—all the Tibetan women who are going to the NGO forum are really in a bind. They really don't know what to do.

Mr. SMITH. I noticed and I know that, Ms. Heiskell, you mentioned this in your comments, about traditional values organizations, those that take a different perspective than some of the feminist organizations, that they were largely excluded, but during the course of this process, because of pressure and Senator Helms in one case, there has been some accreditation.

How strong was the bias against organizations that take a view that is not perhaps in sync with Bella Abzug's?

Ms. HEISKELL. Well, I believe the bias was extremely strong. I think that what Concerned Women for America faced demonstrated that in the clearest terms. We are the largest pro-family women's

organization in the United States. And for us to suddenly appear on a "no-no" list at the United Nations, when some people in the United Nations swore that they weren't really sure who we were, leads us to wonder who *did* put our name on that no-no list.

I have been told that there are other organizations that had to go through similarly circuitous means to get accredited. There is an organization called Life Choices in Tennessee that is pro-life. And it wasn't until they cornered Alan Keyes at a pre-Presidential function and pushed on him a little bit, and he made some phone calls, that they received their accreditation.

Mr. SMITH. I recently spoke to some delegates or would-be delegates and NGO representatives from Canada. And they advised me that they have already submitted, and this was a couple of weeks ago, their passports to the Chinese embassy and those passports are still there. They have gotten no indication whatsoever whether or not they are being issued a visa. And it seems to me that there is a high probability that China will wait to the very end and then say which groups are permitted in, which individuals and groups are going to be blackballed. And I don't think it is beyond the pale of possibility that the United Nations will stand by idly and allow groups that they didn't want to come in the first place to be so left out.

Matt mentioned earlier, Mr. Salmon, that he was denied a visa to go to the PRC a little over a year ago. Congressman Frank Wolf and I had to wait to the very day of departure. Matter of fact, he was convinced we were not going to be issued a visa, so that two Members of Congress could go to Beijing on a human rights trip to meet with high government officials and also to meet with dissidents.

I mean that is the game that was played with these two Members of Congress and this particular Member, Matt Salmon, was actually denied a visa. So it seems to me that the probability is high, unless we are absolutely strong on this whole credentialing and visa issuance issue, that many people will be precluded from participation in what should be a conference for all rather than only the select few.

Ms. HEISKELL. I think, Mr. Chairman, that is one thing that we as organizations are looking to you as Members of Congress to do, to stand as advocates for us and say that these are legitimate organizations.

Here, for instance, we don't expect the Chinese government to try to turn down the largest women's organization in the United States, but there is always that possibility, and we just hope that you as Members of Congress would make every effort to see that that does not happen.

Mr. SMITH. Well, we do have pending legislation, as you know, that would seek to deny funding to a delegation that traveled unless the Secretary of State certified that indeed these problems were overcome, because, again, I don't want this delegation from the United States to be part of a farce, an exclusionary type of conference.

Ms. HEISKELL. Let me just add quickly: I think that is one reason that pro-family individuals must be put on the U.S. delegation.

If someone like Dr. Beverly LaHaye is on the official U.S. delegation, then China cannot keep her out.

Mr. SMITH. You know, just let me say—and I think this is important that this be on the record—last year when I wanted to go into Beijing, there was a great deal of reluctance on the part of the Clinton administration—not to Beijing, to Cairo, as to putting me on—and if it had not been for the then Minority Leader, the Minority Leader of the Republicans, who stood steadfast and said, “We want Smith to go”—had it not been for that, I would have been denied that opportunity to go to Cairo.

So it does not surprise me when pro-life women have difficulty getting any kind of representation on this delegation that the Administration seeks when I myself was blackballed by the Administration.

That is why, when I hear talk by the Administration that they are not represented here, by my good friend from California Mr. Lantos, as I pointed out while he was here, we offered the opportunity for our distinguished Ambassador, Madeleine Albright, to be here today or tomorrow or Thursday or Friday or any day next week. We want to hear. I have questions I want to pose to her. So I hope we will have that conversation with her sooner rather than later.

Ms. Walden.

Ms. WALDEN. The visa issue is the next phase in the accreditation process. First, China moved the NGO Forum out of Beijing to Huairou. Second, everyone needed to receive letters of acknowledgment from the NGO Forum office in New York City. Now, we are at the phase where people are waiting for the hotel confirmation letter from the China organizing committee.

In the case of Taiwan, China does not recognize the Taiwanese or Republic of China passport. In order for the women from Taiwan to go to this conference, they need to receive a compatriot document to travel to the mainland. From China’s point of view, Taiwan is considered a “renegade province”.

However, provinces do not make official treaties with foreign governments, and provinces do not participate in the Asian Development Bank. Moreover, in terms of renegade, Taiwan has never waged war against a neighbor or another country, nor has Taiwan abrogated other nations’ human rights.

From China’s point of view, Taiwan is always referred to as an issue, as a dilemma or as a problem. It is important to take note that Taiwan is none of these. Taiwan is a place, it is a nation, and this understanding is very critical to this conference situation.

Chairman Smith, Representative Lantos and Representative Pelosi answered a question this morning concerning the selection of Beijing for this conference. If you would allow me one more minute, I would like to shed a little light on this concern.

Mr. SMITH. Please do.

Ms. WALDEN. There are six conferences that the United Nations slated for the 50th anniversary year celebrations. China really wanted to host one of these conferences so they strongly lobbied the international community.

The United Nations looked at the list of conferences to be held and examined each conference theme. The environment conference

could not be held in China because their environmental record is rather poor. The population conference could not be given to China because of their record on population control.

The human rights conference that was held in Vienna could not go to China due to their record on human rights. The Social Summit, on increasing unemployment and social integration of the marginalized, could not be given to China either. This left the conference on women and the conference on cities. A number of years ago, when these decisions were made, the United Nations did not consider women's issues very substantive. Consequently, it was agreed to schedule the women's conference in Beijing.

Presently, we see that women's issues are substantive and that many human rights and political issues have arisen around this conference. This includes the jurisdictional question of Taiwan and the rights of Taiwan's women to participate. These concerns really need to be addressed.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you for that very fine explanation.

Do you have any?

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Chairman, I was just going to make a comment on the heels of what Ms. Walden said.

You know as well as I do that if we were holding the environmental conference there, that there would be a great hue and cry from the environmentalists across the world and this Administration would be influenced. The problem is, this Administration, when it comes to the issues of family and abortion, has taken a weakened stand. I think that is part of the problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. I think this is especially true on coercive population control, where this Administration has only paid lip service while, through its dollars and donations, it has actually aided and abetted those who are—like the U.N. Population Fund that has been fronting for the Chinese population extremists since 1979.

You know, I found it interesting—and, Ms. Wilson, you might want to comment on this, in the Prep Comm document—I have read the entire thing, I have read it a couple times, and I have made highlights and underlines. I notice that number 30 has been bracketed, and, you know, I am wondering who perhaps—and the next panel may want to speak to this as well.

Women play a critical role in the family, the basic unit of society. State parties who have ratified the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women have done so bearing in mind the great contribution of women to the welfare of the family and the development of society, which is still not fully recognized.

And let me just underline "still not fully recognized".

And yet this section that women play a critical role in, the family, has been bracketed. I think that goes to the heart of some of the concerns some of us have with the substance which is, again, the subject of the next panel. You spoke to some of that during your testimony.

Ms. WILSON. I think I could write a book on what happens at those conferences, Mr. Chairman.

As you just read, "the family" has been bracketed. When I arrived there and every time they were talking about the roles of women and I would see that the word "mother" was omitted, I would bring it up and put it in, and it was immediately bracketed by the Western countries, whether it was Australia or wherever.

Mr. SMITH. Does that include the United States?

Ms. WILSON. The United States bracketed other important things, and I will tell you which ones.

For instance, when they were talking about giving even pre-adolescents information on birth control without parental authority, we had to be constantly putting "parental authority" as one of the rights of parents, and it was always bracketed. It is hard for me to remember which countries. I do have it in the originals, which I can provide to you.

Mr. SMITH. Provide that for the record, if you will.

[The response follows:]

## B. THE NEW IMPERIALISM

The most vocal countries in this coalition were the European Union—which is composed of 15 European countries and most Scandinavian countries: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Also part of the coalition were several other developing countries, which seemed to be under orders to support anything the Western delegates proposed. They were Barbados, which often spoke on behalf of the Caribbean nations, Namibia and sometimes Senegal. Ghana often claimed to speak on behalf of some African nations, but was often silenced by African delegates who refused to conform to the Western anti-life/anti-family mentality. The nations (mentioned above) were at odds with fundamental human rights documents and principles. They purposely and selectively changed significant human rights language.

1. Even though the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights provides that "recognition of the inherent dignity" and equal rights of all human beings is the very "foundation of freedom, justice and peace", this extremist coalition negotiated vigorously to remove all references to human dignity from the Beijing draft.

2. The Universal Declaration makes marriage a fundamental right. It provides that "the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and the state". In contrast, the draft document portrays marriage and the family negatively, and as obstacles to the woman's self-realization. It portrays marriage and the family as associated with violence against the woman. The same western negotiators pressed throughout the meetings to change "family" to the ambiguous word "families". This is an ominous change implying that any group of unrelated people could call themselves a family. Fortunately, the pro-life/pro-family delegations kept "family" from being changed to "families".

3. The Universal Declaration provides that "everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (including) freedom, either alone or in community with others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance". During the 2 weeks of negotiations the anti-life/anti-family coalition aggressively sought to remove all reference to religion, morals or ethics and spirituality—except where religion is portrayed negatively, for instance, when religion is associated with intolerance or externalism.

4. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that "motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and protection". The western countries repeatedly requested the deletion of any references to the word "mother", except when it appeared in a negative light.

5. The Universal Declaration and the Convention of the Rights of the Child made special provision for parents' rights and responsibilities concerning education and upbringing of their children. The same delegations from Western countries attempted to eliminate all recognition of parental rights and responsibilities from key sections of the draft—even rejecting direct quotations from the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Unfortunately, after lengthy negotiations, many of the paragraphs were lacking the needed provisions which acknowledge parental rights and responsibilities. One pivotal paragraph was changed to give first mention to "rights of the child to access, to information, privacy, confidentiality...." with the implication that these supersede the parents' rights.



Ms. WILSON. But the United States bracketed—for instance, I said instead of “birth control” we should be teaching our children “self control” and we should have national and international programs to promote abstinence until marriage. All of the Western countries laughed at me, the delegates (including the United States, and many times the United States bracketed that.

At one time I used to get them so annoyed at always putting programs of abstinence for adolescents and mothers and so on, that the United States delegation one time said, “Oh,” to the chairman—who is an Austrian lady—“Oh, just let her put it in; we are going to bracket it anyway.” And I turned around, and I said to her, “I wish we had C-SPAN televising what you just did, because I don’t think they would dare to do this.”

Another very annoying part was on artificial methods of birth control. I wanted to be very careful about mentioning that women should be given, in writing and verbally—because many, if not most, of the people in the world are illiterate—the warnings of the artificial methods of birth control, sterilization, and so on, and the United States bracketed my whole paragraph.

We even added that women should not be given vaccinations that are including a pregnancy vaccine, with which, as you know, the World Health Organization is experimenting in India, and has openly said so.

Mr. SMITH. You mean without women’s knowledge?

Ms. WILSON. That is correct, without women’s knowledge, and it is in my testimony, and it is open knowledge. And the United States bracketed that, which I think is tragic.

Also, when it came to funding—I would show it to you—artificial methods of birth control are used, such as the pill and IUD’s, sterilization, and so on. It is in my report. But when the discussion came to giving funding to methods that may not be so harmful to women, I jumped and I said “like natural family planning”; the Australian delegate said “natural family planning, it is not natural for couples to have to abstain anyway.” The American delegation said, “We are going to have to check and see if natural family planning is an acceptable method of birth control.” And they bracketed natural family planning throughout.

So I came back and I said, “Look, women are only fertile for about 100 hours in each cycle. You are endangering their lives. Here is a natural method which is new. It is not the old rhythm method or temperature method which is 98 to 99 percent effective.”

We even work in China, and the Chinese government did a study on this new method. It came out 98.7 percent effective with a continuation rate of 93.7 percent. And, this is the best continuation rate of any method in the world. The pills and the IUD’s have only about a 50 percent continuation rate.

In spite of that, they still bracketed the information I gave and would not agree to lifting the brackets. I also had to fight for many other sentences in defense of families and their children.

But the U.S. delegation put a lot of pressure even on the gender issue, which, again, I could almost write a book about, because when people, delegates from the developing world, were supporting us in the first sessions—that is, about the biological difference between men and women—the U.S. delegation said, “No, no, no, we

could never accept that definition." And then they decided to change the rules and wait one whole month to define "gender", to think about how to make that definition, and it ended up being a nondefinition. One by one I saw all our supporters from the various delegations on the developing countries break down and say, "I am sorry I cannot support you, but the United States is putting so much pressure on my government, I cannot do it any more."

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, and I want to thank this panel for their very fine testimony. It is very helpful, enlightening to the subcommittee.

I would like to take the third panel now, if they would make their way to the witness table. Panel number 3 is comprised of Mary Ellen Bork, who currently serves as a board member of the Catholic Campaign for America. Mrs. Bork earned her BA in philosophy from Manhattanville College and her MA in English literature from Siena College. Mrs. Bork represented the Campaign at the Prep Comm in New York last March. The Campaign was granted NGO accreditation for the population conference in Cairo last year but was denied such status for the Beijing Conference.

Jeanne Head, a registered nurse, has a long career as an obstetric nurse. In addition to her work as assistant nursing care coordinator in the labor and delivery unit of a large New York City hospital, she serves as the U.N. representative for the International Right to Life Federation.

Diane LeMasters Knippers is president of the Institute on Religion and Democracy. After attending high school in Iceland, she graduated from Asbury College in 1972 and obtained her MA in sociology at the University of Tennessee in 1974. She was an editor at Good News magazine for 6 years and then joined the staff of the Institute for Religion and Democracy.

Barbara Ledeen, vice president of the Washington Women's Issues Network, is here representing the International Women's Forum. Mrs. Ledeen has served as a communications specialist in the Department of Defense and as an assistant editor at the New Republic.

Cecilia Royals has been a president of the National Institute of Womanhood since its founding in 1990. Mrs. Royals and other NIW representatives played a significant role at the population conference in Cairo last fall. Most recently she addressed the plenary session of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women and criticized the marginalization of women who choose to have more than two children.

I would like to ask Mrs. Bork to begin her testimony.

**STATEMENT OF MARY ELLEN BORK, BOARD MEMBER,  
CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICA**

Ms. BORK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I am delighted to be here, and I want to congratulate you on having these hearings. I think they are timely and they are going to awaken the American people to a lot of important issues that they wouldn't otherwise know.

The Fourth U.N. Conference on Women, subtitled Action for Equality Development and Peace, should be a very important step in enhancing the status of women and taking actions that will ad-

vance women's education, development, and well-being. This is especially important for the poor women of developing nations.

There are some strengths to the document which the chairman mentioned in his opening statement, and they are very important ones, but unfortunately the document under discussion, the Platform for Action, is seriously flawed by the endorsement of a radical feminist view of equality and gender which leads to inadequate treatment of motherhood and traditional marriage and inadequate treatment of religious and cultural values that women bring to society. The Catholic Campaign for America has reservations about the U.S. delegation endorsing such a document.

The Platform for Action does not represent the views or the thinking of a whole segment of humanity, literally billions of women, thereby making the document less than representative of the views of women worldwide.

The Platform, as you know, sets forth 12 areas of concern: poverty, education, health, violence to women, peace, economics, power and decisionmaking, mechanisms to advance women, human rights, media, environment, and the girl child. In each area, the empowerment of women turns to the issue of equality that, as an American, I find hard to recognize.

According to the document, women cannot achieve real equality unless there is absolute statistical parity between men and women, 50-50 representation in every sphere of life, starting with the family, extending to the workplace and politics. All women would work outside the home and be economically autonomous, and all men would accept responsibility for half the child care and half the housework. Parenting democracy would require the alteration of constitutions and the changing of national laws.

Since this goal will not be achieved immediately, the interim measure that is suggested is forcing political parties to be 50 percent women. This may be a Utopian's dream, but it is certainly not the democratic understanding of equality of opportunity which historically does not produce statistical equality.

When people exercise freedom, the results are not equal. Government-imposed numerical quotas, reeducation, and penalties involve coercion, which is not empowering for anyone. Such an approach is in conflict with the democratic understanding of freedom.

The central theme of the Platform for Action is gender and mainstreaming the gender perspective. The word "gender" appears, as you know, because you said you read it, 200 times and "gender perspective" 45 times. In the context of the Platform, mainstreaming the gender perspective means loosening the idea of gender from its biological roots, claiming new roles and new sexual license.

Gender does not refer to sexual differences anymore but it has evolved, as Bella Abzug said to the U.N. delegates in April, to mean differences between men and women resulting from socially constructed gender roles rather than immutable biological difference. Gender has evolved to be not just two but indeed to be five, of which the polar opposites are male and female and in between are homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual.

To claim that sexual differences are merely culturally conditioned means two things: that the traditional understanding of gender as male and female no longer holds and that sexual difference

is something that is malleable and can be actually anything the individual wants it to be or indeed the government wants it to be. Marriage and motherhood take second place while unrestricted sexual freedom for adolescents and unmarried persons is endorsed. Families have become households.

This amorphous nontraditional and, I think, false concept of gender permeates the entire text of this international document. The goal is to have gender perspective approved in Beijing and then imposed on women through their governments and NGO activities, many of which are supported by taxpayers' dollars. This narrow ideological view does not represent the thinking or the experience of most American women or men. We are witnessing a blatant form of cultural imperialism that undermines the values and standards on which American society is based.

Furthermore, the gender perspective is offensive to those who come from major religious traditions—Christian, Jewish and Muslim. It contradicts the religious teachings of the world's major religions which hold that women and men are equal in dignity and personhood but complementary in nature.

Traditional female and male roles do not deny women opportunities for partnership in society. Women who do not choose to work outside the home participate fully in society. For example, in many, many activities as activists, volunteers, and lobbyists, their activism has been responsible for many positive social changes. This document is disparaging of that choice.

What is missing from this document is a realistic understanding of women's indispensable role in society as life giver and transmitter of cultural values. In substituting an ideological view of gender with a basic understanding of the relationship of men and women as complementary, which, by the way, is the basis of western culture, this document and the actions that will flow from it put in jeopardy the basis of family and social life as we know it.

The Platform for Action should be an honest assessment of the problems faced by real women in many cultural situations. It should address itself to finding answers for better economic development, educational possibilities, and basic health services, the lack of which inhibit many women's advancement to a better and more productive and happier life.

Statistical inequality is simply not the cause of the problems women face, nor will gender perspective lead to effective solutions. The United Nations should try to find common grounds where people from many cultures can work together.

The gender perspective is a view promoted by gender feminists and simply does not represent the views of the majority of the world's women. Endorsement by the U.S. delegation of such a seriously flawed document I think will do lasting damage to our society because it is promoting false solutions to very real problems.

This hearing will alert Americans to a very destructive view of women that they would never accept themselves and would never dream of imposing on an unsuspecting world.

Since I have alluded to some thoughts actually expressed by Pope John Paul II, I would like to ask that his very recent letter to all the women of the world be added to my testimony for the record.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, it will be part of the record.

Ms. BORK. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bork appears in the appendix.]

[The letter by Pope John Paul II appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. I thank you for your very eloquent testimony, and I would like to ask Barbara Ledeen if she would at this point make her comments.

#### **STATEMENT OF BARBARA LEDEEN, INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM**

Ms. LEDEEN. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

My name is Barbara Ledeen, and I am testifying today on behalf of the Independent Women's Forum where I am executive director for policy and liaison. The IWF is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group of independent women who believe in freedom achieved through limited government and individual responsibility.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak to the subcommittee today on the subject of human rights in China with reference to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women scheduled to be held in Beijing in September. The cause of human rights should supersede considerations of so-called women's rights, particularly as women's rights have been enunciated by the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women.

The naturalized U.S. citizen, Peter Harry Wu, was seized upon his entry, as we have discussed this morning, and we believe that this alone is a compelling cause for withdrawal of the U.S. delegation from the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, and we further say that the United States should not participate in any gathering in China at this time.

There are four other compelling reasons that the United States should cancel participation in the conference no matter where it may be held.

First, the United States should not participate in any endeavor or endorse any document whose conception of human rights differs fundamentally from this country's foundational ideas and documents.

Second, a representative democratic government should not be party to constructing or adopting a policy agenda that does not reflect principles and beliefs generally espoused by this country's citizens.

Third, a representative government has no business endorsing a policy agenda whose design for implementation is totalitarian.

And, fourth, the United States should not agree to permit any other entity to dictate this country's domestic policies.

Virtually all of the draft Platform for Action, the major statement to be adopted at the conference, involves matters of domestic policy concerning which the United Nations should play no role whatsoever. The United States also should not be a party to dictating social policy in other countries.

Section I of the Platform for Action concerns human rights. The bracketed language includes numerous statements regarding whether human rights are or should be universal or universally recognized. The argument is over whether alleged women's rights

take precedence over individual human rights and is particularly relevant at this time given that Peter Harry Wu is a male.

To raise the question whether women have or need special rights that are separate and distinct from universal human rights is to raise the question whether women are human. The authors of the Platform do not wish to raise that question openly and so resort to discussion of the human rights of all women, mentioned in paragraph 215, among others. The authors then seek to assure that alleged women's human rights are of an order different from universal human rights.

In language which is already adopted, paragraph 218 asserts that unless human rights of women as defined by international human rights, instruments are fully recognized and effectively protected, applied, implemented, and enforced in national law as well as in national practice. In civil, penal, labor, and commercial codes, and administrative rules and regulations they will exist in name only. This language reflects rights as embodied and decided, implemented in law, and hence presumes that rights are conferrable by law. The language does not acknowledge rights as inherent in man's nature.

Trivializing the very idea of human rights, the construction presumes that individuals have no rights and enjoy only such rights as governments confer upon them. This concept is thoroughly alien to the American foundational idea of universal human rights endowed by the Creator; that is, of natural rights inherent in individuals. It is also thoroughly alien to the concept of individual freedom.

Within the framework of the Platform's overarching reach to dictate to U.N. member countries exactly what their domestic policies should be, there are five central themes concerning the exercise of alleged women's rights. The first is that government involvement, control, and bureaucracy constitute the preferred, primary, and most necessary solution to problems.

The presumption is that people, particularly women, are incapable of exercising or learning to exercise freedom. A component of this presumption is that people, particularly women, are incapable of solving problems or learning to solve problems by themselves. The Platform insults human dignity and freedom, particularly the dignity and freedom of women.

In language which is already adopted, incredibly, paragraph 26 of the Platform asserts that many governments have enacted legislation to promote equality between women and men and have established national machineries to ensure the mainstreaming of gender perspective in all spheres of society.

Laws to confer alleged women's rights to establish quotas and preferences and bureaucracy to enforce them are to be expanded where they exist and are to be put in place where they do not, with enforcement directed to precisely proportional representation of women and men in every sphere of life.

Though the discussion at home in the United States is about how to redress the excesses of affirmative action, that result is discrimination; in Beijing, the United States is to advocate more of what we know has already caused harm here.

The second central theme is that in addressing each of the 12 major issues covered in the Platform, including human rights, "government and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming agenda perspective into all policies and programs so that before decisions are taken an analysis is made of the effects for women and men respectively."

This divisive and polarizing theme is the document mantra, and its intent is to ensure we argue endlessly over whether domestic policy and programs treat women and men identically or, if there is a difference in treatment, whether it favors women.

The Platform asserts in paragraph 19 that "only a radical transformation of the relationship between women and men to one of full and equal partnership will enable the world to meet the challenges of the next century".

The heart of the radical transformation cited is found in paragraph 28: "In many countries the differences between women's and men's achievements in activities are still not recognized as the consequences of socially constructed gender roles rather than immutable biological differences."

If gender is a matter of roles that are socially constructed and have no relation to nature or to biological fact, then all sexuality, hetero—homo, trans, bi—is a matter of choice and any sexual behavior is valid as a matter of preference.

The language which we have just cited has already been adopted. It is the reason that the statement in paragraph 30 that women play a critical role in the family, the basic unit of society, and in paragraph 31 that religion plays a central role in the lives of millions of women have not been adopted and are still subject of debate.

Furthermore, a thoroughly discredited Marxist view of economics constitutes the third central theme. In paragraph 57: "The United States has already agreed that government should have charge of the productive capacity of women through access to capital resources, credit, land, technology, information, technical assistance, and training so as to raise their income and improve nutrition, education, and health care, and status within the household."

By "access" is meant expropriation, often by regulation, and with preference to women. Even if command economies functioned to provide benefits to the people subjected to them, the idea that women require unearned benefits secured by government coercion demeans their capabilities, their capacities, and their accomplishments.

The words "mother," "father," "wife," and "husband," do not appear anywhere in this Platform, signifying the document's fourth central theme, that the family—the definition of family is fluid. In place of the idea of family, the document speaks of household, claiming in paragraph 24 that one-fourth of all households worldwide are dependent on female income even where men are present.

Voluntary marriages, the quintessential social contract, is not mentioned in this Platform. There is no discussion of whether the presence of men who are married to the women with whom they are living as husbands to wives and father to the children of marriage is or might be beneficial to the men and women and children involved.

Instead, approved paragraph 52 asserts that because of the gender division of labor and responsibility for household welfare, women bear a disproportionate burden, attempting to manage household consumption and production under conditions of increasing scarcity.

Paragraph 20, also approved, asserts that the poverty of women and children is, "exacerbated when responsibilities for basic social service have shifted from government to women".

Thus, when the debate here at home is about how to get the government out of the entitlements business so that, in particular, women and children enslaved by a failed system can be set free, in Beijing the United States is to advocate the expansion of government dependency and to encourage other nations to adopt policies of failure.

The fifth central theme of the Platform is that nongovernmental organizations should be funded by governments and should function transparently, which is to say as arms of and with coequal authority in relation to governments.

The Platform does not go so far as to mandate that nongovernmental organizations should have police powers, but that matter is encompassed by the word's transparency, precisely why such an obfuscating word is employed.

Implicitly, if not explicitly, the Platform calls for the United States and other nations to use citizens' tax dollars to support the promotion of radical feminism worldwide as a legitimate political and social movement equivalent to politically funded—to publicly funded political parties.

This Platform is a radical recipe for governments to consign the world's women to second-class citizenship by assigning them unnecessary special privileges that demean and trivialize universal human rights. Fighting discrimination by imposing discrimination does violence to the idea of equality as natural to every person. It also does violence to both the ideals and the functions of liberty and equity.

The United States should cancel participation in the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women and, in addition, should assure that the Platform's radical agenda has no government endorsement in this country.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ledeen appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much for your very incisive remarks and for dissecting some of the more controversial provisions in the Platform. I think it is important that this all get out. It has largely here to date not gotten out. So I do thank you for that.

Mr. SMITH. Diane Knippers.

#### STATEMENT OF DIANE L. KNIPPERS, PRESIDENT, THE INSTITUTE FOR RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY

Ms. KNIPPERS. Thank you very much for inviting us to be included in this, and it is a particular honor to address you, Congressman Smith, whom we consider a hero in the human rights movement.

The adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948 gave the world a powerful mechanism for holding nations ac-



countable for the basic rights of all persons. Sadly, in recent years we have seen efforts to erode these basic standards as authoritarian governments argue that human rights are not universal but are culturally relative.

But another form of erosion is more subtle, more insidious, and more dangerous. It is the trend toward defining every conceivable social goal as a human right, whether or not these social goals are properly the responsibilities of governments and whether or not they are even obtainable. The result is obvious. When everything is considered a right, finally nothing can be defended as a right.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, in its draft Platform for Action, offers prime examples of this erosion. The adoption of this Platform will undermine the pursuit of basic human rights. Even more troubling, it will also sacrifice efforts on behalf of women whose rights are the most repressed and abused in favor of the controversial social goals of western gender feminists. This is a tragedy.

Let me cite five examples of human rights flaws in the draft Platform for Action and the conference itself. No. 1, the draft platform's commitment to universality is unsure. Every reference to universal human rights is bracketed. If this document does not affirm universality, it will mark a serious regression in the progress toward human rights within the international community.

No. 2, the call to address the basic rights of women is blurred and minimized in the draft Platform's context of social engineering and expansive and questionable goals. Serious abuses of rights of women, even when mentioned in the document, are diminished in the context of grandiose plans for reengineering society. For example, achieving for all women the basic right to vote and participate in elections is a much more urgent task than working to ensure equality of outcomes such as equal numbers of men and women in all parliaments.

Let me offer a couple of examples of abuses of women that are mentioned in the draft Platform but diminished by the larger context.

There is the urgent need to combat prostitution and pornography, particularly involving children. A recent report of a religious group which operates ministries in Thailand to young women who have been forced into prostitution tells of girls as young as 12 sold to brothels. One child said the brothel owner would beat her to make her stop crying while she was entertaining customers.

Another example is slavery, which has not been eradicated but is still practiced in nations such as Mauritania and Sudan. A recent fact-finding team organized by Christian Solidarity International reports that local officials estimate some 1,000 women and children have been taken into slavery in the last 5 years from one Sudanese town alone. Team members met a 14-year-old Sudanese girl who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery when she was 7.

Yet the atrocity of human slavery gets only passing mention in the 121-page Platform for Action. Such blatant and egregious human rights abuses are trivialized in the context of a document that takes on the grandiose aim to redefine gender roles in every

society with no reference to biological differences between men and women.

No. 3, the Platform will result in the expansion of the coercive and intrusive powers of governments and international agencies in the lives of individuals and families. The goals of the draft Platform for Action, particularly that of defining equality as outcome rather than opportunity and obliterating any distinctive male or female roles, will lead inexorably to the expansion of the coercive power of governments. There is no question that this will contribute to antidemocratic practices. It will also undermine the rights of individuals and families, beginning with the rights of parents to train their own children.

No. 4, serious human rights abuses such as religious repression are ignored entirely. The most serious omission in the draft Platform is any acknowledgment of freedom of conscience or of religion for women. Throughout the document religion is cited as a source of repression of women. There is only one brief and still bracketed acknowledgment of the spiritual needs of women, but nowhere in the 121 pages does the document call for religious freedom for women.

Women should have the right to engage in religious practice, to change their religion, to propagate their religious faith, particularly to their children. Women who change their religion should be free of the threat of state-imposed divorce or the threat of having their children taken from them. The irony is that this conference on women is being held in a country which currently imprisons women for practicing their faith.

Finally, holding the World Conference on Women in China serves to undermine international human rights standards. Our Ecumenical Coalition on Women and Society is calling upon the U.S. Government to boycott the Beijing Women's Conference unless two conditions are met. The first is that Harry Wu must be freed from prison. The second is that our Government must obtain assurances from the People's Republic of China that U.S. citizens and other U.N. conference participants will enjoy the basic rights of freedom of conscience, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of peaceable assembly as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Women in nongovernmental organizations such as mine going to Beijing are being told they risk interrogation if they meet in groups of more than five, that they cannot meet in hotel rooms, they can't unfurl banners, they can't take in religious literature, they can't engage in corporate prayer outside of one special tent, and they can't tap unregistered computers or fax machines into hotel rooms.

How can we begin to discuss human rights in a climate in which those rights are ignored and abused? It would be unconscionable for the United States to participate in such a sham.

In conclusion, women are brutally denied basic human rights in many parts of the world. Women suffer denial of educational opportunities and property rights. They suffer forced abortion and forced sterilization, genital mutilation, prostitution, rape, female infanticide, the threat of execution for apostasy or blasphemy, slavery—the list goes on.

The campaign to combat the truly horrible abuses of women is undermined by linking women's rights with highly questionable economic, social, and economic theories. The Beijing agenda goes far beyond basic rights for women. The draft Platform claims that peace and development cannot be achieved unless women represent 50 percent of all national and international political and economic agencies. How or why women are uniquely capable of bringing in this Utopia is never explained.

The danger of the Beijing Women's Conference is, it attempts sweeping and unnecessary social change, change that will undermine rather than enhance the rights of women. The draft Platform for Action equals or surpasses the Marxist-Leninist experiment in its ambition.

The draft Platform for Action calls for the most intrusive, arrogant, and radical restructuring of the social order in human history, all on the baseless assumption that this will produce a just, prosperous, and peaceful world. I am convinced of the opposite. It is the road to tyranny and oppression for women and for men.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Knippers appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very, very much for your excellent testimony, and I would—Mrs. Head, if you don't mind, we will suspend. There is a vote under way. Then we will reconvene to conclude the hearing in about 10 minutes or so.

[Recess.]

Mr. SMITH. The subcommittee will reconvene, and I would like to welcome Jeanne Head to present her testimony.

#### **STATEMENT OF JEANNE HEAD, R.N., INTERNATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE FEDERATION, INC.**

Ms. HEAD. Thank you for having this testimony and for inviting me. I am very pleased, especially to appear before you, Congressman Smith.

As you noted, I am the International Right to Life Federation's representative to the United Nations in New York, and I am also the New York State delegate to the National Right to Life Committee.

The International Right to Life Federation is a worldwide federation of pro-life organizations, including the NRLC, dedicated to the protection of all innocent human life from conception to natural death. We see a woman's life as a continuum, beginning at conception and proceeding through the entire life cycle.

IRLF has been a credit to the United Nations as a nongovernmental organization with consultative status on the Economic and Social Council since 1987, and, to my knowledge, we are the only obviously pro-life organization that has that status. We have actively participated in the recent critical U.N. conferences, including the Cairo Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, and what we thought was the final preparatory conference for the Fourth World Conference on Women which is being held in Beijing, as we all know.

I speak on behalf of the International Right to Life Federation and as a woman, as an obstetric nurse, who has spent my life caring for women and children. We have serious concerns about the

general conduct of these U.N. conferences and particularly about their attempts to impose the failed, tragic, social policies of the United States and other Western countries on the developing countries.

We are particularly concerned about the extreme pressure and coercive practices that have been exerted on developing countries and their delegations to accept language in these U.N. documents that would violate their laws, their ethical and religious values, and their cultural backgrounds.

For example, before, during, and after the Cairo conference, these pressures and coercive practices were used by the Clinton administration's delegations, other Western governments, and their powerful national and international pro-abortion NGO allies in an attempt to enshrine abortion as a fundamental right and as a method of family planning worldwide.

When they failed in Cairo, some of the more vocal allies vowed to achieve their goals at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen or at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. They failed to do so in Copenhagen in March of this year.

The activities of the Clinton administration in promoting abortion as a fundamental right and as a method of family planning in relation to the Cairo conference were well documented.

As you yourself know, on March 16, 1994, before the Cairo Prep Comm III, the State Department sent an action cable for every U.S. ambassador and envoy calling for senior diplomatic interventions in support of U.S. priorities for the Cairo conference in Prep Comm III which included the following statement: The United States believes that access to safe, legal, and voluntary abortion is a fundamental right of all women.

The Clinton administration's delegation and its pro-abortion allies worldwide deny that they want to go beyond Cairo in regard to the abortion issue in the Beijing conference. However, that is what they said about Copenhagen, and there was ample evidence during negotiations on the World Summit document of attempts to expand on Cairo even though they were less obvious and they failed.

A notable example is a proposal on school-based clinics floated by the U.S. administration. The massive 121-page Beijing document for the Fourth World Conference on Women was seriously flawed to start with on a number of issues, just as were the Cairo and Copenhagen documents.

It is to be noted that all of these documents were written in U.S.-type English, which often does not translate to mean the same thing in other U.N. languages.

The document that emerged from the grueling three and a half weeks of negotiations during the Fourth World Conference Prep Comm was even more seriously flawed than the document presented to the delegates when they arrived at the Prep Comm. At least one-third of the document has not been settled, as you know.

A large part of issues still to be negotiated involve abortion and related issues. This is a matter of serious concern. When a word, phrase, as you know, is not settled, it is bracketed. Among the words and phrases that are presently in square brackets are, as you heard before: "Mother," phrases related to taking into account

the rights and duties and responsibilities of parents—that is, I think, bracketed no less than 33 times—universally recognized human rights and female feticide, when used along with female infanticide in referring to the practice of killing girls before and after birth for the purpose of sex selection or in discussing violence and discrimination against women and the girl child.

In regard to the use of the term “female feticide,” a U.S. delegation objected to the term during a negotiating session in New York because it might hinder reproductive rights. Much of the ICPD’s language, even some rejected by Cairo relating to the abortion issue, has been reintroduced into the Beijing document, all this without any noticeable protest from the U.S. delegation, without the modifying language which made it acceptable to some countries, such as the Muslims, and without the reservations expressed by many countries.

For example, the paragraph addressing the need to respect sovereign rights, national laws, and full respect for religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds, and universally recognized human rights, which appeared as the first paragraph under “Principles” in the ICPD document, has been allocated to a footnote, the idea of which has been put into square brackets.

The U.S. participation in a consolidated amendment, along with Canada, Japan, Australia, and others, which calls for taking action to ensure the conditions necessary for women to exercise their reproductive rights and eliminate, where possible, coercive laws and practices, that comes straight from rejected language in the ICPD document.

The document continues to refer to unsafe abortion, with the implication that abortion, if legalized, can be made safe. This is a false and dangerous concept. Women suffer serious physical, emotional, and psychological damage, even death, from so-called safe, legal abortion.

There is a risk that some may use this language as an excuse to promote the false concept that legalization makes abortion safe. According to the World Health Organization, the dramatic decline in maternity mortality rates in the developed world coincided with the—and I quote—“with the development of obstetric techniques and improvements in the general status of women”. There is ample data for documenting this in the United States.

The most significant impact of legalization in the United States has been an increase in the number of abortions. In the United States, where abortion has been legal for over 20 years and where health standards are high, maternity mortality is four times that of Ireland, where abortion is not legal and which has the lowest maternal mortality rate in the world.

The key to reduction in maternal mortality from all causes is to improve maternal health care. In the developing world, where medical care, antibiotics, even basic asepsis, are scarce or absent. Promoting abortion would increase, not decrease, maternal mortality, and of course abortion is never safe for the unborn child.

The pro-life and pro-family delegates to these conferences have had a significant impact on their outcome when we have had access to the delegates. It was the practice of these U.N. conferences to accept already negotiated language from previous U.N. conferences.

However, many delegates haven't been at previous conferences or don't remember the details. That is where the NGO lobbyists can be of help. They help the delegates, some of them very small countries without a staff—there was one delegate; she was the only delegate from one country—to sift through the reams of documents and proposals so that they can understand what they really mean.

Contrary to previous conferences, a large percentage of negotiations at the Prep Comm for Beijing in New York were conducted in informal sessions, closed to NGO's and the press, and we are very concerned this upcoming conference in New York on August 31st—or July 31st through August 5th—will not allow any NGO participation.

At the ICPD in Cairo and the World Summit in Copenhagen, NGO's were not allowed access to the floor of the conference as they are in main committee negotiations at the Prep Comm in New York. This was a definite disadvantage for the pro-life and pro-family NGO's in Cairo and in Copenhagen. In Cairo in particular, the pro-abortion side had no such disadvantage.

The president of U.S. Planned Parenthood and former Congressman Bella Abzug, who is afforded special status even when not sitting in a delegation, among others, were part of the U.S. delegation and had full access to the floor, and I am sure this was true of other countries. I know it was true of other countries, particularly Canada; the president of Planned Parenthood sat in their delegations.

We ask the Congress to insist that if they hold the conference, if they go, that the delegation from the United States being sent to Beijing reflect the ethical, religious, and cultural values of the majority of the citizens of the United States and that they cease and desist from promoting the failed and tragic and flawed social policies of the Western World on the developing world.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Head appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. I thank you very much, Jeanne, for your very fine testimony and for the insights and recommendations to the Congress.

Cecilia Royals.

#### **STATEMENT OF CECILIA ACEVEDO ROYALS, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WOMANHOOD**

Ms. ROYALS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Smith. It is a great pleasure to be here, and it is an honor to have this opportunity to address the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights.

I speak as a representative of the National Institute of Womanhood, an institute which is a veteran of three global conferences, the Cairo Population and Development Conference, the Copenhagen Social Summit, and the Preparatory Conference for the World Conference on Women in Beijing.

The Fourth World Conference on Women presents us with a perplexing situation. While it purports to promote the advancement of all women, it is actually injurious to them. The draft Platform for Action is injurious to women in the following ways:

It ignores the central experience of women. The Platform for Action aggressively fails to address the central experience of 90 percent of women, motherhood. It trivializes and disparages the relational aspect of mother and child and ignores the irreplaceable character and value of that relation. Furthermore, it is disparaging to mothers by making the arrogant presumption that they are interchangeable and replaceable with caretakers, consumers, and householders.

The 122-page draft plan condescends to use the term "mother" or "motherhood" a paltry 15 times, in contrast with what we have heard of the amount of times that "gender," and "gender perspectives," is used in the document. Of those 15 mentions, 12 frame motherhood negatively; of the remaining three, two are neutral. There is one, and only one, positive reference to the role of mothers. It, along with the two neutral references, is bracketed for removal. And I will quote the one and only positive reference: "Produce and/or disseminate media materials on women leaders, *inter alia*, as, [caring mothers and nurturers of happy families], managers and entrepreneurs, to provide role models, particularly to young women."

It is an affront to the dignity of 90 percent of women that "caring mothers and nurturers of happy families" are in doubt as role models for young women, much less bracketed for removal.

The U.N. Commission on the Status of Women together with several member states and certain nongovernmental organizations do not want motherhood to appear in a positive light in the document, not even as a mere *inter alia* reference. The United Nations has made a 180-degree turn from its 1948 Declaration on Human Rights where it sought to ensure that motherhood is entitled to special care and assistance.

In fact, special care and assistance for mothers is not found anywhere in the Beijing Platform for Action. Furthermore, it aggressively avoids mentioning them. The following two examples reveal the calculated verbal engineering used to avoid the use of the term "mothers," and I quote: "Women as citizens can help change consumption patterns in their multiple roles as consumers, householders, workers, and voters."

As another example: "As consumers, caretakers of their families, and educators, women play an important role in promoting sustainable development and in their concern for the quality and sustainability of life for present and future generations."

The language of the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights that motherhood is entitled to special care and assistance, could be included in the draft Platform for Action in the text in paragraph 30 which you have already noted as follows—and the language should be retained; the entire paragraph is bracketed; it should be retained, and it could read as follows: "They have also borne in mind the social significance of maternity and the role of both parents in the family and in the upbringing of children and are aware that the role of women in procreation should *not* be a basis for discrimination, but rather motherhood is entitled to special care and assistance, and that the upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between women and men and society as a whole."

The document is injurious to women also because it ignores the relational dimension of women, the family. It trivializes the relational aspect of mother and father, parents and children, and the constellation of relations within families. Furthermore, it is directly hostile to the irreplaceable value of mother and father in the raising and rearing of children.

The only paragraph that attempts to acknowledge the family and the role of women in the family is bracketed for removal. What is more, parental rights are being phased out. Almost every reference to the rights, duties, and responsibilities of parents is bracketed for removal.

While withholding support for mothers, families, and parental rights, it explicitly attempts to protect diverse sexual orientations and lifestyles. You will find that in paragraph 232(h).

Furthermore, while impeding parents in attempts—it attempts to interpose miscellaneous men and women as the gender counselors for children and youth. You will find that in paragraph 262.

It is injurious to women because it betrays the woman's perspective in favor of the gender perspective. The document becomes an international tool to tighten the grip on the control of the concept of gender in the girl child.

The concept of gender in girls is constructed according to the image of the United Nations and some women's organizations and not according to the image of parents and family. The delicate integration and harmony of gender identity with sexual orientation in girls and boys is a serious concern in the education of gender, and in many ways you can say that this document reads as a tool of gender reconstruction.

Consider the following excerpt from a spring 1995 course from Hunter College. The course was titled, "Reimagining Gender," and I quote: "In this course we will find out how 20th century thinkers have reimagined the concept of gender. Is gender a social construction or the product of biological sex? What is at stake in transgressing the binary categories of female-male, feminine-masculine, heterosexual-homosexual, natural-unnatural? How does gender identity intersect with other gender categories such as race, class, and sexual orientation? We will be paying particular attention to the ways in which feminists, queer, and transsexual writers and theorists open up these questions."

Ms. ROYALS. This is an example of what is happening in the colleges and universities throughout the country. The document reads like a how-to manual for government control of gender identity in the girl child at *all* levels of education.

In light of the above-mentioned reference, consider the following gender language in the U.N. document. Paragraph 85 A, "elaborate recommendations and develop curricula, textbooks and teaching aides free of gender stereotypes for all levels of education, including teacher training materials in association with all concerned publishers, teachers," et cetera. Paragraph 85 P, "ensure that gender, cultural and religious diversity are respected in educational institutions and reflected in educational materials." Paragraph 262, "girls and adolescents may receive a variety of conflicting and confusing messages on their gender roles from their parents, teachers, peers, and media. Women and men need to work together with children



and youth to break down persistent gender stereotypes," and bracketed for deletion is "recognizing the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents...." The miscellaneous men and women that are not parents may well be instructors, like the one that devised the gender reimagining curriculum at Hunter College.

Therefore, I urge this subcommittee to protect the rights of parents to direct the upbringing of their children and their fundamental right to educate their children in their gender roles and to prevent undue intrusion of government.

The document is also injurious to women because it contains a distorted hierarchy of values. The document gives excessive attention to sexual and reproductive rights and services, and the introduction of these services to children without regard to legitimate parental concerns.

Conversely, by contrast, the document fails to give adequate importance to the true concerns of mothers worldwide, the basic health care of their children and family members. Of the top killers worldwide, pregnancy-related deaths are 1 percent. 1 percent. Deaths caused by infectious and parasitic diseases, on the other hand, is the No. 1 cause of death worldwide and is responsible for 32 percent of all deaths yearly.

Women are painfully aware that mothers in Kenya must stand by helplessly while their children die of simple pneumonia, because clinics, chock full of costly IUD's, do not have a single vial of penicillin that costs only a few cents. As one delegate put it, "They do not want to let go of the money they are making on us with their reproductive control industry. We need wells, schools, aspirin, and instead they fill our clinics with condoms."

The question that begs to be asked is why? Because the pivotal element of so-called sustainable development is reduction of fertility rates.

In other words, the key element is reducing the number of children per mother. Education of the girl child for the purpose of ensuring that she seeks greater use of contraception, abortion and sterilization, and selects any occupation other than motherhood, is a well-documented population control strategy.

This conference needs to be viewed in its context as following 1 year after the Population Conference in ICPD and the original Women's Conference followed 1 year after the 1974 first 20-year plan of action. The women's issues became predominant when the population issues became obvious and the woman is the agent of population control. Hence, the scandalous link between the population control and the education of the girl child's gender concept.

Consider the following quote from Gender Perspectives in Family Planning Programs of the Expert Group Meeting organized by the Population Division of the United Nations in 1992. And I quote. "In order to be effective in the long run, family planning programs should not only focus on attempting to reduce fertility within existing gender roles, but rather on changing gender roles in order to reduce fertility." To achieve this, the only relevant gender role that needs to be controlled and discouraged is motherhood. Since population control is the goal, motherhood is the antithesis. The United Nations is creating a new marginalized group. Is the woman who

chooses to have several children rapidly becoming marginalized by design?

I urge that your subcommittee take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the United States does not promote and actively opposes this blatant contempt for women. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Royals appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. I thank you for your very eloquent and very fine remarks which I think brings the not-so-hidden agenda to the forefront. You know, as was pointed out with some of our earlier panels, so often so much of this is just framed in the backdrop of diplomacy and people saying nice things about one another and the details. And as Mrs. Bork pointed out, you know, not only is this cultural imperialism, but there are actions that flow from this.

After each statement of principle comes what government should do and what NGO's, everybody else should be doing, and there is a very, very aggressive full plate of action contemplated for the countries of the world. And I think when we get to, as Jeanne Head pointed out, the Administration's obsession with promoting an international right to abortion, which they indeed did—I myself circulated that Department of State cable that was a demarche that went around the world talking about an international right to abortion, and then it was denied conveniently when it looked like many of the countries of the Third World were rejecting it out of hand and it was also a political problem for the Clinton administration, a very disingenuous denial, I have to say, because the proof was as clear as day.

I wonder if any of the panelists could tell us, tell the subcommittee who bracketed different parts of this document? I note in the area dealing with violence against women, there is a fine section about trying to mitigate and deter violence against women, and then I note with sadness that forced abortion and sex selection abortions, prenatal sex selection as it pointed out here, female feticide, all of that is bracketed. Was that the western countries, was that the United States? Who was responsible for that?

Ms. HEAD. Well, first of all, some of us who were there don't have a lot of knowledge of what happened, because most of the negotiations were held behind closed doors in informal sessions, to which the nongovernmental organizations were not allowed to participate or be involved in. However, some things did filter out, like it certainly was the United States that bracketed female feticide.

I understand they bracketed universally recognized human rights. It is interesting to note that many times, I believe, that the delegation in the United States was working through surrogates like Canada. I think it was very obvious, because when they—at the Prep Comm for the World Summit, when they floated the brand-new commitment on education and which included school-based clinics and we blew the whistle on them, they didn't introduce it, but it resurfaced in Copenhagen in the hands of the Canadian delegation, that kind of thing, which is very hard to document. But this particular, as Mercedes Wilson pointed out earlier, was so closed to so many people and so disorganized, it seemed—and I don't know whether that was by design or not. One of their tactics is delay and they keep delaying.

They had to extend it and some of the countries who can't afford to send delegations staying in New York for three-and-a-half weeks as it is, and then they extend it, they had to go home. They had their plane tickets. So that is a good way to get what you want. Somebody leaves the room, then they put brackets on it or take it off or whatever. So I couldn't be real specific about a lot of things that the U.S. delegation did, because sometimes they were very careful and sometimes we just didn't have the information.

Ms. KNIPPERS. It was a State Department official who told me, who told me that the U.S. delegates did bracket universal and references to universal human rights. I am not sure whether that was malicious or just simply incompetence. They said that they felt that they didn't have high enough quality human rights experts on the team at the Prep Comm, and John Shattuck has said that they want to assure that we don't go to Beijing with that perspective.

On the other hand, when I was on a USIA TV telecast with Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, and raised the question of universal human rights, she dismissed it as kind of an academic discussion. So I am still very concerned about it.

Mr. SMITH. On the issue of gender, do you have expectations, hopes, that the final Prep Comm can fix that? Or is this just something that is created, you know, like kind of part of the feminist manifesto, which this will indeed emerge as if those kinds of things are not fixed?

Ms. ROYALS. With gender being in the document over 200 times, it would—in order to fix it, it would require a rewriting of the entire document. There are some proper concepts of the use of the term, "gender" that can certainly be kept and can certainly be used. Not—there should not be a knee-jerk reaction that every time gender is used it needs to be removed from the document. However, since it is so pervasive and since it enters into the education of the girl child, it enters into human rights, it enters into everything, into the environmental concerns, et cetera. It really would take major rewriting to expunge that gender reconstruction and changing of roles in women in addition to the fact that there are many areas in the document that overtly have contempt for the values and cultures of the different people.

And to your previous question, it is my understanding that it was the U.S. delegation that bracketed parental rights consistently. And it is also my understanding that it was the U.S. delegation that bracketed human beings at the center of development or people-centered, any time that people at the center of development or sustainable development or any of that formula was used, which is approximately about four times that it was bracketed. And when that discussion came up at one of the State Department briefings, it was more or less along the lines of we need to ask the trees how they feel about this.

Mr. SMITH. Is it your understanding from the Prep Comms that the Third World delegates were largely cowered and whipsawed into acceptance?

Ms. HEAD. Absolutely. Particularly in the Prep Comm for Beijing. I think it is no surprise that some of the pro-life delegations and pro-family delegations are having trouble getting accreditation to Beijing, because they began to recognize us as being effective. And

a large number of the pro-life delegates—for example, particularly the example in particular is the whole chapter on the girl child was designed by the group of 77. And they hammered it all out. And a number of them were determined to keep in the reference to female feticide in relation to sex selection as along with female infanticide.

And we were just certain, you know, that there were enough in that closed room that would stand up for it. And all of a sudden, we got a message that came out and said it is all falling apart. And it turns out that one delegate in particular who had been called in by her government and told to not say anything, she was muzzled. And that happened in a number of cases like that. Obviously, the pressures are there.

On the gender issue, I know that certain delegates told me that particularly the U.S. delegation was heard to give veiled threats of denial of funding if they did not stand up and do what the United States wanted them to do.

Mr. SMITH. Let me just ask, I had heard from a very reliable source that Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky had at an NGO briefing said that the U.S. delegation was pushing for this reproductive choice, international right to abortion. And I asked that question specifically of Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and he denied it and said that the U.S. delegation was not.

It reminded me, it was almost a reprise of what we heard in Cairo, because I saw it with my own eyes there, that we were indeed pushing such a thing, and then backed off only because we were defeated because many of the countries of the world respect and revere their unborn children.

More than 95 countries, as we all know, I think, have laws or constitutional protections for their unborn children. Almost all of Central and South America, for example, protect their unborn children from abortion on demand. And we get these denials from the highest people, Warren Christopher. And yet I look at this document and I see language that on fertility regulation and reproductive choice and other words that very easily can be construed to be that. And then there is the unsafe abortion language, which was the way abortion was back-doored into this country, by constantly using that method.

Jeanne, if you wanted to talk about that.

Ms. HEAD. Well, it is interesting that on the very day that you had that hearing, the U.S. delegation was making its comment, for example, about female feticide, that they didn't want to use that terminology because of reproductive rights. And it is interesting that we did get a copy of that transcript or that hearing, public transcript, and were distributing it to some of the delegates. Because it is very important, as you found out in Cairo for the pro-life, Central African, South American, Latin American, and other countries that are strongly pro-life, for them to know that not everyone in the United States, and in fact the majority of the people in the United States do not agree with what the U.S. delegation is doing.

So whenever we get anything like that, we pass it out to the delegates. And it so happened that somebody passed one of those transcripts the next day, to Mr. Wirth, who happened for the first time,

the day after your hearing, to appear at the Prep Comm, that we saw publicly. And 15 minutes later, the U.N. Security came downstairs in Gestapo fashion and tried to close us down, told us that we couldn't distribute anything but U.N.-approved documents. And we had to spend the whole rest of the day to reverse that situation.

Mr. SMITH. So the proceeding of a House of Representatives committee with remarks by the Secretary of State was considered to be contraband?

Ms. HEAD. Apparently. It seemed that way.

Mr. SMITH. Nobody dares call it censorship.

Would any of the panelists have any further comments they would like to make? Unfortunately, we have another vote pending on the floor and you have been very patient. This has been a very long hearing, but very, very insightful.

Ms. HEAD. May I just add one thing that I just found out yesterday. When you were talking about accreditation, Tom Minery from the Focus on the Family told me that he had been told that they had international status and could have five representatives attend the conference. And he said he just got notice yesterday, I believe, that they are now reduced to national status and can only have two.

Mr. SMITH. OK. Without—any further comments?

Ms. ROYALS. I just want to congratulate you on the timing of this hearing, because as you know, July 31st through August 4th are some very, very important informal intercessions, which if everything is accomplished there, that the agendas of the organizations and institutions we have been referring to all day today, Beijing will just be unimportant.

The negotiations occurring at the United Nations beginning July 31st through August 4th are the most important negotiations for the removal of brackets. So the timing of this was excellent and I congratulate you.

Mr. SMITH. Again, you know, some of you may have been here earlier, but Mr. Lantos took great exception that the ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, was not here. We invited her here, and I hope to have her here before the Prep Comm.

I think it is very important that on the record we have this exchange and the information you have provided to the subcommittee will be of very great value in getting to the bottom of the accreditation issue, the visa issue, and most importantly, the core information with regards to the conference itself. Because again, many of the press, many people who are looking at this are just glossing over these very weighty issues. And while we may be informed here, these Third World countries that don't have mega staff to go through what is going to come their way during the implementation phase, I think it is very, very—you have done a tremendous public service for the world by your testimony.

So I will carry this, members of the subcommittee, and I know there are none here now remaining, but there is a great interest in this, from Senator Bob Dole, the Majority Leader, to Newt Gingrich, to our distinguished chairman, Ben Gilman, there is a tremendous amount of concern about the substance as well as the accreditation. And it is not going to go away.

The Administration bullied their way during previous conferences. I saw it myself. I was ashamed of it, in all candor. I said that to Under Secretary Tim Wirth, Under Secretary of State. We did not behave ourselves or carry ourselves with class in Cairo. And hopefully that will be changed when we get—if they do go to Beijing.

Ms. HEAD. I would just like to add that it was exciting to find out in Cairo that the rest of the world is pro-life. And it is sad to know that they are being pressured to adopt our failed policies.

Mr. SMITH. You know, just one final comment, and then I will adjourn. That was the greatest revelation to me as well. I had known myself that most of the countries of the world protect their unborn, they revere motherhood, and basic traditional values are deeply respected. And all of a sudden I saw the United States and many of the Western powers as acting in a role that was very unsavory, trying to force, pressure, even coerce these countries into accepting a view of the world and a few of their families that they found unacceptable. And it not only was the delegates themselves that said this to me, because I, like you, and perhaps a few others here talked to delegates day in and day out in Cairo, but even their news media, their radio and television and newspaper journalists were befuddled and at times even angered by the U.S. insistence that we follow a perspective that forced abortion on the world.

So it was an eye-opener to me. The world really is not with us. They have a better understanding, I think, of traditional values than we do. So I do thank you for your testimony and this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:53 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

# UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 1995

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN  
RIGHTS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:06 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith, (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. The subcommittee will come to order. Good afternoon. This is a second in a series of hearings on The Fourth U.N. Conference on Women, which is scheduled to be held in Beijing this September.

Last week, we heard testimony from human rights organizations and women's groups, and their testimony was not encouraging. Several witnesses testified to the effect it would be shameful to participate in a human rights event in a nation that is holding a U.S. citizen, Harry Wu, as a hostage in an attempt to extract political concessions from the United States. Others testified about the generally deplorable human rights record of the Beijing regime, particularly in its treatment of women.

Louisa Coan of Amnesty International testified, and I quote, "The Chinese human rights record for women is dismal." Other witnesses pointed out that the victims of China's human rights violations are not limited to its own citizens. Prospective attendees and observers have been cautioned, for example, against the public display of Bibles, which may result in prosecution for possession of forbidden religious literature.

Commissioner Carl Anderson of the United States Commission on Civil Rights testified on a resolution passed by the Commission urging a U.S. boycott of the conference unless these problems are addressed and solved in advance. The Commission's resolution urges that "Our government should not agree to send a delegation whose participation is conditional on the relinquishment or attenuation of the right of religious freedom, including religious expression or the right not to be discriminated against based on religion. The participation of the U.S. delegation in the Beijing conference should be conditional on the release of Mr. Wu and on credible assurances that the religious rights of Americans in China will be respected."

There was also testimony about the lack of basic due process and fundamental fairness in the conference procedures. Representatives

of groups representing the women of Taiwan and Tibet testified that their groups had been denied accreditation for the conference. Organizations representing moderate to conservative viewpoints testified to viewpoint-based discrimination in the accreditation procedures. Although many such groups were eventually accredited, it was only after a struggle and a congressional outcry, and it remains to be seen whether Beijing will issue them the requisite visas.

Finally, there was testimony that the tentatively approved conference documents may be designed not so much to address legitimate problems of the ill treatment of women as to advance a radical feminist agenda. We have heard about the absence of any favorable mention of family or motherhood. We heard doubts about whether the often repeated word "gender" is simply a reference to men and women, or whether it refers to a radical feminist theory of gender perspective, in which gender roles are socially constructed rather than inherent and God-given. And we heard about the refusal of those preparing the document to come out squarely against forced abortion or against abortion for the purpose of sex selection.

Today, we will hear from three Administration witnesses. We hope their testimony will help the subcommittee to understand the Administration's thinking behind the U.S. participation in the Beijing conference, in light of serious human rights violations, and particularly, the oppression of women by the Chinese government.

We also hope to get a better understanding of what the Administration believes our standard should be with respect to participation in the international conference in a nation which holds a U.S. citizen as hostage.

Finally, we hope to hear what official U.S. policy will be in respect to the important procedural and substantive problems that have arisen in connection with the conference; and these include, discrimination in the accreditation process against groups in Taiwan and Tibet, possible viewpoint-based discrimination against conservative and moderate women, denial of meaningful access to the conference to NGO organizations, and the failure of the draft document to endorse societal protection of the family or of motherhood, the failure of the document to define gender in such a way that it addresses the legitimate fears of those women who believe that it is being used as a code word for something other than the inherent characteristics of men and women, and whether the final document will clearly condemn forced abortion and sex selection abortion, or whether, on the other hand, it will endorse an international right to abortion.

Our first witness is Madeleine Albright, the U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations. She serves as a member of the President's Cabinet and as a member of the National Security Council. Ambassador Albright previously served as the research professor of international affairs and director of the Women in Foreign Service Program at Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. Ambassador Albright, we are very much appreciative to have you here. We welcome you and look forward to your testimony. I would like to yield to Mr. Lantos for any opening comments.



Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me say, I feel particularly fortunate this week to have the pleasure of being at hearings where remarkable women represent the United States. Yesterday, as a member of the joint subcommittees that held the Waco hearing, I had the great privilege of welcoming and praising Janet Reno, a remarkable public servant who has put to rest the notion that Waco was a government conspiracy, rather than the climax of the brutal life of a criminally deranged lunatic leader of a far-out cult that killed innocent children.

Today, I am delighted to welcome our most distinguished guest, Ambassador Madeleine Albright. She has upheld the sterling tradition of superb service of several previous U.S. ambassadors to the United Nations. I would argue that through her tireless and extraordinarily brilliant and eloquent efforts to defend and promote U.S. interests in that international body, she has acquired the most illustrious record of any U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in the history of that organization.

Certainly, as our top representative at the United Nations and head of the U.S. delegation to the U.N.'s Fourth World Conference on Women, she clearly is the U.S. Government's representative best qualified to discuss our concerns with respect to U.S. participation at the conference.

With the testimony of Ambassador Albright today, we are now having the hearing we should have had 2 weeks ago. Instead of highlighting the pros and cons of U.S. participation at the Fourth Women's Conference, the previous hearing bogged down in tedious discussion of some topics that the majority of member countries do not consider very significant issues. The salient points about the conference are, in my view, the following:

This is a U.N. conference, not a Chinese conference. The agenda and the procedures were agreed to by the member states of the United Nations, not dictated by the Chinese. I, personally, opposed the decision of the Bush administration to agree to Beijing as the site of the conference, but I recognize that it was the executive branch's prerogative to make that final decision.

To attempt to undo that decision at this hour would cause not only great difficulties for the conference organizers and a great disappointment for the thousands of women who are planning to attend, but we would be blamed, fairly or not, for doing irreparable harm to a conference that many women believe will galvanize the international community into meaningful action to advance the status of women.

Mr. Chairman, many countries share our concerns, and they have decided that the best option is to go to Beijing and engage in the most open forum possible under the circumstances. They will seek to gain broad press coverage for the conference, and they will try to engage in dialog with their Chinese hosts and thousands of Chinese citizens.

We, of course, all realize that the Chinese place severe limits on freedom of action. Our delegates intend to protest these violations of internationally recognized rights. However, they think, and I think, that our presence in Beijing and the presence in Beijing of a large gathering of non-Chinese from all over the world, and the direct relevance of the conference agenda for Chinese women, will

have profound repercussions on that very closed society. I do not think anyone would argue that the impact of the conference will be infinitely greater if the voices of American participants are heard. Our women will bring to the conference unparalleled commitment, expertise, experience, vision, and a passionate commitment to a free and open society.

Now, my record in the Congress over the past decade and a half rather clearly demonstrates that I do not believe in mollicoddling the Chinese. Not long ago, I led the fight which in large measure succeeded in preventing the Chinese from winning the right to host the Olympics in Beijing in the year 2000. There were few things that the Chinese wanted more desperately than the recognition and the reflected glory of hosting the Olympics in the year 2000.

My resolution, which overwhelmingly passed the House, and the parallel resolution introduced by Senator Bradley, which passed the Senate, played a significant role in denying the Chinese something they wanted desperately, the Olympics in the year 2000. When my resolution passed, I made it clear I had every intention of introducing a parallel resolution with respect to the Olympics in the year 2004 if Chinese human rights conditions do not dramatically improve in the meantime.

The most recent legislation I introduced in this committee regarding the private visit to the United States of President Lee Teng-Hui of Taiwan, passed unanimously and subsequently passed unanimously in the House of Representatives. Then the Senate urged President Clinton to allow President Lee to come to the United States so that he could give a speech at his alma mater, Cornell University. I took on the Administration, which I generally support, because I felt at the time, and I still feel, that the Administration's position was dead wrong in attempting to deny an alumnus of a distinguished U.S. university the right to make a private visit to his alma mater. I was very pleased that in the final analysis, the Administration yielded to the congressional demand that the President of Taiwan be allowed to visit Cornell. The Chinese, of course, went ballistic. Both of these actions scored direct hits against a despicable dictatorial regime.

Now, Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to you, let me say that your legislation has a fatal flaw in its logic. It assumes that the Chinese are anxious to have an articulate, free, vocal, powerful American delegation in Beijing during this conference. In my judgment, nothing could be further from the truth. There is nothing the Chinese would prefer more than for the United States to self-isolate itself from the global community, and while all of our friends and allies in the democratic countries will be represented by their women's organizations, our women as groups would be denied the privilege of attending this conference.

I am not certain of many things. As you get older, you get certain of fewer and fewer things, but I am convinced that the Chinese would love nothing more than your legislation to pass and to be implemented because that would remove from Beijing the single most articulate and significant voice for freedom, democracy, human rights, and women's rights.

Now, the two issues I mentioned, the denial of the holding of the 2000 Olympics in Beijing, and the granting of the visa to the Presi-

dent of Taiwan, one might argue are symbolic issues. But, a few weeks ago, along with a number of colleagues, and I think some of them are here on the platform with us, I was in the minority, in the very small minority, of members who voted to deny most favored nation treatment to China. That was a substantive vote. My good friend, Mr. Funderburk, and I worked together in trying to persuade our colleagues unsuccessfully that that is the policy we should adopt.

China sells us \$40 billion worth of goods. We sell China \$10 billion worth of goods. They have a \$30 billion trade surplus with us. They have no place to sell the toys and trinkets that we buy in such unbelievable quantities. That would have been substantive leverage on seeing to it that human rights, including women's rights, could be improved. But the majority of our colleagues and the Administration were on the other side; so, we lost on that issue.

The women's conference is a matter of enormous importance. It is not an issue solely in our hands to decide. The conference, obviously, will take place whether we are there or not. It is much too late to move it to another site, and no country is interested in moving it to another site. We will not have support if we launch a last ditch effort to change the venue. The Brits will go, and the French will go, and the Australians will go, and the New Zealanders will go, and the Danes will go, and the Dutch will go, and the Germans will go, and the Swedes will go, and everybody will go, except American women. By boycotting the conference, we would do the greatest damage to the group we wish to help, the women of the world who are still fighting for equal access to food, shelter, education, healthcare, job opportunities, and fundamental equality.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I wholeheartedly wish that the conference were to be held somewhere else, in a free city, in a free country. But the Bush administration made the decision that the United States would participate at this conference in Beijing.

I do not want to hear arguments about Harry Wu being in prison while we have that conference. Harry Wu is a friend of mine. Harry Wu is a hero of the human rights movement. But, there is no doubt in my mind that if Harry Wu were to testify alongside Madeleine Albright, given his whole public record, he would urge us to be there. He showed us with great courage that you sometimes need to go to China to make a point. He is making the point in a Chinese prison as we meet here. I want the women of America to make that same point as they express themselves articulately, intelligently, eloquently, powerfully, at the conference.

I want to wish all participants, and particularly, the chairperson of our delegation, Madeleine Albright, the best of luck in representing the values we share. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Funderburk.

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madame Ambassador.

I am ashamed that the United States of America is sending a delegation to the United Nation's Conference on Women. It is not surprising that the Clinton administration, which has declared itself to be the one true voice for women's rights, is promoting an agenda in the name of women in the most oppressive regime on the planet. This is a regime which has brutalized and enslaved its peo-

ple. It practices forced abortion and sterilization. We have heard first hand from Harry Wu and the victims of the Golden Venture, women forced into the sea because they would not submit to the destruction of the most innocent helpless humanity imaginable, their children.

Perhaps the true agenda of the Beijing Conference on Women mirrors what this Administration is really about. Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs, Tim Wirth, working closely with his right or left hand, if you will, Bella Abzug, and officials from the Departments of Education and HHS, has formulated several themes which he intends to promote at the Beijing conference. They range from expanding the definition of gender by declaring five new genders, male, female, homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual, as well as the promotion of the unratified CEDAW, Conventional Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, a treaty in which fathers and husbands are described as the primary abusers of women and children, and the promotion of an international quota system which mandates that all legislatures have women comprising 50 percent of their membership.

As I said earlier, it is shameful for the United States to be a participant in this conference at any place in the world, let alone Beijing. As a former ambassador to a harsh communist country, China, I know that China was recently described by Amnesty International as the world's most egregious violator of women's rights through forced abortion, rape and sterilization. Infanticide, the ultimate form of gender discrimination, is carried out daily by the Beijing regime to the tune of millions of innocent deaths every year. The result is a sex ratio in China which favors males over females by 64 percent.

A byproduct of this conference, perhaps the greatest outrage of all, is the carrot and stick approach that the U.S. delegation is using against developing countries. Either accept the gender feminist population control agenda of the U.N. WHO, or forget about foreign aid from the United States.

Mr. Wirth and his cohorts have violated every diplomatic decency and stopped at nothing to insult Catholic and Islamic governments around the world. Thanks to President Clinton, we now have a State Department working for the anti-family agenda of the United Nations. So, the next time you hear this Administration talk about family values and affirmative action, take a look at what they said and did at the U.N. Conference on Women and see how it stacks up.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that two letters and supporting documents, one submitted to me by the Reverend James Dobson, and one by Concerned Women for America, be included in the record.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection.

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Thank you.

[Materials submitted for the record appear in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Berman.

Mr. BERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to associate myself with the position of my colleague, Mr. Lantos, on this issue. Both he and Ambassador Albright will have, and will articulate, I

think, the compelling reasons for participation. I just want to make a couple of points.

I read your opening statement, Mr. Chairman. I guess I want to take issue with at least one thing that you state in there. You postulate in your recitation of the issues with respect to U.S. policy whether the final document will clearly condemn forced abortion and sex selection abortion, or whether, on the other hand, it will endorse an international right to abortion.

The opposite of condemning forced abortion and sex selection abortion is not an international right to abortion. It will be affirming the right of the abhorrent Chinese practices of forced abortion. To put those two in opposite positions, I understand may very well reflect your position. It is not the position of many of us. It is not the position of the majority of Americans. It undercuts the effort to call attention to the abhorrent practices that the Chinese government, and the government of its provinces, engages in forced and coerced abortion to proclaim that the choice is condemning that or affirming an international right to abortion. So, I just wanted to disassociate myself from that part of your opening statement because I do not think it reflects the polar opposites that you seek to imply in your statement.

Second, I do think, as we deal with the Chinese practices, the case needs to be made as to why withholding our participation in this conference, with all the negatives that Mr. Lantos has mentioned and that Ambassador Albright's statement speaks to, why the causes that we do share with respect to human rights practices and Chinese policies will be furthered by that absence. Why will Harry Wu's release be more likely because we do not participate? I think it is a more rigorous test than simply the statement.

On the issue of MFN, a closed issue, but I thought a very good case could be made that denying a country whose government engages in these practices the trade benefits that allow it to maintain a \$30 billion balance of payments, positive balance of payments with us, had a coherent relationship to Chinese practices. I do not understand why refusing to participate in this, in this particular conference would.

The third thing I would like to do is just introduce into the record a statement by human rights and women's organizations calling on the United States to work at the Beijing conference to protect women's human rights. It is dated July 25. It gives the reasons for its belief that we should participate. Its signatories are the leaders of some of the critical and most important, most objective, human rights organizations.

[Materials submitted for the record appear in the appendix.]

It includes the director of the Washington Amnesty International U.S.A., whose comment has been cited by several members here today. It includes the executive director of the International Human Rights Law Group. It includes the director of the International Campaign for Tibet, the International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet, the Tibetan Women's Delegation. It includes Xiao Qiang, the executive director of human rights in China. It includes some of the people who are dedicated, are the most dedicated, to trying to change the Chinese government's policy. They say we should participate in it.

If there is no objection, Mr. Chairman, I would ask that the statement by the International Human Rights Law Group and other supporters be included in the record of this hearing.

[Materials submitted for the record appear in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, it is so ordered. Mr. Salmon.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The People's Republic of China is an inappropriate home for a conference that purports to seek to improve the human rights of women. China has a sorry record on human rights that few countries can match for outrageousness, from coercive population control policies that target women and children, both born and unborn, to sex selection abortions that target women and children, to forced abortions which target women and children, to forced sterilizations that target men and women, while suggesting that children are a scourge to be eradicated.

These are horrendous policies that violate the norms of human decency. They are horrendous policies. At the same time, Chinese officials have shown their contempt for the very women hoping to participate in the conference. The imprisonment of American human rights crusader, Harry Wu, simply adds insult to injury. Yet, this Administration remains committed to be a part of this show for the Communist government in Beijing, the same government that is preparing one of its show trials for American Harry Wu. We must not reward China with our participation.

I am also disturbed by reports that the Administration hopes to use this conference halfway around the world to undermine the sanctity of motherhood in ways that it would not try to do within our borders. Were it not for this other agenda, I believe the Administration would recognize the terrible message that attendance would send to oppressors of women and men the world over. Yet, frankly, Mr. Chairman, I am not hopeful that we will be able to convince the Administration to come to its senses. After all, this is the Administration that remains committed to denying the Bosnian people the chance to defend themselves as they are being slaughtered.

Of course, press reports indicate that the First Lady has her bags packed for Beijing, ready as she is to push for an international fundamental right to terminate one's own child on demand and without apology. Let us not be a part of this travesty.

Finally, I think that those opposed to this position are overlooking a very critical, but elemental, part of the Chinese tradition. That is the aspect of saving face. Having lived in that part of the world for a couple of years myself, and having been a student of the Chinese culture, let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, how important it is to save face. If we send delegates from the country that denotes the bastion of freedom and human rights the world over, I would ask you this, does that not ratify the location? Does that not symbolize that we are accepting that China is, indeed, pursuing the same human rights that we are pursuing?

I would tell you that I do believe that there is an inability to understand what really makes the Chinese government tick, and their lust for power and control of the very people that they purport to serve. I believe that by sending a delegation, we are simply

ratifying, and we would do great harm to the cause we purport to improve. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Salmon. Mrs. Meyers.

Mrs. MEYERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are certainly two ways of looking at what the United States should do in relation to this conference in Beijing. Many people, even many people who are very supportive of women's rights, think that the thing that we ought to do is just boycott.

I thought about that, but I have come to believe that it is really important for us to have a presence in Beijing. Now, we may want to decide how high a level of conference delegates that we have, but the forces of oppression and the human rights abuses that take place in this world are certainly on the rise, and they do focus on women. The United States has always led the world in promoting human rights and working to prevent atrocities against women. That is why I believe that the United States should participate in the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, even if it is held in Beijing. Failure to do so would hand the foes of freedom a victory that I am sure a supporter of human rights would not really want to give them.

First, I would like to say, I wish it were not being held in Beijing. It would be much better if it were another location. I do not know a soul who does not feel that way. We did not choose the location. I believe the United Nations chose the location, and I think the reason for this was because it was Asia's turn for a U.N. conference, and no one else, at that time, wanted to host a conference. That is the reason that this conference ended in Beijing, which is probably not a good place for it.

I will not talk a whole lot longer. I am anxious to hear what the Secretary is going to say. I just wanted to say that I think that not going to the conference will not hurt the Chinese government at all. In fact, I believe that they would prefer that the United States boycott the conference. I am sure the Chinese government would deeply appreciate it if there were not an American delegation at the conference to call attention to China's horrific treatment of women and girls. If we do not go, this official U.N. conference will be dominated, or at least there will be a strong presence there, of countries who are the enemies of human rights and the supporters of oppression against women. That would be just fine with the Chinese communists, but I do not think it should be just fine with us.

If there were some way of moving this conference, I would strongly support it. I do not think it is possible at this point in time. There are 45,000 people going to this conference perhaps. But the outcome of this conference is extremely important to three billion people in this world. I believe that the U.S. delegation should have the opportunity to promote the rights of women at the major U.N. forum devoted to that cause. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mrs. Meyers. Madame Ambassador, your full statement will be made a part of the record, but you are invited to proceed however you like.

**STATEMENT OF MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT, UNITED STATES  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, to you and to the members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to be here to discuss with you the Administration's policy toward the Fourth World Conference of Women to be held in Beijing, China, beginning on September 4, and I am especially glad to have the opportunity to give you facts rather than have you be dealing with hearsay.

I will begin by explaining why the Administration believes our participation in the conference is important. Then, the leaders of the team negotiating the conference platform for action will be available to respond to your questions about the status of that effort. They are Melinda Kimble, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, and Ambassador Victor Marrero, who is our representative to the U.N. Economic and Social Council.

Let me begin, Mr. Chairman, by expressing my appreciation for the interest you have shown in this conference. Although we may have differences about some issues, we share a desire to improve the status of women around the world. On that basis, I hope we can find common ground on our approach to the Fourth World Conference.

As the leader of the American delegation to the conference, I am pleased to say that I expect U.S. goals will have strong support. These include promoting and protecting the human rights of women and ending violence against women, expanding the participation of women in political and economic decisionmaking, assuring equal access for women to education and healthcare throughout their lives, strengthening families through efforts to balance the work and family responsibilities of both women and men, and recognizing the increasing importance of NGO's. These goals are interconnected and at the heart of each is a commitment to the freedom of individuals to exercise control over their own lives.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent the better part of my life working for democracy. As someone whose family was driven from its home twice as a child, first, by Hitler, and then, by Stalin, I believe it is the responsibility of every free person to do what he or she can to advance the freedom of others, and I intend to see that our delegation to the Women's Conference serves as an unabashed advocate for freedom and human rights.

Now, I am well aware that there are some who say that we should withdraw from the Women's Conference in light of the human rights policy of the host country. Those suggestions are well motivated, but they miss the main point. American withdrawal would not stop the conference or cause it to be moved. It would lead, instead, to a conference in which 130 million American women would be unrepresented, and in which American influence and leadership would not be felt. It just does not make sense in the name of human rights to boycott a conference that has, as a primary purpose, the promotion of human rights.

The way to help women in China and elsewhere is not to abandon the field to others, but rather, to attend this conference, to debate the differences of philosophy that exist, to lay out before the world the abuses we want to halt, and to gain commitments to



change from the societies most in need of change. That is what leadership and a belief in free discussion are all about.

With respect to Harry Wu, our position is clear. He should be released immediately and unharmed. His case is a top priority for the United States. I can understand why some would want to tie conference participation to Mr. Wu's release, but that assumes falsely that our attendance would be some sort of favor to Beijing. We have no cause to believe that our approach to the conference will have any impact on China's decisions concerning Mr. Wu.

We do have reason, however, to hope that the conference will have a positive effect on the status of women in China. Conference preparations already have contributed to a heightened awareness within China of women's issues. There is public discussion of previously taboo subjects, including violence against women. Chinese women returning from the preparatory meetings have described their heightened sensitivity to the depiction of women in their own media and to the economic exploitation of women. It matters a great deal that more than 5,000 Chinese women will participate in the NGO forum and will take their impressions back to their communities.

Given the nature of China's human rights record, I do not mean to exaggerate the impact of this one conference. But as a former member of the Board of the National Endowment for Democracy, I know that one of the best ways to promote democratic thinking is to expose people to new ideas on matters that relate directly to their own lives.

The Women's Conference will contribute to a freer and more equitable world. As its recommendations are implemented, it will also strengthen families around the world. We know from our own experience that when families are strong, children are cared for, socially-constructing values are taught, and an environment is created in which civility and law may thrive.

We want momentum to build around the idea that women and men should share fairly the responsibilities of family life. We want to see girls valued to the same degree as boys. We want parents and prospective parents to be able to make informed judgments as they plan their families. We want to see domestic violence curtailed and condemned. Each of these is a central element of the conference draft Platform for Action, and effective action on each will help families and communities everywhere.

In this context, I note the recent letter of Pope John Paul II in which he expresses deep appreciation to the United Nations for its sponsorship of the Women's Conference. In the letter, His Holiness cites an urgent need to achieve real equality in every area, equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with respect to family rights, and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic state.

Mr. Chairman, in preparing for the conference, a great deal of progress has been made on key issues. It is inevitable, however, that in an effort to develop a final document, some differences will arise. For example, in light of the current budget constraints, the United States is wary of calls for developed countries to increase foreign aid. We are opposed to the view put forward by some that

men and women have rigidly defined roles that permit discrimination against women. We will block the introduction of extraneous issues, such as the U.S. embargo against Cuba. We are opposing statements inconsistent with our own traditions of free speech.

We will hold firm in Beijing to the commitments made at the 1994 U.N. Conference in Cairo regarding reproductive health and rights. We are determined that there be no stepping back from the principle ratified in the 1993 Vienna declaration that "The human rights of women and girls are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights."

Given the scope of the conference, it is also inevitable that in addition to differences of views, there will be differences of understanding. The draft platform for action is not, at this point, an artistic success. It is repetitive and it often uses a half a dozen words or paragraphs where one would do. It may be partly for this reason that some rather bizarre misunderstandings have arisen.

For example, some articles in the press have argued wrongly that the U.S. delegation is intent on redefining motherhood, fatherhood, family and gender. The document's call "for equal treatment for women" has been trivialized by the suggestion that it would require absolute statistical parity between men and women in every field of endeavor. Most incredibly, my office has been besieged by calls criticizing my alleged belief that there are five sexes, which is something that even Saddam Hussein has not accused me of in the past.

Just so we are clear, for more than two decades, the term gender has been used in U.N. documents when referring to the socially ascribed roles of the two, count them, two sexes. The contact group established to resolve this issue agrees that gender was understood as it has been used in the United Nations for 20 years, and it does not have, and may I say that again, does not have another broader meaning when used in the Platform for Action. In other words, gender refers to male and female.

Mr. Chairman, since the first women's conference 20 years ago, opportunities for women have expanded throughout the world. It is no longer a question of whether women from all countries will have a strong voice in controlling their destinies, but only when and how that goal will be achieved. Building inclusive societies is still a work in progress. The United States has been working on it for more than two centuries. For more than half of our nation's history, until 75 years ago this month, American women could not even vote. Many traditional or authoritarian societies still have a very long way to go. The Fourth Women's Conference will offer guidelines and promote commitments for every state to move forward whatever their current practices and policies may be.

Mr. Chairman, in preparing for this hearing, I happened to come across an old Chinese poem which struck me as relevant to much of what we are discussing here today. In the poem, a father says to his young daughter, "We keep a dog to watch the house, a pig is useful, too. We keep a cat to catch a mouse, but what can we do with a girl like you?"

For me, the Women's Conference will be a success if it brings us even a little closer to the day when girls all over the world will be able to look ahead with confidence that their lives will be valued,

their individuality respected, their rights protected, and their futures determined by their own abilities and character. In such a world, the lives of all of us, men and women, boys and girls, will be enriched. It is to make progress toward such a world that the United States will be participating actively, forcefully, and proudly in Beijing.

In that effort, we welcome the interest of this subcommittee and of all Members of the Congress, and we solicit your counsel and support. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Albright appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Madame Ambassador for your very comprehensive statement and for some of the words that I find reassuring in what you have told us today. I would like to ask you a few questions, and I will yield to my colleagues to questions that they might have.

The first would be, just to try to get a better understanding and maybe it is a bit hypothetical, but what would it take, in terms of human rights practices by a country, to cause the United States not to go to that country and participate? I happened to serve as chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the OSCE, as you know, has a very well-defined *modus operandi* when it comes to the conduct of conferences. Host countries must provide unfettered contact with the press. Their rights, the right of free speech, association, cannot be diluted. The problem that we have here, and this is why I have been arguing, I even said, "No conference." I have been arguing for quite some time to change the venue because already we here that there is going to be a major effort conducted by the Chinese to preclude contact with nationals in Beijing. You might speak to, if you would, what kind of advice you have given to our potential delegates and NGO's in terms of their contact with Chinese people in Beijing.

Would we be willing to go to a place—for instance, we canceled and would not participate in the Moscow Human Rights Conference precisely because of egregious human rights abuses in that country. The invasion of Afghanistan was certainly a major determinant in that case. It seems to me that we send a message that is very, very bold, and I think Mr. Salmon hit the nail right on the head when he talked about U.S. non-participation based on principle would certainly send a clear message, particularly as it relates to loss of face on the part of the Chinese.

They are going to try to circumscribe this conference. They are already doing it by moving the NGO forum, as you know, so far away from the main site. There was an article just recently in the Washington Post detailing how difficult it will be for that kind of interface that is so important when the NGO forum is held alongside the main forum. They have made that kind of interface and contact very, very difficult, and that is by design, I would submit.

But, again, getting to some of the key issues, I would like to ask, what would it take? Here, we have a country that forcibly aborts millions, not thousands, not hundreds of thousands, millions of its women every single year, forcibly sterilizes them. We had a hearing, and I wish Administration witnesses and folks had been here to hear it, of three women that the Clinton administration is going

to send back to the People's Republic of China, to the same people that are holding Harry Wu, and again, I wish members of both sides of the aisle would have been there, we had a few, but not the kind of numbers that I think were appropriate, to hear these women tell how they had been forcibly aborted as part of the routine enforcement of the one-child per couple policy.

One woman testified—she came in, by the way, in shackles by our own INS people, which I found outrageous. This poor woman, who is a threat to no one, came in with her hands bound. Right as she went to the door coming into the hearing room, the shackles were taken off. The point I am making is, this Administration is going to send those women back. They are excludable. When the asylum law was changed, and I find that frightening in terms of a woman's rights point of view—not even talking about the children any more. These are the women who have been victimized. They are going back to China.

This woman talked about how one of them, at 6 months, she was forcibly aborted. She went into vivid detail as to how they did it. And then, another woman testified that she picked up a child that had been abandoned, a little baby girl, picked her up off the street, essentially, and that was counted against the allotment of children she was allowed and she was told she had to be forcibly sterilized, and she became pregnant and was forcibly aborted.

These victims are going to be sent back. That is why when the wonderful talk in the document about women's rights and the rights of the girl child—and you are right. I agree. I am the father of two girls, two boys and two girls. I want them to have every opportunity humanly possible to go as far as their talents will allow, and I hope all women have that capability. It all reads very well, but then, when you have the reality of a dictatorship that oppresses its women so brutally, and this Administration sending these women back, which I find to be shameful and an abomination, and, again, they are excludable and they can go back any day now. The deeds do not match with the highfalutin, and I think, very laudable words that are contained, in many cases, in this document.

Iraq: would we go to Iraq and have a human rights conference? If this was 1938 or 1939, would we go to Nazi Germany and have a human rights conference? Maybe we would if we would speak out boldly in a country-specific way. But I am fearful that in the U.N. method, and I saw this in Cairo, myself, where Peng Pei Yung, who runs the one child per couple policy, was given the red carpet.

Yes, there was language in there talking about coercion, but when it is not country-specific, when voices are not raised in a way that says, "China, you are exploiting your women in the most cruel and degrading way humanly possible," they can sit back and say they agree with the consensus document because it does not apply to us.

So, if you could, about the actual place and some of these other issues, how our delegates might have been admonished not to do certain things, I yield to the distinguished ambassador.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Let me say that Beijing is not a place I would have chosen for this conference had the choice been up to me. I agree with Congressman Meyers as she describes the problems in-

herent in having this conference in Beijing. Also, she describes accurately the problems or the genesis of how the conference came to be in Beijing. To complicate it even further, even since 1992, there have not been other countries in Asia that have offered to take this conference on. So, that is one of the major issues. I think that those facts speak for themselves.

As far as judgments about where and when you hold conferences, I think that it has to be done on a case by case basis. One has to weigh the pros and cons of going to a particular place with the message that one needs to deliver. I happen to think that the presence of somewhere between 40,000 and 50,000 women in China, speaking their minds on all the subjects that you have raised and that I spoke about in my testimony, is something that is going to have a very loud resonance. That when we go there, holding our heads high and explaining fully what is important to us in all the various parts of human rights in terms of what we believe the role of women can and should be against abuses and against human rights generally, that we are sending a very strong message about how we want to have women treated and how we believe human rights should be pursued.

I think, in fact, that it is something out of which we should make a plus. This is an opportunity for us to make our voices heard very loud, and if we were not to go, which is truly hypothetical, I think, first of all, as I stated in my testimony, American women would be not represented at what is a once-in-a-decade conference, to set the standards and the bench marks for where we want countries to go. Then, an additional problem is that there are 7,000 to 8,000 women that are members of the NGO's that will go no matter what, and they would be there with no official tie to a delegation.

Now, on the technical problems, let me just say that we are dissatisfied with what we have heard thus far about the arrangements for the media, and I am making that a special point. I have talked, and will continue to talk, to the U.N. organizers to say that that is unacceptable, and I am going to take other ambassadors with me in doing that demarche. So, we are a month out. We are going to pursue that because we believe that there needs to be access by the media, also, on all the technical problems of visas and trying to make sure that there are no bureaucratic impediments. As a matter of fact, some of the American women participants in the last few hours, I guess, have gotten some of the visa and hotel rooms taken care of.

We do expect that there will be contact with the Chinese people. The truth of the matter is that people that are outside the conference site are in a foreign country, and they are, as whenever any American travels anywhere, subject to the laws of that particular country. But I think that it would be a major error if we do not go because we are not doing the Chinese any favor by going. We are going because we believe it is the right thing to do in representing American women, and thereby, showing leadership for women throughout the world about the proper standards.

Also, finally, obviously, not every word in that document is something, as it stands now, we are supporting. But the good words, those are standards that we are going to live up to, that we are

going to push toward, that we are going to try to get other countries to use as a measurement of their performance.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you. I have lead two human rights delegations to China, and like other communist dictatorships, whether it be Rumania, the Soviet Union, when it was the Soviet Union, and other countries that I have been to, they are very good at putting visiting delegates in a situation of, especially when they are the host, of getting us to look like we are acquiescent, perhaps speaking kindly of their regime. You will be in a situation after situation, I believe, the head of the Chinese delegation is Chen Mu Wah, who was the first minister in charge of the population control program in China. Peng Pei Yung will also be very active in this, and she is currently running the coercive population control program, again, the most cruel, in my view, and it is shared by many people who do not even share my views on the right to life issue, the cruelest exploitation of women in modern history, maybe in all of history.

Again, we saw, first hand, at this hearing, and I have seen people in the past who have suffered the degrading and horrible fate of being forcibly aborted by their government. Those women that were here just a few days ago breaks one's heart. One of the women who had the 6-month forced abortion could not even continue her testimony. She broke down and was sobbing. It was a frightful scene. She concluded it later, but it just tore her apart.

These are the people who run that terrible exploitation of women. You will be in a situation where toasts will be made. Again, I found out. I met with Li Peng face to face. They look for, with the cameras rolling, for Chinese propaganda purposes, for Frank Wolf and I to say things that could then be spun. We saw with Harry Wu how well they do that, you know, with the so-called confession that he is allegedly to have made with regards to his activities, which none of us believe. But, for domestic consumption, they are able to spin that into a tale of Americans love the Chinese. I am very fearful, however willing you will be to let them do this as head of the delegation, that there will be instances where that can be done, particularly with Chen Mu Wah, and others, who will be hosting the Chinese delegation. Again, they could not have a worst host, in my view, when you talk about the exploitation of women.

Will you, in those situations, raise the issues of forced abortion so that your words are not misused? Will you in a country-specific way, in the plenary session, in the debates that will take place in open debate in the main committee, speak out boldly and Chinese-specifically? Everyone can condemn coercive population control in the abstract, but there, in Beijing, like you would, and I would, and Mr. Lantos would, and others, if we were in Nazi Germany, condemn the Holocaust and the abuses of Jews and others in the country itself. Will you do that?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I think you are beginning to know me pretty well by now, and people in New York know me pretty well. I do not mince words. By my word, I will do my utmost to speak clearly about what the U.S. position is, and not to be used as a tool. I am not going there with the idea that I am going to

be charming. Some people even say I am not a good diplomat because I just tell it like it is, and that is what I plan to do.

If I might return to a point that you made about attendance at various events, in Nazi Germany, for instance, we did send a team to the 1936 Olympics, and a black man, Jesse Owens went, and won three gold medals, showing Hitler's Aryan Race ideas to be a lie. So, sometimes, there are reasons to go and prove a point.

Mr. SMITH. But, again, on that case, Mr. Lantos, and I joined him on this, felt that it would be inappropriate to give Olympics sanction to Beijing for the Olympics at the turn of this century.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. I am not suggesting that.

Mr. SMITH. I know you are not. But, again, just so I know, because I will be watching with bated breath, you will raise this country-specific role in China on forced abortion?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that. Let me ask one final question. I have others, but I will yield to my colleagues and come back for a second round. Your language in your testimony is encouraging with regards to gender and to the fact that the Administration is not pushing the right to abortion. I was very concerned when I heard that our former colleague had represented to an NGO forum something quite the opposite. I asked Warren Christopher directly about that. He said we were not pushing, and I have the verbatim transcript, abortion. And yet, we keep getting spins from some that would suggest otherwise. You seem to put that to rest in your testimony, as well as the fact that you are saying that gender means male and female.

Why cannot that be specifically laid out in the document? Is the contact group working to do that so that there is no ambiguity, no one can say or glean from language what they want to take from that so that there is no ambiguity?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. The truth is, I do not understand why there is ambiguity because I think nobody has talked about these five genders. That has truly been a red herring. I think it is hearsay and innuendo. It is simply not true. Gender refers to male and female, as has been the usage in documents in the United Nations since these things have been written. So, there should be no ambiguity on that.

Mr. SMITH. That will be clearly spelled out in the document?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, it is going to be stated as gender and people will understand what that is.

Mr. SMITH. But, my question is, why not spell it out so that you absolutely drive a stake in the heart of any of the ambiguity? You know, when in doubt, and we do this all the time here, put it into the language of the document so that no one can misconstrue any meaning.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. We will, obviously, do the best we can. What I would like you to do is to address that question to the next panel of people that are actually working on the day-to-day part of the document.

Mr. SMITH. Let me at this point yield to Mr. Lantos for any questions he might have.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. A lot of points have been raised, both by you, Madame Ambassador, and by

some of my colleagues. I will try to be very fast. The only item with which I find myself in disagreement with respect to your observations refers to your pledge that you will not be charming in China. Like my wife, you, too, even when angry, are charming. So, I do not think you will be able to live up to this pledge, but the others, I think you will.

I deplore the fact, Mr. Chairman, that despite my attempt to emphasize this at the outset, some of my colleagues on the other side seem not to understand certain facts. The agreement for U.S. participation at the Beijing conference unfolded during the Bush administration. So, your venom and ire is to be directed at George Bush, Dan Quayle, Jim Baker, and not Hillary Clinton. This irresistible urge to bash Hillary Clinton I find nauseating. There are few women in American public life during the history of our nation who have been as exemplary role models of what a mother and woman should be than the First Lady, a brilliant lawyer, a fighter for good causes from health to children, and indefatigable volunteer worker on behalf of the American people. So, I would like to urge my colleagues to refrain from Hillary-bashing because it turns our stomach. She is an outstanding woman, a fine wife, a great mother, and an outstanding volunteer public servant, and that is the way we view her. Now, you may not like that, which is your problem, but a public hearing, dealing with a U.N. conference, is not an appropriate forum at which to bash Hillary Clinton. She is not a witness. She is not the subject of this issue. She is dragged in every time because you think you score political points. You score negative political points. I find it revolting, and disgusting and inappropriate.

During the 4 years of the Bush administration, I never said a word against Barbara Bush. During the 8 years of the Reagan administration, I never said one word against Nancy Reagan. They were entitled to the respect due to the First Lady. I think it is high time some of my colleagues learn that it is inappropriate for a Member of Congress to drag in Mrs. Clinton and try to bash her.

Mr. SMITH. The chair would like to inquire, what specifically?

Mr. LANTOS. The record will show—

Mr. SMITH. I mean, I see a red herring developing right here with all due respect.

Mr. LANTOS. Well, when you see a red herring—

Mr. SMITH. The chair will just reclaim the time, please, for one brief second.

Mr. LANTOS. It is my time, but I will be happy to yield to you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, my friend, for yielding. I do not think you were even addressing your points to me, frankly, but to Mr. Funderburk.

Mr. LANTOS. I was not.

Mr. SMITH. But, in hearing what you are saying, I listened very carefully, and Mr. Funderburk raised serious questions about policy opinions that Mrs. Clinton very, very aggressively, and she has every right to do it, puts into the public domain. I do not think to raise opposition to those is bashing. I think that is part of the dialog that should be unfettered in all of our conversations and debates. So, I do not mean trying to make Mr. Funderburk out to be a basher, he was not bashing, in my view.



Mr. LANTOS. Well, unless I am dreaming, one of my colleagues on the other side referred to the First Lady as having her bags packed and ready to go. In the context, I do not think it was a bon voyage message. So, if I may continue, my colleague may react, if he chooses. I am happy to yield to you.

Mr. SALMON. I would appreciate that. I think many of your comments have been very forthright. Obviously, you feel them deeply. My comments as to the opinions expressed and the motives expressed by the First Lady are my opinions and I do not recant them. As a matter of fact, I think the First Amendment applies just as directly to us as it does to any member.

Mr. LANTOS. No one is bashing the First Amendment, if I may reclaim my time. Let me go on to my other points because there are many issues to be raised. We may be here a long time. We spent 10 days on Waco, so we might as well spend an afternoon on this.

I think it is important to separate the issues from the non-issues. The issue of human rights is not a subject of our discussion. I yield to no one in the Congress in my commitment to human rights. As the founding chairman with my good friend, John Porter of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, and as the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, my record is clear on human rights, as is my record with respect to my public denunciation since the day I arrived here of Chinese human rights violations, vis-a-vis Tibet, vis-a-vis women, vis-a-vis political dissidence, you name it.

I also think it is sort of obvious that we all reject with total outrage the forced abortions and forced sterilization of which this regime is so abundantly guilty, and we have done so publicly, you and I, Mr. Chairman, and others, through the years. That is clearly not an issue.

What is at issue is the fact that Beijing was signed off on by the Bush administration, the administration of George Bush, not the administration of Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton inherited the U.N. Women's Conference in Beijing. It was handed to him by the Bush administration.

But having settled that issue, I hope, once and for all, rather than posing for holy pictures, the question we need to ask is, is it in the interest of the United States, is it in the interest of human rights, in general, and is it in the interest of women's rights, in particular, for us to attend the conference? Now, it is clear from your testimony, Madame Ambassador, that you are convinced that it is in the American national interest for us to attend, and I fully share your view. Self-isolation in this context would be a totally counterproductive policy.

Second, it seems to me, the whole history of dealing with totalitarian regimes demonstrates, and I want to pay tribute to my good friend, Chris Smith, who has been an indefatigable fighter for human rights under very difficult circumstances, and I know he agrees with me, that our presence in totalitarian countries, either as private citizens, or as members of small congressional delegations, or, as in this case, a part of a major international conference, can only serve to liberate to whatever extent the constraints of a totalitarian regime.

That is why you and I and others visited Refuseniks during the Soviet regime. That is why we have visited prison in police states. That is why we have in countless instances made our presence speak volumes for our commitment to freedom and human rights. To assume that suddenly the presence of thousands of American women will be counterproductive I think is nothing short of absurd.

I have full confidence in the sophistication of Ambassador Albright, and under her leadership, of our delegation, that they will not be taken in by the ceremonial toasts of their Chinese hosts. This woman has handled the interests of the United States in a most difficult and hostile arena for a long time with extraordinary distinction. She ought to have no difficulty dealing with the Chinese hosts. You have my full confidence, Ambassador Albright, that you will do us proud.

Now, the spinning of the Harry Wu episode particularly tweaked my interest. The sight of Harry Wu squirming uncomfortably and obviously terrified as these Chinese police interrogators mentally tortured him has not brought much credit to China. I would like to see that Harry Wu tape run 24 hours a day so everybody could see it. It shows the police state techniques and tactics that some of us are so familiar with. So, do not worry that Madeleine Albright's statements will be taken out of context, or Madeleine Albright will be dazzled by a toast. She is far too wise, and intelligent, and a seasoned diplomat and statesman able to handle those things.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to return, perhaps, to the only new point, as we have discussed this issue ad nauseam and ad infinitum. The only new point that perhaps came out of this afternoon's observations, which was my basic point in my original statement, is that we should not kid ourselves that the Chinese want to exclude us from this conference. In their fondest dreams, they hope that you will prevail. In their fondest hopes, they are looking to a conference without Ambassador Albright and all the other effective and articulate American women who will carry the flag of freedom, and human rights, and women's rights proudly into the arena in Beijing.

So, while I have no doubt, knowing your sincerity, that your legislation is well-intended, as an old friend of yours, I make a plea that you reconsider that legislation because I am convinced that if it were to succeed, it would be totally counterproductive. The Chinese would love it, and the voice of freedom and decency would be crippled at Beijing.

Now, should your legislation pass, which in the present climate the chances of it doing so are considerable, the State Department, as I understand it, would have the expenses that they incur during the course of this conference deducted from next fiscal year's budget. I think this is an unfortunate and punitive measure, but should the measure pass, I will urge Secretary of State Christopher, and the President, and you, Ambassador Albright, to take that penalty because there will be few dollars in next fiscal year's State Department expenditures which will be as appropriately and effectively used than sending the expenditures to a group of articulate and able American women to the U.N. Conference on Women in Beijing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I obviously agree with what Mr. Lantos has said, but let me make an additional point. I know you are concerned about Communist China. I have spent my entire life studying communism, its effects, and its destruction. As I mentioned in my testimony, we came to the United States because my father was a Czechoslovak diplomat who sought asylum in the United States after the communists took over his country. I, in my academic career, have done nothing but study about communist systems, writing my dissertation and various other papers on the subject. Also, as I mentioned, I was a member of the Board of the National Democratic Institute of the National Endowment for Democracy, which are institutions having been set up by President Reagan as a way of dealing with communist societies by promoting our agenda. So, I could talk about this a long time, and I will try not to.

But, basically, there is nothing more destructive to communist societies than the introduction of alternative ideas. They find that the hardest thing to deal with. Believe me, 40,000 American women will present alternative ideas, ideas that are not controlled by any state; that will have a way of permeating that system in a way that other things cannot. And alternative sources of information, which is what democracy is about, is the only way to break through communist systems.

I think that, as Congressman Lantos says, this is money well spent. It is a way to make that system take cognizance of things that we believe in, basic human rights, the things that you are talking about, and I can assure you that we are going to go there and never forget that we are Americans who represent freedom and human rights. It would be doing a big favor to the Chinese for us not to show up in force with our message.

Mr. SMITH. Let me just clarify for the record before I yield to Mr. Funderburk, the legislation H.R. 2047 was mischaracterized by my good friend. He described an amendment that had been originally offered to the Foreign Relations Act, the Reauthorization Bill. The language in my bill, as offered, which probably will not have time, unfortunately, because of the crunch on the floor, to be considered, simply focused on accreditation, a very, very important point. We have been in this dialog, you and I, and others have been in dialog with you for several months, that there was a pattern of exclusion of pro-life type organizations. You have tried to mitigate some of that, some of the damage that was done by the United Nations. We know that the Chinese objected to Taiwanese and Tibetan women. Apparently, we joined in that consensus, and that is unfortunate. But accreditation is an extremely important part, and the visa issuance.

We have a member of this panel who was excluded from visiting China, Mr. Salmon, by the Chinese. They were going to deny a U.S. Congressman access, as they almost did to Mr. Wolf and me a year and a half ago, waiting until the very last day, and then, all of a sudden, saying, "Well, I guess you can come." That puts a number of these women, and I think it is 40,000 women from around the world, not just American women, I think that is what you meant by that comment, Ambassador Albright, 40,000 women from around the world will be going. If they can exclude certain people,

it becomes a conference of exclusion and not inclusion. And that is an extremely important point. That is why the legislation was offered, to try to have maximum impact, if we do, indeed, go to Beijing, rather than limiting those views that the Chinese dictatorship may find to be outside of what they deem to be permissible.

So, that is the main thrust behind it. The sense of the Congress language deals with forced abortion and things of that kind, but the operative language is one of access, both accreditation and the issuance of visas, and then, the Harry Wu case, which, again, I consider to be an extremely important one. Mr. Funderburk.

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not excel in pontification and put downs of my colleagues. I think "nausea" is the word. So, I am not going to waste your time in a partisan slugfest exchange. But, whether or not my colleague on the other side likes it or not, or believes it or not, I have the right, and Mr. Salmon has the right, to express our opinions, just like he does. And here is one of mine.

Based on my experience, I have a very low opinion of an international body that consistently turns a blind eye to tyranny, to murder, and to discrimination against women in communist countries. Maybe this is because dictatorships make up such a large number of that body. But the United Nations named, for example, Nicu Ceausescu, as the head of international youth, even though he personally raped women and murdered people in Communist Rumania. That is a great example for our children.

I do want to follow up on the Chairman's questions, three short ones. Have any Tibetan women's organizations been accredited? Have any organizations been accredited that represent the women of Taiwan? How do you explain the fact that the Catholic Campaign for Women is unaccredited, whereas the Catholics for Free Choice has been accredited, since you were praising the Pope's statements about this?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Correcting about the 40,000; however, 10,000 American women are equal to 40,000. You are right. They are 40,000 all told.

Let me state, on that whole issue of accreditation, we did, in fact, believe that the system was not working properly, and it was thanks to our pressure at the United Nations that the accreditation process was opened up, and a whole review process was begun, and very large numbers of new organizations were accredited. What is happening now is that, in addition,—first of all, we are expecting 3,800 official delegates from 185 countries to the conference. The United Nations is also making provisions for 30,000 NGO observers from 3,500 NGO-eligible groups. That is the largest number accredited to a U.N. conference of any kind.

Now, there were some that were not accredited, and we have continued to press on that. Some of them have not been accredited because they are political groups and not groups that address themselves to women's issues. One U.S.-based group that is Taiwan-specific, the U.S. American Taiwanese Women's Association, was accredited, and one of the Board members of this group is a prominent senator from Taiwan. So, we have pressed on that.

On the Tibetan issue, they believed that those that applied had a political agenda that was not really relevant to the purposes of

the conference. I do think that the women-specific agenda groups, we have pressed very hard on.

If I might take a minute to clear something up about why we associated ourselves with what happened in Geneva on the ECOSOC issue, this is something that comes to my mind, but it was of great interest generally. We wanted very much to make sure that Freedom House was accredited as an ECOSOC NGO organization. While these are two very separate issues, they were being dealt with specifically together in the Geneva ECOSOC meeting, and our decision to accept the chair's compromise had to do with the fact that we were able to get an awful lot of votes and Freedom House is now accredited. It is something that we are very proud of. So, this was an issue where we could not separate those two voting issues. I think you understand how legislative operations work.

Let me just say, Congressman Funderburk, that I think that the United Nations, on the whole, is an organization that we are pressing very hard in to make sure that democratic values are pursued. That does not mean that there are not mistakes made occasionally, but I do think that we work very hard through that organization to make sure that there is a democratic approach to issues. I did not know about Nicu Ceausescu. But I truly do think, you know, you spent your time in Rumania. You know how it is that one tries to pierce the communist systems. That is why I think this is an important place for us to be.

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Did you have an answer on the Catholics for Free Choice?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. On the Catholics for Free Choice, I have just been told, their application was not complete. This is another part of the problem, and I hope that you will address this to Ambassador Marrero, who has spent a great deal of time on this. What really happened on a number of these applications was that they had not filled out the forms properly, or there were specific problems, and we went back to a lot of them. I think he is going to be able to answer that for you in very specific detail.

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. The Chair recognizes the distinguished chairman of the full committee, Mr. Gilman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I regret I have had to go back and forth, but I want to welcome Ambassador Albright, once again, and I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for continuing the hearings on this important issue, the Beijing Conference on Women.

Ambassador Albright, if we do send a delegation, and if we really want to send a strong message to the PRC, can we include Ching Lee Wu, the wife of Harry Wu, on the U.S. delegation?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. We will take it into consideration. Our delegation is in the process of being formed. I think we have a suggestion I had not heard before.

Mr. GILMAN. I think it would be an important symbolic gesture, and I hope you will take it into serious consideration.

Recently, some of the organizations that were denied accreditation seemed to finally receive accreditation. To what do we attribute that? Is it just bureaucratic incompetence or is it some factor that has come into play?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. It is our hard pushing.

Mr. GILMAN. I hope you push even more.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. May I truly say that this is an issue that we have worked very hard on at the United Nations, at our U.S. mission at the U.N. Ambassador Marrero specifically has devoted a great deal of time to this issue because we believe that the process was an inadequate one. We made sure that it was reopened, that the review went through, and we have done, I believe, and I think you have just corroborated that, a remarkable job in trying to, in opening it up and making sure that the accreditation process has moved more swiftly.

Mr. GILMAN. Ambassador Albright, is there a pattern among the organizations that are being denied accreditation? Is there some common thread?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, I think, and, again, I ask that you re-ask this of Ambassador Marrero, who really has dealt with this in some detail, I think part of it was that applications were not complete; part of it was that some groups were not groups that had an agenda of women's rights, but more specific political agenda; and there is no doubt about the fact that there were groups that were Taiwan- and Tibet-specific that were not women's groups, but more political agenda. That, I would imagine, are the threads.

Mr. GILMAN. Ambassador Albright, is it fair to say to the Chinese government, "If you want to sponsor an international conference, particularly a conference on the rights of women, you are going to have to play by certain internationally recognized rules, at least for the 2 weeks it takes to hold the conference, and one of these rules is that the host nation should not be violating the internationally recognized human rights of people who come to attend and observe the conference, including rights of freedom of speech and freedom of religion." Have we said that, or can't we say that, to them?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, we have a number of times said to them that they have the responsibility of host country, and that we expect them to behave as good hosts.

Mr. GILMAN. I am just looking at an article here that says, "The United Nations bars 11 groups from the meeting. A U.N. agency, acting on objections from Iran and China, barred 11 activist groups yesterday from attending the world conference." Are you aware of that list?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. May I ask you what the date of the article that you are—

Mr. GILMAN. It is Saturday, July 22, in the Washington Times.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. That, Mr. Chairman, has to do with the—I can explain this more specifically than I did to the Chairman and Congressman Funderburk as to what happened. This has to do with what happened in Geneva with ECOSOC. There were two NGO accreditation issues pending before the 1995 substantive session of ECOSOC held in Geneva in June.

The first was to finalize the list of NGO's accredited to the U.N. conference, and the second was to take actions on the applications for permanent accreditation to ECOSOC of another set of groups, including Freedom House. The U.S. government viewed these as two separate issues, though many other delegations did not. For those groups seeking accreditation to the world conference, the U.S.

delegation's priority was to accredit the maximum number of NGO's that were relevant and competent within the meaning of a General Assembly resolution which lays out very specific guidelines on accreditation.

What happened was the following. The chairman of ECOSOC proposed a compromise solution under which 748 of the 759 groups recommended by the United Nations would be accredited, including several that had been opposed by China. The United States accepted the compromise, understanding that under the agreement, 11 NGO's would not be accredited, but that the additional groups would bring the total number of NGO's eligible to send observers to more than 3,500; as I said earlier, the most ever for a U.N. meeting.

ECOSOC took no action on a second list of 267 NGO's that the United Nations had not recommended for accreditation, including 67 groups from the United States. The decision, and this is the compromise, to accept the chair's compromise on the world conference accreditation issue allowed the U.S. delegation to pursue vigorously its second key objective at ECOSOC, securing the permanent accreditation to ECOSOC of Freedom House, one of the most important human rights related NGO's in the United States. This objective was also realized when, in fact, Freedom House was accredited. So that, while we saw it as separate, they were looked at together. That is a long explanation, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Are the Tibetan women still precluded from going?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Yes.

Mr. GILMAN. Are we going to try to get them in to this delegation?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. No, the process is now closed.

Mr. GILMAN. It is closed permanently?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Yes.

Mr. GILMAN. Is Mrs. Clinton going to be going to the conference?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. That has not been decided, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Ambassador Albright.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. I recognize the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Moran.

Mr. MORAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I remember, at the last meeting we had on this conference in Beijing, I suggested that we really needed to hear directly from Ambassador Albright. I am sure others made the same suggestion. I appreciate the fact that in the interest of fairness, we are having an opportunity to get the perspective of the government and our representative to the United Nations. I think it has been a very valuable perspective.

Thanks to my friend to the right here, I do not need to say much more about defending the First Lady's honor. I think you pretty well took care of that issue very well, Mr. Lantos, and I am glad you did.

I do not need to underscore the fact that this is a conference that was planned 4 years ago by President Bush and Secretary of State Baker. Certainly, the abuses that we have talked about occurring in China were occurring at that time. They were, certainly, very much aware, President Bush, having served as ambassador to China. Is that not right? Was he not ambassador to China?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Yes.

Mr. MORAN. So, President Bush was, certainly, particularly well aware of these abuses that were, in fact, occurring in China then, as they are today, undoubtedly, although, perhaps, you may make a case that they may not be occurring as often or in an as extreme a fashion as they were when President Bush was ambassador to China. But, nevertheless, I know that human rights are being abused in China. But, it was President Bush's considered opinion, as well as Secretary Baker's opinion, that this conference should proceed in Beijing. So, I am glad that you made that point, Mr. Lantos.

I guess I need unanimous consent to put something in the record?

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, it will be included.

Mr. MORAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. This is actually the critique by Catholics for Free Choice of the draft Platform for Action. I thought it was interesting. You might find it provocative, but I am glad that we will have that on the record as well for a balanced perspective.

[Materials submitted for the record appear in the appendix.]

I did not support your resolution, Mr. Chairman, H.R. 2047, because it laid out criteria that it is clear could not be met by China. As a result, if those criteria are not met in your amendment, in your bill, it said that we could not participate. Well, it seemed as though that was really the ultimate objective of the legislation, that we would not participate.

I do not think that that is fair to the women that we have been talking about. For us not to participate does nothing for all these women who clearly do not have anywhere near equal rights in China, whose human rights are being abused, whose control of their own bodies and lives has certainly been taken from them by a totalitarian regime. So, I would hope that we could agree that we really ought to do everything we can to improve the lives of these women, and to stand aside and to ignore China and ignore what must be 500 million women at least that live in China, more than in any other nation, seems somewhat irresponsible and inconsistent with our concern. I know you have a very deep concern over the human rights of those women.

Sometimes, God works in strange ways. I know that it was not politically correct for the United Nations to choose Beijing. In retrospect, perhaps, they might not have. But, the fact is, as Ambassador Albright has said, there is nothing more powerful than the power of an idea. We are going to have thousands of the most articulate women, and some men, as well, over there voicing ideas that are bound to influence the attitudes of the people who live in China. My guess is that China will never be the same, and that it will be the Chinese government who will rue the day that they invited the conference to come to Beijing because those ideas will have a resonance, and they will stay there in China long after the conference has departed.

So, I am pleased that we are going to have an opportunity to shape things up in China. I think that is exactly what is going to happen. I am pleased that our government has stood firm in making clear that we will fully participate, even to the possibility of the



First Lady, who is certainly one of the, if not the most eloquent spokesperson for women's rights in this country today.

Let me just ask the Ambassador, because this is supposed to not be a soliloquy here. It is supposed to be a question and answer session. Let me ask a question of the Ambassador. Is the Holy See, the Vatican, going to participate? They made a decision to participate?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. That is, yes, Congressman Moran, they are going, and His Holiness did, in fact, address himself to the issue in a letter, which I think you are probably familiar with. So, they are going. I met with Cardinal O'Connor not long ago in New York. We spoke about the importance of the conference and the agreements specifically that were reached in Cairo on reproductive questions. So, I think they are supporting it, and they will be there.

Also, our delegation will be varied in terms of being able to have people, Americans, including men, who will be representing a wide variety of geographical places, and different professions, and different interests, so that we can deal with various issues that will come up. So, we will look like America, our delegation. We will speak with one voice because that is what you do as an official delegation. We will be representative, and we obviously look forward to exchanges with other delegations.

If I might just add here, it is just, it is interesting. President Bush, actually, will be in China during the time of the conference on some private business, as I understand it. We hope very much that Members of Congress will, in fact, join us in China at the conference. It is also my understanding that members from both sides of the aisle are going, several of them, to China, during the August recess period.

So, we do think that it is important for Americans to be there, and to carry the message. So, I think, I agree with you, Congressman Moran, that it could be that the Chinese will rue the day.

Mr. MORAN. And, in fact, at our insistence, there will be thousands of non-governmental organizations, spokespeople, from all sides of the political continuum, who will fully participate. They will really not have as much of a voice if the U.S. Government was not going to be there, as well.

So, in conclusion, I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we ought to defer to the Pope's judgment, if not on all things, at least on his judgment that we ought to fully participate in this conference. I would hope that we would not raise any further objection, but be as supportive of the opportunities this conference provides to us, as the Pope, obviously, views it to be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Moran. I have been advised by—

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, may I make one comment? I think here, generally, about relations with China, I think we know that it is very important for us to engage with the Chinese. We are not at a time in our history where we wish to have bad relations with them or to have a containment policy. We do think we need to engage. We have some serious differences, and the differences are on human rights, and on nuclear proliferation, and on various trade issues. But we need to engage with them, and are going there, and your going there in various roles, I think, is very important. We need to engage with them.

Mr. SMITH. Madame Ambassador, your staff has advised us that you have to leave very shortly. I know that our two remaining have not asked questions, but if they could keep it brief. I apologize to both members, but the note just came up that you have to be at the White House.

Mr. SALMON. So we do get a chance, I will try to get to my question quickly. I feel compelled a little bit to defend my honor. But, since we have heard from the other side what nauseates them, let me tell you what upsets my stomach. It is the seemingly unquenchable desire of someone on the other side to put a party label on this problem. Perhaps those on the other side have forgotten, this member has conceded in past meetings that the previous Administration did make a bad decision in the conference location. But that is not the issue today. The issue is, "Where do we go from here?"

I came with a new breed of politicians in this freshman class who are more interested in solving the problems of the day than to place blame retrospectively. So, frankly, I think the issue is, "Where do we go from here?" Yes, I will say it. If you want me to flog myself, I will do it, too. The previous Administration made a bad decision. Where do we go from here and how do we make the best of a bad situation?

Madame Ambassador, I have one question. I read that the State Department has cautioned women who are going to the conference against bringing a Bible to China, and cautioned them against group prayers in their hotel rooms. Are either of these reports accurate, and if they are, are you outraged that our government would tell its citizens that they might want to think twice before taking a Bible to a U.N. conference?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Congressman, let me put this into the proper context. The Administration has consistently asserted that internationally recognized rights of freedom of expression and religion set out in the universal declaration of human rights must obtain, within the conference site, for all participants for the conference. This is important so that the conference can, in fact, be a success. This is about human rights, and we have every expectation that this will be the case.

We cannot predict how Chinese authorities will react to activities or demonstrations outside the conference site that would be prohibited if carried out by Chinese citizens. We have been assured, however, that there will be no problem when there are religious materials brought in for personal use. So, those participants who wish to bring their Bibles or other religious effects can do so. It is more a matter, I think, of having outward demonstrations off the site.

Mr. SALMON. Madame Ambassador, I just might suggest there might be some really good ideas in that book, on human rights and women's rights, that maybe we can share with the Chinese. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Mrs. Meyers.

Ms. MEYERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that one of the most revealing trips that I have taken since I was a Member of Congress was one that was an OSCE trip, and it was to Berlin, and we went behind the Iron Curtain before, you know, when the cold war was still at its height. I think East Germany was maybe one of the most oppressive of those satellite countries. We were allowed

to meet with people as long as it was in their living room, as long as it was a small group, and it was not a public place.

So, we did meet with individuals, and we met with a few church leaders. They did hold church services, but if East German citizens went to church, it was a black mark against them at their job. It was very oppressive. So, of course, the church groups were very small. There was a rabbi that was there from the Midwest who was allowed very limited contact with people. It was an absolute revelation to me of what it was like to live in a country that was so oppressive.

Well, I think we did a little good. We offered a little support, and encouragement, and information, which those people wanted very badly. I think all of the congressional delegations that went behind the Iron Curtain did some positive things. I think when Mr. Smith and Mr. Wolf went to China recently, it was probably a very positive thing. I think, if they conveyed to the leaders the importance that we attach to human rights, if they offered support and encouragement to the Chinese citizens with whom they came in contact, I think that was a very good thing, and I am sure Mr. Smith and Mr. Wolf did that. If they can do that, just think what 100 to 120 American women can do. I do think that China might never be the same. I appreciate your being here.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mrs. Meyers. You know, part of, and this is the experience of having been in China and just following Chinese human rights problems for the past 15 years, some of the people with whom I met with, from Wei Ching Chung to Bishop Shu, were arrested simply for meeting with us. John Shattuck, our Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, met with Wei Ching Chung 2 weeks after I met with him and he has been in incarceration ever since. That is part of the problem that I feel. However unwitting and how inadvertent, some of the contact that our own people may make with the Chinese, they may not like what we do, and they may face a very severe punishment, particularly if there is any kind of corroboration on some of these issues.

Madame Ambassador, you are clearly one of the most articulate members of this Administration. I will be looking forward to hearing you, in a very country-specific way, speak out against the cruelty of forced abortion in China, itself, while in Beijing. I think you have indicated that you will do that.

Again, I hope you will take back to the White House the clear and unmistakable message that the women that this Administration is poised to send back will go back to their oppressors. I wish you had been here, and sat here, and saw those women, with tears in their eyes, recounting the barbarity that they suffered at the hands of the Chinese, and you will be meeting face to face with the architects of those programs, as I have. I met with Peng Pei Yung. She says there is no coercion there. It is a lie. I know you do not buy into the big lies, nor do I. So, I hope you will, in the boldest way possible (because, obviously, you are going and the Administration is sending a delegation), while in Beijing speak out, and I will be waiting, as will many other members, to hear your ringing statements on human rights in China while in China. Thank you very much.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me thank you for holding this hearing, and let me specifically also thank Congressman Meyers for your support and for the great leadership that you showed on the Women's Caucus International Task Force. I think it has been very important to all of us, and we are very grateful.

I hope very much, Mr. Chairman, that this hearing has been useful in terms of giving some facts. I hope very much that you will consider money well spent and that you will let us go because we want to go, and we want to go with your support.

Mr. SMITH. Again, I know you are late, but would you say that the legislation that was pending had any laudable effect in trying to help bring about some of this accreditation and, hopefully, on the visa issue, because, again, part of what I have tried to do is to open up the process. I find it to be outrageous that a host country could put pressure.

Let me just say to my good friends, the Chinese lobbied very hard for this. Some of the countries, the Third World countries and others with whom I have contacts with, told me just how hard they lobbied for this, how they wanted it. Hopefully, we will not allow them to paint a Potemkin village to their own populous by having one situation after another where it looks like the Chinese government and their policies, vis-a-vis, women, are being touted and lauded when they have one of the cruelest and more barbaric policies toward women on the face of the earth.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I think often pending legislation is helpful. Passed legislation often is not.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much. Thank you for appearing before us today.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. I do think you generated a lot of good discussion. So, I thank you very much, and I will be happy to report to you when I get back.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Madame Ambassador.

I would like to welcome our second panel to the hearing by the subcommittee, and again, thank Ambassador Albright for her testimony.

Victor Marrero is the U.S. representative on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Mr. Marrero graduated from New York University in 1964 and received his law degree from Yale Law School in 1968. He has previously held several positions in Federal, State and city governments.

Melinda Kimble is Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Economics from the University of Denver. Ms. Kimble joined the Department of State in 1971 and received the Department of State's Meritorious Award honor in 1979.

Mr. Marrero, whoever would like to go first, please proceed. Your full statements will be made a part of the record.

**STATEMENT OF VICTOR MARRERO, UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. MARRERO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am the U.S. representative on the United Nations Economic and Social

Council, which oversees the work of a Commission on the Status of Women, a U.N. body that has overall jurisdiction for the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women.

During the past year, I have worked actively and closely with officials from the U.N. Secretariat, as well as representatives of other governments, concerning preparations for this conference. Drawing upon my experience at the United Nations, I have participated in many of the meetings of the leadership of the conference, also known as the Bureau, and I have offered guidance and direction to other members of the U.S. delegation of the Fourth World Conference concerning applicable U.N. procedures and processes.

During these and other meetings, I have helped to shape the format and structure of the conference, and have participated in the resolution of some of the knottier, substantive, procedural and logistical issues that have emerged. For example, I was the U.S. delegate on the contact group established to resolve the question regarding the use and meaning of the word "gender" in the conference's draft Platform for Action. I was also involved in many of the negotiations regarding accreditation of NGO's to the conference, and in discussions regarding the format for negotiating sessions in Beijing.

More recently, I have been part of the negotiating team for the Platform for Action. During informal negotiations held this week in New York, I was the designated head of the U.S. delegation, and have been concentrating effort and offering overall guidance to the human rights contingent that is headed by Ambassador Geraldine Ferraro, the U.S. Representative on the U.N. Human Rights Commission.

I am pleased to answer any questions that you might have. Perhaps, Ms. Kimble can read her statement.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Marrero appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Ms. Kimble.

#### **STATEMENT OF MELINDA L. KIMBLE, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Ms. KIMBLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Melinda Kimble, and I serve as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Global Issues in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. In this capacity, I am one of the principal U.S. negotiators for the U.N. Fourth World Conference's main document, the Platform for Action. My work has focused primarily on the economic issues in the draft platform, although I have worked very closely with Ambassador Marrero in developing the overall U.S. negotiating strategy.

The Platform for Action has been produced through a number of consensus-oriented negotiations, with 185 member states participating. It has its roots in the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, the document adopted by the Third World Conference on Women held in 1985. This platform, drafted by the U.N. Secretariat for the World Conference, now includes ideas that emerged from five re-

gional U.N. meetings held during 1994 in Indonesia, Argentina, Austria, Senegal, and Jordan.

It is far from complete, nor is it tentatively approved. It is very much a work in progress. Our top priorities for this platform, as Ambassador Albright spelled out in some detail, include reaffirmation and recognition of the human rights of women, including actions to end violence against women, a lifespan approach to health and education for girls and women, and the need to balance work and family responsibilities of both men and women.

We are also seeking to encourage more access to economic opportunity for women, and recognize the importance of non-governmental organizations as partners in building strong communities and inclusive societies. It is also important, as Ambassador Albright spelled out, that we seek to encourage the full participation of women in political and economic decisionmaking.

In March and April I took part as a negotiator in the final preparatory meeting for the world conference. At this meeting, delegates moved forward on a significant portion of the document, leaving some 30 to 35 percent of the language remaining to be negotiated, but changes and revisions could continue to occur right up to the adoption of the platform in Beijing in September.

I have been in New York much of this week, and will be returning, as informal negotiations are currently underway to reach agreement on a number of platform issues, particularly in areas where previously agreed language is being used. We are making slow, but steady, progress.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Kimble appears in the appendix.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much and I have some questions I will pose, and other I would like to submit for the record, and hopefully, you can get back to us and we will keep the record opened for those answers.

There was a Washington Times report that I am sure you have seen which had some confusing news about the role of the word "universal" as a modifier to the phrase "human rights" and how it relates to abortion. Earlier today, and as you well know, Ambassador Albright made it very clear that the United States has not sought, does not seek, and will not seek to establish any international right to abortion. And yet, we get this confusion again and again.

Can you tell us what impact "universal" has, and is anyone suggesting that "universal" somehow includes the right to abortion?

Ms. KIMBLE. Absolutely not. In fact, the whole question about the discussion of what one might call "universal human rights" revolves around the concern in the international human rights community that, by calling human rights universal, you are suggesting there are some human rights that are not universal.

The United States has consistently argued, and encouraged the term, "all human rights and fundamental freedom." As a second option, we prefer, "internationally recognized human rights." We believe this should be used in the context that we see in the universal declaration of human rights where it is spelled out that all human rights are universal in nature. This is very technical, but I think it is very important. We are negotiating in six languages, which

complicates our work many times at the United Nations. When we refer to the broad scope of human rights, we want to be sure they are not limited.

Mr. SMITH. OK.

Ms. KIMBLE. The only comment, the only issues related to abortion in the document are two. One is forced abortion, which we clearly condemn, and we want spelled out as an abuse, and basically, a human rights abuse. The other is in a context where states permit legal abortion, abortion should be safe. That is the only issue. It is an issue that came out of the Cairo Conference, and that is a health-related reproductive health issue, and those are the only two areas where abortion comes into the document. Thank you.

Mr. MARRERO. Mr. Chairman, if I may, on the same question, I would point out that the statement you made regarding this issue actually derives from a speech that Vice President Al Gore gave at the Overseas Press Club in the wake of the preparation for the Cairo Conference in August of last year. He repeated the same statement in Cairo, and I believe, Mr. Chairman, you were at that conference, and heard the Vice President's own words stating the policy of this Administration, that we do not seek the recognition of an international right to abortion. We did not do so in Cairo and will not do so in Beijing.

Mr. SMITH. We appreciate that because there were some places within the Administration, and you may agree or disagree with this, but I have and you have seen it, I am sure, many times the State Department cables that have been sent out before one of the Prep Comms for Cairo that made it very, very clear that the international right to abortion was being promoted and pushed. Undersecretary Wirth had made that clear at NGO forums, and was pushing the so-called choice issue, and Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, herself, at a forum which was the genesis of the question I had asked to Secretary Christopher, we had someone who actually heard her say it, that they were pushing "choice". Then, she was asked to define what "choice" meant, and she said, "abortion."

So there are some voices within the Administration that were giving conflicting and alternative perspectives on this so-called international right. So, to hear it from the highest echelons, from Vice President Gore, Madeleine Albright, and Secretary Christopher, and yourselves, is reassuring that there will be no chicanery when it comes to this important question.

Mr. MARRERO. Well, we give you our assurance, Mr. Chairman, as the two lead negotiators on this issue, that that is not on our agenda. We do not take instructions on this issue from anyone in the government contrary to the policy expressed by the Vice President, who has already stated his position on this issue, and that of the President himself. So that is the policy of this delegation.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that. Let me ask you, Section 30, on page 13, contains virtually the only language in the document praising the family as the basic unit of society, the critical role that women play in the family, and the importance of both parents in the upbringing of children, yet Section 30 is bracketed in its entirety. Can you explain why, and also, perhaps give us an insight as to the U.S. position on that?

Ms. KIMBLE. Well, first of all, I think it is important to realize that many delegations do not bracket in opposition. They bracket to ensure clarity, or they bracket because they want to go back to something and be sure that the language used is exactly the language that they want in the paragraph.

Paragraph 30 and paragraph 31, I would say, are paragraphs that we are supporting. We want to work out these paragraphs and inclusion of these ideas as a key component of the global framework. We think they are important for women everywhere. We did not bracket these paragraphs, but I want to reiterate that we think the ideas here are important. We are working with other delegations to remove the brackets. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that. In Section 1071, page 39, language supporting the role for parents in the health services that their daughters receive is bracketed, and the same is true in Section 1071[m], 108[e], and many other sections. In each of these cases, the parental role advocated in the bracketed language is a limited one, not an absolute or an authoritarian one. But, even so, this parental rights language ended up bracketed. Can you tell us why?

Ms. KIMBLE. Yes. In dealing with the parental language, the delegations agreed that they wanted to decide where it should be placed. The brackets are there as a holding action until all the delegations agree on the best place to use it. But it will be in and it will reflect accurately the agreement, similar agreements on this language reached in Cairo.

Mr. SMITH. Let me ask you, earlier today, again, in her testimony, Ambassador Albright said, and I just briefly quote, "The contact group established to resolve this issue," talking about the gender issue, "agreed that gender was understood as it has been used in the United Nations for 20 years. It does not have any other meaning when used in the Platform of Action. In other words, gender refers to male and female." Is that going to be explicitly explained in the document again, because we keep getting this feedback from feminist authors, lecturers, and other people, that there are these "five genders". We are not making that up. I have read it in some of the textbooks. I have seen the background for it. We would hate for someone to misconstrue the language in the document. Why not spell it out? I mean, Justice Scalia admonishes Congress all the time to be specific. "Don't leave any ambiguities in legislation." Hopefully, this can be nailed down absolutely in the document.

Mr. MARRERO. Mr. Chairman, the contact group that was formed to discuss that issue agreed that in order to resolve it, there would be a statement by the chair of the conference setting forth the understanding of the conference's meaning and use of the word. The statement that was proposed is, as so many things in the public domain in international and national affairs, a compromise between those who wanted to have a very detailed, specific definition in the document itself, and others who did not want to engage in a long protracted philosophical debate trying to define one word in a document of over 100 pages.

The compromise that was agreed to essentially keeps the essence of what we all intended and understood, which is that there is no new meaning, no new nuance to the word from that which had al-



ways been understood in the context of U.N. documents. In over 20 years of use of that word in U.N. documents, it had never been understood to mean other than two sexes, male and female. We had never heard of a controversy or allegation that the word meant five sexes. And the chair's statement that was drafted, in essence, acknowledges that there was no such understanding before and none in this document. Again, it is a compromise that was reached, and we think that it keeps the understanding and the essence.

Mr. SMITH. You said "the long definition." What were the other definitions that were put forward?

Mr. MARRERO. There was a long debate as to whether the definition should be based strictly on biological distinctions, or whether it should make reference to socially constructive roles of men and women. Both of those points of view had their supporters, and obviously, their opponents. Because there could not be a consensus on those two diametric points of view, it was agreed to keep, again, the principle of the understanding without getting into specifics on either side of the question.

Mr. SMITH. Again, that is precisely the ambiguity that we are concerned about. You are making my case and the case of those of us who want this defined in the most definitive way possible. Ambassador Albright, you know, spoke very eloquently about how male and female is—I mean, where is that written that that is the definition? As you pointed out, there are those who believe that there is a construct, and that is the way that this is defined, as opposed to just simple biological determinations.

That is the issue that has given rise to this whole debate, and there are a number, and you know it, as well as I, of feminist writers, and lecturers, and thinkers, and theorists, who have the "five sexes". I mean, we did not grab this out of thin air. We did not make up this issue. I have read it. I have seen it. Now, you are giving further testimony to it by saying that there are these two schools of thought, but there seems to be some kind of compromise, but where is it written. I mean, why do we not nail down the difference and say, "That is it."

Mr. MARRERO. Again, Mr. Chairman, in many, many years of U.N. usage, this issue had never arisen as a controversy. It was not until the last days of the last preparatory committee meeting in New York that there was even a question as to "gender" meaning male and female. So, given that long, long history of understanding, and acceptance, and common usage of the word to mean male and female, many delegations believe that the record had been clear before, had never been understood otherwise, and there was no reason to deviate from the prior understanding. So that, even though the issue is not as square as you and I perhaps would prefer, it is there by implication simply because there had been no prior history of understanding of the word to mean other than two sexes.

Mr. SMITH. If you could tell us, who were the people, or the groups, or the delegates, who believe that gender is just a social construct? Did they ever offer that there were these "five sexes"? Who was pushing that?

Mr. MARRERO. In the discussions that took place in the Prep Comm and in the contact group, there was never any articulation

by any delegation, either directly or indirectly, about five sexes or five genders. It just did not come up.

Mr. SMITH. Then, who objected to definitively defining it so that there is no ambiguity that it means male and female?

Mr. MARRERO. There were dozens of delegations that took part in the contact group from all parts of the world. I cannot tell you delegation by delegation where they came out, but it was a process of give and take, and ultimately, of compromise, that resulted in the statement that was agreed to.

Mr. SMITH. But there had to have been, because I have been in negotiations over and over again on legislation, there had to have been some people in the forefront who felt very strongly that this could not be defined as male and female in the body of the document. Could you tell us who they were?

Mr. MARRERO. Mr. Chairman, again, I do not recall that there was any specific delegation that objected to the definition of it as strictly a male/female. It was a question of whether we defined it in the document itself with words of definition, as opposed to a chairman's statement giving the sense of the group.

The debate that we had never boiled down to what each of the delegations believed the word meant. There were some delegations that actually offered a word for word definition, but we did not reach a point at which the question was whether we should have one definition or another. We reached, very early on, a consensus that what we wanted was not a definition as such in the body of the text, but rather, a chairman's sense of the body incorporating the understanding of the group.

Mr. SMITH. Again, that leaves the issue unresolved. This is the most, like many U.N. documents, quite exhaustive, dotting every i, crossing every t, 121 pages of single-spaced language, and on this issue we are asking that there be no ambiguity, and just take Ambassador Albright's statement and put it into the body of the document so that this cannot be misused by those who have another agenda.

Mr. MARRERO. What we sometimes do in these situations, Mr. Chairman, where there may be some remaining ambiguity in some people's minds, you may think that there is, others may not, but what some delegations do in cases like that is create the equivalent of a legislative history where each delegation will indicate for the record what it believes the word or the thought means, and in that way, we can state explicitly our own individual delegation understanding so that there be no ambiguity, at least as to our position.

Mr. SMITH. Are you unwilling or unable to say who it is that objected to defining this in the document?

Mr. MARRERO. I think that it would not be appropriate for me to speak for other delegations, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. But you were there?

Mr. MARRERO. Yes, I was there.

Mr. SMITH. I would have no problems, if I had a difference of opinion with anyone, in saying who it was that opposed me on a certain perspective.

Ms. KIMBLE. Could I? I am not exactly sure that this will resolve all the ambiguity, but I would like to say that one of the problems is that we were working in six languages, and at least three U.N.

languages have only one translation in their language for the term gender, and that is sex. So, when the document says gender in English, it says sex in Arabic, for instance.

Many of these delegations told us that they would accept a simple, a simple equational use, or they would accept a biological use, but much of this document is dealing with socially ascribed roles of women, in particular, women as teachers, women as legislators, women in new capacities, and other delegations felt that just substituting sex and gender would not be an effective approach and would not encompass the way the terminology is used in the document.

But, given your concerns, as I mentioned at the beginning, we are still in the process of developing this document. Certainly, the U.S. delegation will try to find a way, at least in the English version, to strengthen the clarity of what we mean by this term. I cannot assure you that we will have a definition in the document because many, many, many delegations, I would say, over 100 delegations, oppose the idea of a definition in the document.

Mr. SMITH. One hundred delegations oppose what Madeleine Albright said earlier should be the definition? Where is Bella Abzug on this? Does she feel that this is something that should not be included, as well?

Mr. MARRERO. Mr. Chairman, we do not represent Bella Abzug. I think that she has a voice of her own.

Mr. SMITH. I know you do not, but she has her own language. We all know that.

Mr. MARRERO. Let me say one other thing. In saying what I did, I am not taking the position of refusing to answer your question. The contact group met in an informal discussion. There was no record of the meeting. It was not an official meeting of the United Nations. There was no translation. So, therefore, there are no minutes of those discussions. Therefore, I think it would be inappropriate for me to characterize the positions that may have been taken by other governments simply because I cannot speak for them.

To the extent that there will be discussions on the record later on in Beijing, we will have, if this issue comes up again, an indication of where delegations fall on it.

Mr. SMITH. Let me say finally that, notwithstanding the assurances by Ambassador Albright, hearing this further elaboration of what is going on here, I still remain concerned that this is an unsolved issue and will be a major bone of contention. We plan to have a series of follow-up hearings post-Beijing, and hopefully, this could be—I mean, this is, in my view, very easily settled by defining it. I mean, every bill we pass out of Congress has a list of definitions. Without it, you leave everyone gleaning from that that which they want to do. It should not be up to the delegation to say, "This is what we mean. The Gay Rights movement gets some sanction from the language that is in here," and so on. So, I hope you will do everything humanly possible to define it in the body of the document. I say that with all sincerity.

Let me ask you, has any accredited NGO or NGO representative received funding, either directly or indirectly, from any U.S. Government source for any purpose connected with the Beijing conference, and if so, through what agency did they receive funds?

Mr. MARRERO. I do not have, Mr. Chairman, the sources of funds for the literally hundreds of U.S.-based NGO's that were accredited to the conference. I would not be surprised that some may receive some funding for their activities from the U.S. Government. That may be an issue that we will have to come back to in written form.

Mr. SMITH. Could we get an accounting of that as quickly as possible?

Mr. MARRERO. To the extent that we may be able to supply it.

Ms. KIMBLE. Could I further clarify your question because, as you know, through the participant activities of AID, AID supports the participation of other delegations or NGO's from Third World countries in U.N. conferences. We can provide that, too, but that may not be what you are interested in.

Mr. SMITH. That would be very helpful. I noticed at the Cairo conference, that there were a number of people salted away on delegation after delegation, and the funding source remained still somewhat of a question, from International Planned Parenthood Federation and other groups, and part of the concern that I had there was, frankly, that when you are talking about getting more money and lobbying governments for more money, there is a conflict of interest of having those very same people subsidized by, perhaps the United Nations, perhaps AID, who are then making a case as to why their organization ought to get additional moneys from the international community.

Minimally, there should be sunshine and disclosure to know if that kind of relationship exists. Whether or not it is ethical is another question, but we, at least, should know who it is that makes up these delegations and what their funding sources are. So, I would very deeply appreciate that, and if you could make that available to us as quickly as possible.

Let me just ask another question. The notion that groups denied accreditation, such as the Taiwan-based or Tibetan-based groups, are political, and the groups accredited deal with women's issues, is this not an incoherent and result-oriented standard that allows the United Nations to exclude anyone the PRC does not like? We had read reports that the Chinese were lobbying to have certain groups excluded. Aren't women's issues political issues? Were we not able to—again, that was the gist of my legislation—to make sure that there is absolute, unfettered access? If it was held in Australia, for example, every one of these groups would have been there.

Mr. MARRERO. Mr. Chairman, there were four basic criteria established by the United Nations in determining accreditation to the conference. One was that the group had to be a legitimate NGO, legitimate in the sense of being non-government membership organization incorporated in the country of its headquarters; that it had to be relevant and competent to the issues of the conference; that it be either international or national—that means not strictly local groups—and that the group had to have a complete application submitted by the deadline.

Now, in determining which groups were relevant and competent, yes, there were some that we believe fell into gray areas because they may have been groups that were involved in legitimate activities related to the conference, but, on the other hand, they may

also have pursued other agendas that the host government, in this case, found objectionable. Indeed, there were other governments that objected to groups that they believed were political in the sense of challenging the territorial integrity or sovereignty of a particular state.

That was one measure by which certain groups were objected to by China, indeed, by India, in one case by Bhutan, by Iran. The 11 groups that were not accredited by ECOSOC in the last round essentially fell into this category in varying degrees of certainty. It was in that context that they were not accepted.

Mr. SMITH. And it is your view that they were improperly excluded?

Mr. MARRERO. I am sorry?

Mr. SMITH. And it is your view and testimony that they were—

Mr. MARRERO. It was the view of the United States that the U.S.-based groups that we advocated for should have been accredited, but in that context, again, with 54 member states participating and voting, our view did not prevail.

I think it is important also to focus on the positive results that were achieved. Bear in mind the absolute numbers that we are talking about. Over 3500 groups that applied were accredited. Only 11 out of 3500 were not. Many of those 3500 that were accredited, were accredited specifically because the U.S.' delegation took a very, very active, proactive, and aggressive role in making sure that the process was open, transparent to the maximum extent possible, kept opened, and in fact, reopened at one point, in order to allow for more groups to apply. So, I think that in that ratio the numbers are overwhelmingly favorable, and I think that is the important thing.

Mr. SMITH. On the visas question, if these individuals, having gone through this arduous process of being accredited, being denied, and then, finally, getting accreditation, if the visas are denied, what would be the U.S. response then?

Mr. MARRERO. Mr. Chairman, we have been assured by the Chinese government that any group that is accredited by the United Nations to participate in the conference will be issued a visa. That was practically a guarantee that was publicly articulated by the Chinese Ambassador in Geneva, on the record, for the members of ECOSOC.

Mr. SMITH. Just to clarify on the gender issue one more time, if I heard you correctly, there were no official minutes taken of the contact group discussions. Ambassador Albright testified that, in her view, it is male and female, yet there is no written record, and there is, certainly, no language in the document. To someone like myself who believes we should nail things down and say what we need to say, it is still an unresolved issue.

Mr. MARRERO. Again, Mr. Chairman, Ambassador Albright was articulating the understanding of the overwhelming number of delegations who participated in this process, including that of the United States. That is our understanding. The statement that was agreed to as a consensus chairperson's statement, does not specifically make the reference to male and female, but, again, it does so by implication of what had been the prior understanding, for many, many years.

Mr. SMITH. The consensus chair statement, is that in a written form?

Mr. MARRERO. Yes, the chairperson's statement is in written form.

Mr. SMITH. Can we get a copy of that?

Mr. MARRERO. Absolutely.

Mr. SMITH. I, regrettably, have to go to the floor. I have an amendment up in probably about 15 minutes or so that will take the rest of my day. But, Mr. Salmon will assume the chair. We do have some additional questions, I do, that I would like to give you and ask you to respond on the record.

[Pause.]

Mr. SMITH. I am advised that Mr. Salmon has to leave for another appointment, as well. Again, we will provide you some questions, and I do appreciate your testifying today.

Ms. KIMBLE. OK.

Mr. SMITH. This subcommittee is adjourned.

Ms. KIMBLE. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 4:38 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

# APPENDIX

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OPENING STATEMENT  
THE HONORABLE TOM LANTOS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
JULY 18, 1995

At the outset I'd like to associate myself with all of Chairman Smith's remarks on China's human rights practices, which are deplorable. I have been one of the most persistent members of this body in condemning the Chinese Government for its wanton disregard of individual freedoms and its systemic violation of fundamental human rights. The arrest and indictment of Harry Wu is one more outrage in the Chinese assault on the civilized world, and it is the duty of all U.S. government officials to protest this illegal detention and to work for his immediate release.

The focus of today's hearing, however, is not China's human rights record, but the U.S. interest in participating in the Fourth World Conference on Women, which will take place in Beijing in September. It is a distinction worth noting, and which would have been eloquently elaborated upon by our Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Madeleine Albright, if she were here.

Ambassador Albright, who will lead the U.S. Delegation to the Conference, received an informal invitation to testify at this hearing just last Thursday. Let me point out that Committee rules require at least one week advance notice to

Members of the subcommittee about a subcommittee hearing, and it strikes me that an invitation to a Member of the Cabinet ought to be extended more than five days in advance of the scheduled hearing.

The State Department indicated to Chairman Smith that Ambassador Albright would like to testify on this issue, but that she could not do so today, due to urgent business connected with the collapse of the UN peacekeeping operation in Bosnia. I should note that Cabinet-level testimony before a Subcommittee happens infrequently, but because of the importance of the subject, Ambassador Albright offered to appear at another time. It is unfortunate to go ahead with this hearing without hearing testimony from the U.S. Government official who is in the best position to explain the rationale for U.S. participation in this conference. I do hope that the Subcommittee will be able to accommodate Ambassador Albright because I think it is vital to be able to hear the Administration's position on this critical issue.

Let me note, Mr. Chairman, that Beijing should never have been chosen as the site of this conference. It was a mistake, and I fought against it at the time. But the member-states of the UN, including the United States government -- which at that



time was the Bush Administration, and the decision was signed off by then Secretary of State James Baker -- supported the choice. To repudiate that decision now, would suggest that U.S. commitments are valid for two years at a time.

There are a lot of UN decisions and resolutions that I do not agree with, but to reverse agreements that previous U.S. Governments approved is a serious step that should not be taken lightly. If we decide to pull out of the Beijing Conference, it could undermine other key UN initiatives that are often long in the planning and execution such as the Biodiversity agenda agreed to at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.

Moreover, the Conference is **not** the Beijing Conference. It is the Fourth World Conference on Women. The agenda is a crucial and ambitious one: to enhance the status of women, including achieving advances in women's economic, educational and health concerns and promoting women's human rights. We should not jettison our opportunity to influence the plan of action that will be adopted at the Conference because of the current state of U.S.-Sino relations. To boycott the Conference and silence the U.S. voice plays into the hands of the Chinese regime. We hurt ourselves, the effort to improve the status of women worldwide, and probably the UN system, but not the people we want to target: the brutal Chinese

regime.

The Conference will take place whether we are there or not. So the best strategy is to attend the Conference and hit the Chinese hard for their cruel violations of women's rights and suppression of their aspirations.

On a final note, I want to emphasize that I am not overlooking the plight of Harry Wu. Harry's cause is to expose the horror and magnitude of the repressive system that China's rulers use to maintain their grip on power. The United States can best honor Harry, further his life's work, and strive for his release by keeping up the pressure on the Chinese in all fora, including this one which will have the world's attention for several days.

Representative Nancy Pelosi  
Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights  
Hearing on the Fourth World Conference on Women

July 18, 1995

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the upcoming Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. I have long valued our strong working relationship on human rights issues, Mr. Chairman, and commend you for your continuing efforts to promote freedom, democratization and human dignity around the world.

I know that we share the same determination to see Harry Wu released from his imprisonment in China and the same staunch advocacy for improving human rights in China. Like you, I was not pleased that Beijing was chosen as the site for this important U.N. Conference. China's appalling human rights record, and its practice of female infanticide, forced abortion, and the abortion of female fetuses, make a mockery of the honor of hosting an international conference on the status of women. Yet, for several reasons, the U.N. chose Beijing as the site for this Conference. Since the Conference is going to take place, I believe that an official U.S. presence there is warranted.

Throughout the past months, I have been actively involved with the Members of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues in pushing the Administration to ensure an impartial, fair and non-politicized accreditation process for non-governmental organizations. The Members of the Women's Caucus have also been involved in monitoring the dispute about the Chinese government's arbitrary change in venue for the NGO Forum, an important adjunct to the official Conference. Throughout these disputes, I have

remained optimistic about their successful resolution and hopeful that the Conference would be able to proceed. I believe that, in reference to our concerns about the arrest of Harry Wu, we must continue to proceed optimistically with the hope that Harry will be released by the time the Conference takes place.

This Conference is important to women here in the United States and to women around the world. Women everywhere want strong families, economic security, and decent education and healthcare. They are working at the local, the national and the international level for a stronger voice in decision-making and stronger legal rights. These goals are important and they can be advanced at the Beijing Conference. And, they can be advanced more successfully with an official U.S. presence than they would be without us represented there.

I have thought long and hard about the issue of U.S. participation in the Beijing Conference. I am not interested in providing China's dictatorial government with an opportunity to propagandize the world and to gain a public relations advantage in the long struggle to improve human rights there. Despite recent setbacks in the U.S.-China relationship, I believe that our country should be officially represented at the Fourth World Conference on Women. The question for me becomes what level of representation is appropriate.

I oppose the First Lady's presence at this Conference. Given the arrest of Harry Wu, regardless of whether he is released by the time of the Conference, and the recent round-up of Chinese dissidents, Mrs. Clinton's presence at the Conference would send the wrong message to China's leaders. She should not attend the Beijing Conference.

I do believe, however, that Ambassador Albright should attend the Conference. As our national representative to the U.N., Ambassador Albright is the appropriate person for this Conference. The Conference is, after all, an international forum hosted by the U.N.. Ambassador Albright's presence would be in keeping with her official duties and it would confer no special status on China's government.

The women of the world reaped concrete benefits from the Nairobi Women's Conference. International attention focused on women's status, on their health, education and economic needs, on obstacles to their development and full participation in society, can make a real, positive difference in identifying solutions to problems faced by women around the world. The Beijing Conference provides such an opportunity.

I look forward to continuing my efforts with you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, to promote human rights in China. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAN MEYERS  
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
July 18, 1995

Mr. Chairman, you have said several times that the forces of oppression are on the rise and human rights abuses are increasing around the world. That is true. And women are the victims of an incredible number of these human rights abuses. The United States has always led the world in promoting human rights and working to prevent these atrocities against women. That is why I believe the United States should participate in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, even if it's held in Beijing. Failure to do so would hand the foes of freedom a victory that I am sure a supporter of human rights such as yourself, Mr. Chairman, do not really want to give them.

First, let me say that I would prefer that this conference were not being held in Beijing. The idea of holding a United Nations human rights conference in China is strange. I wouldn't choose it as a location, and I don't think any American would. The United Nations chose it, I understand mainly, because it was Asia's "turn" for a UN conference and no other country in Asia wanted it.

The behavior of the Chinese government regarding accreditation and accommodation of non-governmental organizations at the women's conference has been despicable. The United Nations Secretariat's going along with the Chinese government is doubly deplorable. The organizations represented here should be

allowed to attend the conference. I participated in the press conference that protested the unfair exclusion of non-governmental organizations.

Our bilateral relations with China are troubled by the Chinese government's blatant contempt for human rights and the standards of civilized conduct. The disgraceful arrest of an American citizen on trumped-up charges must be responded to. But, the women's conference has nothing to do with our bilateral relations with China. It has to do with promoting the human rights of women, and denouncing those countries that deny those rights.

Not going to the conference won't hurt the Chinese government at all. In fact, I believe that they would prefer that the United States boycott the conference. I am sure the Chinese government would deeply appreciate it if there wasn't an American delegation at the conference to call attention to China's horrific treatment of women and girls. If we don't go, this official UN conference will be dominated by the enemies of human rights and the supporters of the oppression of women. That would be fine with the Chinese Communists. But the United States Congress?

If there were some way of moving this conference, I would strongly support it. I just don't think it is possible. There are 45,000 people planning on going to this conference. And the issues being discussed at this conference are very important to

almost 3 billion people. I believe that the United States delegation should have the opportunity to promote the rights of women at the major United Nations forum devoted to that cause.



WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI  
30 DISTRICT ILLINOIS

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TESTIMONY BY  
CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
REGARDING THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN  
JULY 13, 1995

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee I am pleased that you have called this hearing regarding the Fourth World Conference on Women which will be held in Beijing, China, this coming September.

We have a long day ahead of us and therefore I will keep my remarks brief.

The problems surrounding this conference are numerous, ranging from the accreditation process of non-governmental organizations to the location of the NGO Forum to the content of the draft Platform for Action.

It is the substance of the Platform of Action that I would like to address today.

A Preparatory Meeting or PrepComm was held this past March at the United Nations to put together a document that would incorporate the ideas generated at previous regional meetings around the world. The language in the document that was not agreed to in March is in brackets and will be debated at the meeting in Beijing. It is this language with which we should be concerned. It is anti-woman,

anti-family, redefines the term gender and promotes quotas in the workforce.

The document should be promoting the dignity of women, but it does not even come close. Instead, it is a document on gender. In the 120 page document, the word gender appears over 200 times. Gender, however, no longer means male and female, but “socially constructed roles that are subject to change.” There are some who believe that masculinity and femininity are just roles that have been created by society to promote the domination of men and the oppression of women. We need to abolish this narrow perspective, they say. The new thought stresses that since our roles are socially construed, gender must have a broader definition, such as: masculine, feminine, homosexual, bisexual and transsexual.

At the end of the PrepComm, when it became apparent to some of the developing countries that gender no longer referred to male and female and the U.N. was not prepared to give a definition of the word, a Contact Group was formed to meet in May. Their resolution? That “the word ‘gender’ has been commonly used and understood in its ordinary, generally accepted usage in numerous other United

Nations. . .conferences.” The problem with the statement is that it still does not define gender.

Another problem with the Platform is its anti-family, anti-motherhood tone. Mothers are referenced only 15 times. In a document on women, in a world where 90% of women become mothers, motherhood is barely mentioned. The words husband and wife are never used. When the word family is included it refers to failure, disintegration and deterioration. The document implies that families cannot be counted on.

The Platform of Action also promotes gender equity through statistical enforcement. The following two examples are lifted from the draft:

1. Governments should “commit themselves to establishing the goal of gender balance. . .setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieve equal representation of men and women in all positions.”

2. Governments and all other organizations should “create regulatory bodies and enforcement

mechanisms to monitor women's access to senior levels of decision-making."

The draft redefines equality. Whereas it previously meant equal rights and equal protection under the law, after the Beijing conference it will mean absolute statistically equal participation in every activity in society. Quotas perpetuate the idea that women are inferior, just when women were attaining equality on their own. What is needed is the removal of barriers to equal opportunity and education. Women will participate in numbers equal to their desires. No one should try to manipulate what should be the free decisions of women.

The consequences for the world if the Platform of Action is implemented is devastating -- both to women and the family. The conference is supposed to be about women and for women. The document should be celebrating all that is true and endearing to the dignity of women. Motherhood should be honored. The family should be strengthened.

The final version of the Platform for Action will effect this country and every country in the world. Here at home, NGOs sympathetic to the document will be pressuring Congress to adhere to the principles it

agreed to in Beijing. Elsewhere, entities such as the World Bank will pressure countries to implement the document in the name of sustainable development.

Congress must do something. Chairman Smith and I have introduced a resolution setting conditions that must be met in order for a U.S. delegation to go, as well as expressing issues that we would like to see them support. It is by no means a comprehensive resolution, but it conveys the most important message: that motherhood and the family are fundamental to a healthy society and should not be destroyed.

Thank you.

**TESTIMONY OF NINA SHEA, PRESIDENT  
THE PUEBLA INSTITUTE\*  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION & HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
JULY 18, 1995**

Thank you Mr. Chairman for inviting the Puebla Institute to testify today and for holding such timely hearings.

I first wish to state clearly the position of the Puebla Institute regarding the UN Beijing Women's Conference. The Puebla Institute urges the U.S. government to completely withdraw from participating at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September 1995, unless Harry Wu is freed and allowed to return home. There should be no business as usual as long as Mr. Wu is a political prisoner in China.

There are three main reasons for our position. I wish to briefly summarize them:

1. **Harry Wu is U.S. citizen.** He is one of us. This distinguishes him from all the untold numbers of political prisoners in China. He resides and works in California where he was a scholar at the Hoover Institute of Stanford University.

Mr. Wu carried a valid U.S. passport and entry visa into China.

In every U.S. passport, it is written: "The Secretary of State of the United States of America hereby requests all whom it may concern to permit the citizen/national of the United States named herein to pass without delay or hindrance and in case of need to give all lawful

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\* **The Puebla Institute is a non-profit international human rights group that defends religious freedom for all peoples throughout the world. It has reported on religious persecutions in China since 1989. For further information contact Puebla Institute at 1319 18th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. (202)296-8050, Fax (202)296-5078.**

aid and protection."

This is in essence a contract of responsibility between the U.S. and the passport bearer. The U.S. has a responsibility to see that Harry Wu's fundamental rights are observed.

**2. Harry Wu is human rights defender.** Harry survived 19 years in the laogai, or gulag. He was arrested at the age of 23 for being a "rightist," after he criticized (at the invitation of the Chinese government) Chinese support for the Soviet invasion of Hungary. This charge was "corrected" when he was released in 1979. When he left China in 1979, he did so voluntarily. He had not been expelled. When he re-entered China in June there were no public charges pending against him or outstanding warrants for his arrest. He was arrested at the border as he entered. He is now being charged with espionage and faces a possible death sentence.

But Mr. Wu is not only a human rights victim. He is a human rights defender of the stature of Andrei Sakharov, Vaclav Havel, Anatoly Shcharansky and Nelson Mandela. Mr. Wu is a bold critic of the repressive human rights policies of Beijing, and the Chinese fear nothing more than the truth he witnesses. I do not need to reiterate the seminal work Mr. Wu did in exposing to the world the atrocities of the Chinese laogai. This committee above all knows Mr. Wu's courageous efforts that led to his revealing exposes of the laogai. He suffered for his principles and spoke of the atrocities of dictatorship from personal experience. And he also risked everything to give relentless voice to others who are victimized into silence. He knew the risks that were involved in his work and he felt morally compelled to assume them. In returning to China this June, he was not a fool; he was a hero.

International law recognizes the importance of human rights defenders like Mr. Wu



and accords them special protections. The UN Human Rights Commission has a separate agenda item under which the world community studies and develops protections for Human Rights Defenders. The 1993 Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights also pays tribute to human rights defenders and calls for their special protection. As the world's leading democracy we are morally bound to press for Mr. Wu's freedom.

**3. Participation in such a human rights event as the Beijing Women's Conference when our own citizen is stripped of all human rights would amount to a shameful kowtowing by American delegates.**

The Beijing Women's Conference, like the Vienna Conference on Human Rights which I attended, will be a celebration -- a veritable festival -- of rights and will result in a Beijing Declaration and forever more Beijing will be associated in international law as the place where human rights were advanced. As is already clear from the regulations (on everything from which NGOs are credentialed, to worship, publications, communications equipment and informal meetings) that have been issued to conference participants and NGOs attending the non-governmental forum, Chinese influence permeates this UN conference. It will be impossible for the U.S. to separate China from this conference. The Chinese will be the hosts of the conference and will be giving the opening welcome. They, as hosts, will be thanked in turn by each of the official delegations. It will be an event that will confer great prestige and legitimacy on the Chinese regime. It will signal that the international human rights community has conferred membership within its ranks to the government of China -- a privilege that was denied them by the Olympic Site Selection Committee in 1993.

Though the grotesque duplicity of this situation would be true regardless of the Wu

case. Harry Wu's arrest, detention and possible death sentence forces the U.S. into a confrontation over human rights. China's treatment from beginning to end against Wu is a deliberate act of provocation against the U.S. Because of who Wu is and what he dedicates his life to, China's treatment of Wu shows contempt for U.S. human rights standards. China's capricious legal and penal systems -- its total lack of the rule of law -- are now directly affecting the U.S., for one of its own citizens has been taken a political prisoner. This is the wrong time for the U.S., by its presence, to pay tribute to China as an honorary member of the international rights community.

The U.S. is to be represented in Beijing by the First Lady, two Cabinet members and an Under-secretary of State -- one of the most prestigious delegations assembled for any UN world conference in recent years. Even without the First Lady, this remains a very distinguished delegation. To remove only Mrs. Clinton from the delegation in protest of Mr. Wu's arrest would be a trivial gesture. No official American delegate of any rank should be placed in the position of participating in the making of toasts to China over human rights, or in the celebration of the further development of human rights standards while guests of the Chinese at this time.

Pragmatically speaking, withdrawal of official U.S. participation from the Beijing Women's Conference is one of the few points of pressure that can be applied by the U.S. Human rights advocates, including the Puebla Institute, have advocated that athletes boycott contests and business executives forego profits and deals in countries that seriously abuse human rights. Though much has been invested in preparing for this conference by the U.S. and NGOs and others, we should now be prepared to give up official U.S. participation in the

Women's Conference, unless Mr. Wu is freed or the conference is moved.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher insisted on NBC's *Meet the Press* two days ago that the women's conference and Harry Wu's case should be kept separate. The U.S. is not likely to use the Conference in Beijing as a forum to protest the case of Harry Wu at the Conference.

In conclusion, I urge the Congress to pass legislation banning official U.S. participation in the UN Women's Conference until Harry Wu is released. U.S. participation while Mr. Wu remains a political prisoner would be nothing less than giving the appearance of coddling dictators.

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER CARL A. ANDERSON  
UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS  
before the  
Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights  
House Committee on International Relations  
July 18, 1995

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the invitation to testify before the Committee this morning. I do so not on behalf of the Commission, but on behalf of a statement unanimously adopted by the Commission at its meeting last Friday (July 14). Therefore I am here in my capacity as an individual Commissioner who was the sponsor of that statement. It is entitled: "Statement of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on the U.N. World Conference on Women in Beijing, China" and it reads as follows:

According to the State Department, the Chinese government may restrict the right of Americans and other foreign nationals to religious expression and the free exercise of religion during the United Nations World Conference on Women scheduled to take place in Beijing in September. We believe that our Government should not agree to send a delegation whose participation is conditioned on the relinquishment or attenuation of the right to religious freedom, including religious expression or the right not to be discriminated against based on religion or any other status included in this Commission's statutory mandate.

In addition, the Chinese government has arrested an American citizen, Mr. Harry Wu, apparently because of his laudable record in the field of civil rights for Chinese nationals and Chinese Americans. Since June 19th, he has been detained apparently without benefit of counsel. We believe Mr. Wu's rights to due process of law in the administration of justice have been grossly violated, and he should be released immediately.

The participation of the U.S. delegation in the Beijing conference should be conditional on the release of Mr. Wu and on credible assurance that the religious rights of Americans in China will be respected. If the government of China rejects these conditions, we urge the Administration to withdraw its delegation, and we urge Congress to cancel funding for American participation in the conference.

Mr. Chairman, I believe this to be a defining moment for our government in the cause of civil rights and human rights. In my opinion, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights took this virtually unprecedented action to protest the treatment of an American citizen held by another government and of that government's perceived potential threat to the civil rights of other American citizens, because as I stated at the time of the statement's adoption we cannot as a nation become entangled in such gross violations of human rights as are occurring now in China without it having serious implications for civil rights within the United States.

How is it possible for the government of the United States to participate in a world conference ostensibly devoted in large measure to civil rights when a condition for our participation is the relinquishment of the civil rights of the members of our own delegation and their acquiescence to a gross denial of fundamental civil rights to another American citizen? I believe that as officials charged with ensuring the equal protection of the laws in the administration of justice we cannot pay that price even if that price is the civil rights of only one American.

In 1992, the Commission on Civil Rights issued a report on the Civil Rights Issues Facing Asian Americans in the 1990s which found in part that many Asian Americans suffer from false stereotypes. It is especially important that our government proceed in a manner which will not promote, even indirectly, such stereotypes. America must show as much resolve to secure the release of Harry Wu as it did to rescue Captain Scott O'Grady. Moreover, in my opinion, it

is particularly important that such resolve be demonstrated in a case where the American at issue is an American by choice--that is, a naturalized American citizen.

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# NEWS RELEASE

For Release: IMMEDIATELY

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&  
BARBARA J. BROOKS

## Civil Rights Commission Proposes Conditions On Attendance of U.S. Delegation at Conference in China

WASHINGTON, D.C.--The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights unanimously adopted a statement Friday urging that the Government not send a delegation to the United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing if China restricts the religious liberties of visitors.

The statement, introduced by Commissioner Carl A. Anderson, also urged that the participation of an American delegation be contingent on the release by the Chinese government of Harry Wu, an American citizen arrested reportedly because of his efforts on behalf of civil rights.

Commissioner Charles Pei Wang expressed his deep concern for the plight of Mr. Wu.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan fact-finding agency. Its members are Chairperson Mary Frances Berry, Vice Chairperson Cruz Reynoso, and Commissioners Carl A. Anderson, Arthur A. Fletcher, Robert P. George, Constance Horner, Russell G. Redenbaugh, and Charles Pei Wang. Mary K. Mathews is Staff Director.

The text of the statement follows.

-30-

7-17-95



UNITED STATES  
COMMISSION ON  
CIVIL RIGHTS

624 Ninth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20425

STATEMENT OF THE U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS  
ON THE U.N. WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN BEIJING, CHINA

According to the State Department, the Chinese government may restrict the right of Americans and other foreign nationals to religious expression and the free exercise of religion during the United Nations World Conference on Women scheduled to take place in Beijing in September. We believe that our Government should not agree to send a delegation whose participation is conditioned on the relinquishment or attenuation of the right to religious freedom, including religious expression or the right not to be discriminated against based on religion or any other status included in this Commission's statutory mandate.

In addition, the Chinese government has arrested an American citizen, Mr. Harry Wu, apparently because of his laudable record in the field of civil rights for Chinese nationals and Chinese Americans. Since June 19th, he has been detained apparently without benefit of counsel. We believe Mr. Wu's rights to due process of law in the administration of justice have been grossly violated, and he should be released immediately.

The participation of the U.S. delegation in the Beijing conference should be conditional on the release of Mr. Wu and on credible assurance that the religious rights of Americans in China will be respected. If the government of China rejects these conditions, we urge the Administration to withdraw its delegation, and we urge Congress to cancel funding for American participation in the conference.

7/17/95



BEIJING CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

TESTIMONY OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 18, 1995

LOUISA COAN,  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, CHINA COUNTRY COORDINATOR,  
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA

The following testimony deals with Amnesty International's concerns about human rights in China, including a particular focus on women's human rights, as well as Amnesty International's concerns regarding the Clinton Administration's policy towards China. Our testimony is based on two recent Amnesty International reports: "China, Six Years After Tiananmen: Increased Political Repression and Human Rights Violations" (June 1995) and "Women in China: Imprisoned and Abused for Dissent" (June 1995).

This testimony is being given in the context of whether the United States should go to the Fourth World Conference on Women, since that conference is to be held in Beijing. Therefore it is relevant to state that Amnesty International does not take a position on whether the conference should be held in Beijing or whether the United States should boycott the Conference.

However, Amnesty International USA wishes to go on record to reaffirm its support for the Fourth World Conference on Women. In a press release of July 14, 1995, Mary Gray, Chair of the Board of Amnesty International USA, stated that "The UN Conference on Women is an important event in its own rights. The fact that we object to the policies and practices of the host government of the Conference - China in this case - does not diminish the significance of the conference itself. It is not a Chinese conference, it is a world conference addressing a most important issue. Women the world over are looking forward to it as a forum in which to further their goals of development, equality and peace. Discrimination against women is a serious issue that must be addressed by governments at all levels. The epidemic of violence against women is the harshest evidence of this discrimination. Violations against the human rights of women are an onerous reality. Amnesty International is going to the Women's Conference urging all governments to make commitments to address that reality."

We are submitting for the record with this testimony, if the subcommittee permits, a document entitled "Equality by the Year 2000?: Amnesty International's Recommendations for the Fourth UN World Conference on Women's Platform for Action" (September 1994).

### Women's Human Rights in China

Amnesty International has just published a comprehensive report on women's human rights in China. This 29-page report, "Women in China: Imprisoned and Abused for Dissent," (June 28, 1995) is attached as part of this testimony.

China's human rights record for women is dismal. Women are the victims of China's well-documented, widespread practices of long-term detention of prisoners of conscience, unfair trials of political prisoners, use of administrative detention and "re-education-through-labor camps, an increasing incidence of torture and other ill-treatment, killings of unarmed demonstrators, and use of the death penalty, including executions for white-collar crimes.

In addition, the Chinese government's policy of compulsory birth control results in serious human rights violations affecting women in particular. Amnesty International has confirmed cases of forced abortion and forced sterilization carried out by or at the instigation of people acting in an official capacity. Women have been detained in storerooms or offices --sometimes for days or even weeks -- until they are "persuaded" to have an abortion. One official reported being able to transfer such women to the local detention center for up to two months if they remained intransigent. Pregnant women have been rounded up in the middle of the night by local militia and family planning officials to be taken in trucks to have abortions or be sterilized at local hospitals.

Chinese women continue to suffer human rights violations for carrying out work which women's organizations across the world can freely do. They are among the thousands of pro-democracy and human rights activists, Tibetan independence demonstrators, labor leaders, and members of independent Christian groups who have been the targets of relentless political oppression.

- **Phuntsog Nyidron**, a Tibetan nun serving a 17-year sentence, is one of nearly 200 Tibetan women known to have been arrested since 1992, and believed to be still detained for their involvement in independence demonstrations.
- **Gao Yu**, a journalist, is charged under legislation concerning state secrets which Amnesty International believes encompasses matters that would be the subject of public debate and scrutiny in many other countries and goes far beyond what is needed to protect national security. This is the same legislation under which **Harry Wu** is now charged. Gao is now serving a six-year prison sentence for disclosing "important state secrets" after a secret trial at which she had no legal representation.
- **Tong Yi**, Tiananmen Square activist and assistant to Wei Jingsheng -- one of China's best known dissident -- is serving two and half years of "re-education-through-labor" without being charged or tried. Just 5 days ago, on July 13, human rights groups learned that prison officials informed Tong's parent's that she had been uncooperative in fulfilling her labor production quotas in the camp and prison authorities would now be "taking stronger measures" to make her obey.

Wives and female relatives of imprisoned male dissidents are also frequently the victims in a pattern of continuing harassment, intimidation and attempted isolation of those who speak out and steadfastly pursue legal remedies on behalf of detained relatives of friends.

Amnesty International believes that rape is a serious problem in some local detention centers and other administrative detention centers. Women in detention have also been beaten with electric batons and subjected to electric shocks on the breasts, thighs and sexual organs. In some cases, dogs have reportedly been unleashed on naked women. Women have also been severely beaten by prison guards and inmates assigned supervisory duties, for failing to complete forced labor quotas.

While the Chinese government acknowledges that police use torture, few of the victims officially recognized have been women. Those few provisions in Chinese legislation aimed at protecting women against sexual abuse in detention are often ineffective in practice.

Since 1991, six female Tibetan political prisoners have died in custody or shortly after being released from jail. All were reportedly healthy on arrest and tortured or ill-treated during their time in prison. Amnesty International has called for the Chinese government to ensure that these and other cases of torture and death in custody are thoroughly and impartially investigated. The authorities in the country must clarify the causes of death, and explain what -- if any -- medical treatment was given to those women.

These human rights abuses in China are directly linked to grossly inadequate fundamental legal safeguards. The judicial system fails to ensure due process and adherence to basic international standards designed to protect individuals against abuse. This lack of safeguards and enforcement allows for continuing human rights abuses, even when the practice is prohibited by existing law. Prime examples include torture and the increasing practice of unethical, cruel and inhuman harvesting of human organs from executed prisoners for transplants.

Amnesty International has urged the Chinese government to take all the necessary steps to improve the human rights situation of women in China. Particularly in the run-up to the 1995 World Conference on Women, when women all over the world have been turning their eyes toward Beijing, the Chinese government has not been able to hide the human rights abuses suffered by women in China, and indeed has not completely succeeded in avoiding criticism. However, the government has not taken adequate steps to stop the abuses, and international pressure must continue.

#### United States Policy Towards Human Rights in China

U.S. policy towards China is one of confusion and weakness. In the name of engagement, the Administration has compromised the principles of fundamental human rights. When President Clinton decided to de-link human rights from most-favored-nation trade status, he promised "a continuing aggressive effort in human rights." He then committed to eleven concrete steps by

which the Administration intended to keep pressure on China. However, in a recent letter to Amnesty International, Vice President Gore acknowledged that only three of the eleven steps have been implemented, and then only partially. Meanwhile, China's human rights situation has steadily, sometimes dramatically, deteriorated over the past year. We have had new reports, for example, of the deaths of three of the Tibetan Buddhist nuns mentioned above; arrests of scores of dissidents, Christians, and other prisoners of conscience; and the June 19 detention of an American citizen, Mr. Harry Wu, whom Amnesty International considers to be a prisoner of conscience.

Furthermore, the Administration has recently lifted at least one of the sanctions banning export of military equipment to China imposed after the 1989 Tiananmen massacre. This, we believe, is sending the wrong signal to the Chinese government. Clearly, the policy has not responded adequately to the reality of the situation in China. The Administration has failed to make human rights policy an integral part of the overall U.S. engagement with the PRC. This is particularly evident as the Administration aggressively pursues its economic and strategic interests, leaving human rights floundering on the periphery, to the detriment of thousands of Chinese suffering under repression, including, most recently, Harry Wu.

While the U.S. government's efforts with corporations to develop a voluntary code of conduct have resulted in a model code, no further mechanisms to ensure business cooperation in promotion of human rights appear to be forthcoming. The business community has yet to cooperate in actually adopting such codes, limited as they are. This is especially troubling in light of the fact that business loudly proclaimed their support of human rights in China during the intense debate over MFN. Business has always said that they simply disagreed on the tools. We have seen no action on any level, with the exception of a few businesses whose codes of conduct led them to withdraw all operations from China several years ago, and the continuing efforts of one American businessman, John Kamm. We are left to conclude that in fact business has few tools to address human rights, and none which are public.

It is imperative that the Administration construct a clear and coherent human rights policy as part of U.S.-China relations. Any failure to do so will send a powerful message to the international community about the seriousness of U.S. human rights policy. If the U.S. does not pull together a coherent policy on China soon, it will lose its credibility both in its attempt to persuade China that our human rights protests are in fact rooted in respect for universal principles, as opposed to a mere tool with which to keep China, and in its relations with the rest of the world. When a major power like China continues to carry out egregious human rights with little price to pay, others will follow.

## POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT

### 1. *Political prisoners convicted under the Criminal Law*

While a few prisoners of conscience were released during the past year, thousands of political prisoners detained or convicted after unfair trials during the past decade remain held. Many were sentenced under the Criminal law after being convicted of either political or ordinary criminal offences. They include many prisoners of conscience jailed for the peaceful exercise of their fundamental human rights, including members of ethnic and religious groups, and political activists.

The Chinese authorities still argue that there are no political prisoners in China, acknowledging only the existence of "criminals" convicted "according to law". However, this definition includes the acknowledged category of "counter-revolutionary criminals" -a euphemism for political prisoners. In January 1995, a Chinese Ministry of Justice official was cited as stating that 2,678 prisoners convicted of "counter-revolutionary" offences were jailed. This figure - whether or not it accurately reflects the number of prisoners convicted of "counter-revolutionary" offences - is far below the real number of political prisoners: it excludes those held for political reasons but convicted of other offences, those held under various forms of administrative detention without charge or trial, and those detained for long periods for investigation or pending trial.

Cases of political prisoners previously unknown continued to come to light during the past year. They include people convicted of political offences since the early 1980s for a variety of activities, including membership of banned secret religious sects, and scores of political prisoners jailed for their activities during the 1989 pro-democracy protests, many of whom were convicted of ordinary criminal offences, such as "hooliganism", "disturbing public order", or "snatching ammunition" or "firearms" which had been abandoned by soldiers on 4 June 1989 in Beijing.

In many such cases, the information available is insufficient to assess whether or not the prisoners were involved, as charged, in violent or criminal activities. However, Amnesty International is concerned that the prisoners were convicted after unfair trials and that many are reported to have been subjected to torture or ill-treatment in order to extract confessions. This casts strong doubts on the validity of the charges against them. Furthermore, many of those convicted of ordinary criminal offences received sentences totally disproportionate with the offence they were alleged to have committed. For example, Liu Wensheng, a 23 year-old man from Beijing, is reported to be serving a sentence of seven years' imprisonment imposed on a charge of "disturbing the traffic" during the 1989 protests.

Some of those convicted of "counter-revolutionary" offences for their activities during the 1989 protests are serving long prison sentences, such as Tang Yuanjuan, formerly an assistant engineer at a car factory in Jilin province, who received a sentence of 20 years' imprisonment. He was accused of organising a small discussion group with some friends and a protest march in Changchun city following the 4 June 1989 massacre in Beijing. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience held solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and association. Jailed since 1989, Tang Yuanjuan has been held since 1991 at the Lingyuan No.2 Reform Through Labour Detachment, a large labour camp in Liaoning province, where he and other political prisoners have reportedly been ill-treated<sup>1</sup>. Tang Yuanjuan is now reported to be in poor health, suffering from tuberculosis and hepatitis.

## **2. Increased use of administrative detention**

The police continues to use "shelter and investigation" - a form of "preventive" administrative detention - to arbitrarily detain dissidents and suspected opponents for long periods without charge. The detention of dissidents for "shelter and investigation" is not only arbitrary according to international human rights standards, it also appears to be illegal under Chinese law: in many cases it violates the legal provisions which define the type of cases and circumstances in which "shelter and investigation" can be used<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See Amnesty International report, *Torture in China*, AI Index ASA 17/55/92, published in December 1992, pp. 10-14.

<sup>2</sup> For further information, see Amnesty International's report, *China - Punishment without crime: Administrative detentions*, AI Index: ASA 17/27/91, published in September 1991.

Another widely used form of administrative detention, "re-education through labour", is imposed as a punishment by local government committees without any judicial process: the accused are not charged under the Criminal Law, do not appear before a court of law and have no access to a lawyer. Often, the accused are not even present when their case is examined by the committees which impose such sentences. Once sentenced, the accused can appeal to the court against their detention, but such appeals are rarely successful. To Amnesty International's knowledge, there has been no successful appeal against "re-education through labour" decisions in political cases since the law providing for such appeals came into force in October 1990.

Both "shelter and investigation" and "re-education through labour" have been increasingly used by the authorities during the past year to detain dissidents and others for long periods without charge. Human rights and political activists, members of unapproved religious groups, as well as other people branded as "hooligans" or "troublemakers" because they peacefully exercised fundamental human rights, were sentenced without trial to terms of two or three years' "re-education through labour".

Amnesty International is concerned about the growing use of these two forms of administrative detention against dissidents and people identified as potential opponents. This appears to reflect a deliberate policy to silence both outspoken and potential critics in the most arbitrary fashion permitted by Chinese legislation - by denying them due judicial process.

### III. NEW ARRESTS

#### *1. Arrests of human rights activists and dissidents*

A crackdown on prominent dissidents and human rights activists took place during the first half of 1994 in a number of cities, particularly Beijing and Shanghai. At least 19 of those arrested are known to be still detained<sup>3</sup>. Amnesty international considers that they are prisoners of conscience detained for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression or association. It is also concerned that many of them have been sentenced to terms of administrative detention without being charged or tried.

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<sup>3</sup> See Amnesty International's report, *China: Dissidents detained without charge or trial since 1994*, AI Index ASA 17/02/95, issued in February 1995.



Human rights activists were detained in Shanghai during the first half of 1994. Most of them were members of the Shanghai-based Association for Human Rights, which was formed in 1993 but refused legal registration. At least six members of the association were detained between April and June 1994 and held without charge, including Li Guotao, the association's chairman, Yang Zhou, a founding member, and four other members, Yang Qingheng, Dai Xuezhong, Zhou Qibing and Zhu Fuming. Bao Ge, another dissident in Shanghai associated with the human rights group, was detained on 3 June 1994 after sending an open letter to the government asking for a national human rights organization to be set up. Bao Ge had also campaigned to seek reparations from Japan for war crimes committed in China. Bao Ge, Li Guotao, Yang Zhou, Yang Qingheng and Dai Xuezhong were later sentenced without charge or trial to terms of three years' "reeducation through labour" and sent to labour camps to carry out the sentences. Several of them are known to have unsuccessfully appealed to the courts against their sentence.

In Beijing, some of those arrested had attempted to form an independent labour rights group, the League for the Protection of the Rights of the Working People (LPRWP), which applied unsuccessfully for legal registration in March 1994.

Yuan Hongbing, a law professor at Beijing University, and Wang Jiaqi, a law graduate, were among the first to be secretly detained. They were arrested by plainclothes police officers in Beijing on 2 March 1994. Both had sponsored the LPRWP and had initiated a petition in January 1994, addressed to the National People's Congress, seeking justice in a case of police brutality. Wang Jiaqi later escaped and fled the country, while Yuan Hongbing has remained in detention. As of May 1995, he was reported to be held in Guizhou province and was not known to have been charged. According to unofficial sources, his wife has not seen him since his arrest over a year ago.

Zhou Guoqiang, a poet and lawyer in Beijing and a sponsor of the LPRWP, was taken into police custody on 3 March 1994, together with his wife Wang Hui who was released after a week. Zhou Guoqiang remained in detention and was sentenced without charge or trial in September 1994 to three years of "re-education through labour". His wife was again detained in April 1994 and held for three months without charge. She only learnt of her husband's sentence in December 1994, when he wrote to her from the labour camp where he had been sent to serve his sentence. The camp is located in Heilongjiang province, hundreds of miles from Beijing in the far north of China. Zhou Guoqiang has appealed twice against his detention and sentence. His first appeal was rejected in January 1995. As of May 1995, the result of the second appeal had not yet been announced.

Other people associated with the LPRWP were detained between April and June 1994, such as Xiao Biguang, a member of the Christian community in Beijing who was arrested on 12 April 1994. He was brought to a closed trial in April 1995 on a charge of "swindling" but no verdict was announced. Others were sentenced to terms of "reeducation through labour", including Zhang Lin, a graduate in nuclear physics from Qinghua University in Beijing, who received a three years' term. Zhang Lin is now serving his sentence in his native province of Anhui and is reported to have been ill-treated in the labour camp where he is held.

Others arrested in Beijing in 1994 who remain in detention include Wei Jingsheng, a prominent dissident and former long-term prisoner of conscience, who was detained on 1 April 1994, apparently for his activities and outspoken comments about human rights issues. As of May 1995, he was still held at an undisclosed location outside Beijing, but the authorities had not made public any charges against him. His assistant, Tong Yi, a professor of Chinese literature, was detained on 4 April 1994. She was reportedly charged in August with a forgery offence, but this charge was apparently later dropped: she was sentenced in December 1994 to a term of two and a half years' "re-education through labour" without being charged or tried. She was transferred in January 1995 to a labour camp in Hubei province where she was reportedly ill-treated (see below, page 12).

## **2. Crackdown on religious groups**

Members of religious groups who refuse to join the official churches or have not registered with the authorities continue to be harassed, fined or detained by police because of their peaceful religious activities. Many arrested in previous years remain imprisoned. For example, Zheng Yunsu, the leader of the Jesus Family, a Protestant community in Shandong province, who was arrested in 1992 and sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment on charges of "disrupting public order" and "swindling". Other members of the Jesus Family arrested at the same time are also serving terms of imprisonment or of "reeducation through labour".

Police raids on religious gatherings organised by independent groups have also continued and scores of Protestants and Catholics have been detained or placed under restriction as a result.

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\* See *China: The imprisonment and harassment of Jesus Family members in Shandong province*, AI Index ASA 17/31/94, issued in November 1994.

Among recent incidents<sup>5</sup> were the arrests of some 30 to 40 Roman Catholics in Jiangxi province during and after the Easter celebrations in April 1995. The arrests were carried out on various dates between 13 and 26 April by police from various counties in Jiangxi. The arrests are believed to have been connected to the celebration of the Easter Sunday Mass on Yi Jia Shan mountain, located in Chongren county, which has long been used as a place of worship by Catholics from across Jiangxi province. Over half of those detained were released after short periods in detention. However, 17 people were reported to remain in detention as of mid-May 1995, including 10 lay women and one 23 year-old nun, Zeng Yinzai. Those still detained are reported to be held in several places, including detention centres in Chongren, Yihuang and Linchuan counties. Many were reportedly severely beaten by police at the time of arrest. Two women, Gao Shuyun, 45, held at the Chongren county detention centre, and Huang Guanghua, 43, held at the Linchuan county detention centre, are reported to have been beaten so severely that they could not feed themselves.

Other recent arrests include that of a senior house-church leader detained on 1 April 1995 near Wenzhou, Zhejiang province, reportedly for "itinerant preaching", and of a Roman Catholic priest, Chi Huitian, who was detained on 17 April 1995 in Hebei province, reportedly as he was preparing to celebrate the Easter Mass before a large congregation in an open field near his house. In Shanxi province, six Protestant house-church leaders were arrested on 13 April 1995 at a house-church meeting in Changzhi city. According to reports, all those attending the meeting were detained by police, but most were released after short periods. However, six people were kept in police custody, including three well known house-church leaders who had come from other areas.

Human rights violations perpetrated against Catholics in the course of enforcement of the birth control policy were also reported. An appeal from Catholics from two mountain villages in northern China, which circulated outside China in March 1995, claimed that the villagers had been subjected to arbitrary detention, torture and heavy fines by local officials for breaches of the birth control policy. According to the appeal, many Catholics in the villages of Fengjiashuang and Lontiangou, in Lingshou county, Hebei province, reject abortion and sterilization and had been fined in the past for having more children than permitted. However, a new birth control campaign was initiated by local family planning officials in spring 1994. In the course of the campaign, they sent team from the nearby town to the villages, taking away targeted individuals to the county government offices, where they were detained and tortured, the appeal said. When those targeted could not be found,

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<sup>5</sup> See *China: Christians arrested during Easter and others serving sentences*, AI Index ASA 17/26/95, 12 May 1995.

their relatives were detained instead as hostages and similarly tortured or ill-treated<sup>6</sup>. Various sources have confirmed the allegations made in the appeal. They indicate that these abuses were still being perpetrated in late 1994 despite the villagers' complaints to the provincial and local government and people's procurator. According to reports, family planning officials ignored the procurator's order to stop their actions.

### **3. Repression in Tibet**

Repression of dissent increased in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) during the past year as new forms of repression were introduced, targeted primarily against people actively promoting the independence of Tibet. By the end of 1994, at least 628 political detainees were held in Tibet. Most of them were Buddhist monks and nuns detained solely for their peaceful expression of support for independence. Some were held without charge or trial for long periods, while others were sentenced to lengthy terms in prison after unfair trials. Many were reported to have been tortured<sup>7</sup>.

New security measures were introduced to prevent nationalist demonstrations and limit the scope of religious activities. In May 1994, TAR Communist Party members were told to remove any signs of religion from their homes, such as altars, rosaries, shrines or pictures of the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama; Tibetan government officials and employees were told to recall any of their children who had been sent to India for education in schools set up by the Tibetan exile community; and photographs of the Dalai Lama were generally banned.

In September 1994, the TAR authorities published new regulations on security, clearly defining people engaging in "splittist" (nationalist) activities as the first target of surveillance and security measures. The regulations also described a new security "comprehensive management" body which would be empowered to oversee security in all institutions, enterprises, groups, and even temples and monasteries.

In the past few months, a large number of arrests appear to have been related to the enforcement of the new security measures and of the campaign to restrict religious activities. In December 1994, for instance, 14 monks from the Sang-Ngag Kha Monastery, 25

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<sup>6</sup> See Urgent Action UA 62/95, ASA 17/15/95, 14 March 1995.

<sup>7</sup> For further information, see Amnesty International's report, *Persistent Human Rights Violations in Tibet*, AI Index ASA 17/18/95, published in May 1995.

kilometres east of Lhasa, were reported to have been arrested during three protests against "political interference" in their monastery<sup>8</sup>. The protests were believed to have been held in reaction to announcements by local officials that the number of monks in the monastery would be strictly limited, and followed threats by an official that the monastery would be closed down if any of its members showed support for the Tibetan independence movement.

In January 1995, a peaceful pro-independence protest was reportedly staged by monks at the Yamure monastery, in Medro Gongkar county, in protest at the official ban on photographs of the Dalai Lama. Following the protest, the monastery was raided by over 100 troops and four people were arrested. On 29 March 1995, local officials accompanied by a military escort visited the monastery and announced that the abbot and one of the teachers had been expelled from the monastery for "political reasons" - the first such expulsion in recent years. Twenty-four unregistered novice were also expelled.

A series of similar protests involving monks and nuns were held in Penpo Lhundrup county in February 1995, leading to at least 60 arrests. In one incident at Nalanda monastery on 28 February 1995, violent confrontations occurred when an estimated 70 soldiers attempted to raid the monastery. Some monks reportedly threw stones at the soldiers, who responded by firing tear gas shells into the monastery. Police later reportedly beat up all the monks in the monastery.

Altogether, 123 people are reported to have been arrested in Tibet during the first quarter of 1995, in connection with peaceful pro-independence activities or police raids on monasteries and nunneries. Those arrested include 50 nuns and 68 monks. Most of them are believed to be held for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights.

#### IV. UNFAIR TRIALS

Trials continue to fall far short of international fair trial standards, with extreme limitations being placed on the right to defence, and verdicts in political cases being routinely decided by the authorities before trial.

In July 1994, five Tibetan monks were sentenced to terms of between 12 and 15 years' imprisonment for "counter-revolutionary sabotage". They had allegedly broken the name-plate on a government building and pasted up pro-independence slogans in eastern Tibet in

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<sup>8</sup> See *Fourteen monks arrested in Tibet*, AI Index ASA 17/08/95, issued in February 1995.

March 1994. The sentences were announced by a court in Pakshoe county, Chamdo Prefecture, at a show trial attended by several thousand local inhabitants, and broadcast on Tibetan television.

On 16 December 1994, the trial of 15 prisoners of conscience detained since mid-1992 concluded in Beijing. Three of them received the heaviest prison terms to be passed against prisoners of conscience in China for several years. Their joint trial was also the first major political trial to be held in Beijing since 1991.

The 15 defendants were charged with "counter-revolutionary crimes" and accused of having been involved to varying degrees in three underground dissident groups, and of writing, printing and distributing political leaflets before 4 June 1992. Nine of the defendants were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 20 years to 3 years, one was sentenced to 2 years' "supervision", and the five others were convicted as charged but "exempted from criminal punishment" because their "crime" was considered "minor" or they were deemed to have shown "repentance" or atoned for their crime during the two years or more they had spent in detention before the verdict was announced.

A translation of the court verdict against the 15 defendants - a copy of which was obtained by Amnesty International - is attached in appendix. The verdict states that the main trial hearing of their case took place in July 1994, though the verdict was not announced until December. This followed a series of unfair judicial proceedings and delays which are believed to have been determined by political considerations<sup>9</sup>. None of the court hearings of these cases were publicly announced in advance and they are not known to have been open to the public. According to reports, some of the defendants' relatives were not informed in advance of the trial hearing itself and were unable to attend it. The trial was initially due to take place in September 1993 but was postponed - apparently because the court hearing the case found the prosecution's evidence against some of the defendants to be "insufficient". The court verdict shows that this procedure was again used after the July 1994 hearing. Instead of quashing the case, however, the court each time sent the case back to the procuracy for further investigation. This procedure, which contributes to the unfairness of trials in China, has been used in other political cases. The court verdict does not indicate that any debate of the defence arguments took place during the court hearing. Nor does it indicate that any defence witnesses were called in court. In political cases, this is routinely denied to defendants.

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<sup>9</sup> See *Dissidents Detained Since 1992: Political Trials and Administrative Sentences*, AI Index: ASA 17/05/94, issued in January 1994.

A similar procedure to delay final trial until the prosecution's evidence was deemed to be "sufficient" was used in the case of journalist Gao Yu. Arrested in Beijing on 2 October 1993, two days before she was due to travel to New York to take up a fellowship at Columbia University, Gao Yu was accused of disclosing "important state secrets" in articles she had written for a Hong Kong magazine. On 10 November 1994, she was brought to a secret trial at which she had no legal representation and sentenced to six years' imprisonment on the charge of disclosing "state secrets". Neither her husband nor her lawyers were notified in advance of the trial - her lawyers were later told by the court that it had been "unable to find them". Furthermore, prior to this final trial, the prosecution's case against her was examined in court on four occasions and found each time to be "inadequate" and "needing verification".

Amnesty International is also concerned about other cases in which people were convicted of "stealing" or "leaking state secrets" after unfair trials, such as that of Xi Yang, a reporter for the Hong Kong newspaper *Mingpao*, who was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment after a secret trial in Beijing on 28 March 1994.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Torture and ill-treatment of detainees and prisoners held in police stations, detention centres, prisons or labour camps has continued to be reported. Many prisoners are also reported to suffer from serious illnesses as a result of harsh conditions of detention, including inadequate medical care and food, and punishments which threaten their physical and psychological well-being.

The cases of torture which have come to Amnesty International's attention during the past year include those of dissidents who claimed they had been ill-treated in the labour camps where they are serving sentences of "reeducation through labour". Some of them reported that ill-treatment of prisoners was a common practice in the labour camp where they were detained.

One such testimony concerned the Guangzhou No. 1 Reeducation-Through-Labour Centre, a labour camp in Hua county, Guangdong province, where prisoners have reportedly been subjected to constant abuse and forced to work for as long as 14 hours a day. According to Chen Pokong, a pro-democracy activist held there, prisoners work in a stone quarry during the day, transporting and loading stones into boats, and at night make artificial flowers which are sold for export. "Inmates who labour slightly slower are brutally beaten and

misused by supervisors and team leaders (themselves inmates). Inmates are often beaten until they are blood-stained all over, collapse of loose consciousness". In a letter of appeal smuggled out the labour camp last year, Chen Pokong further stated that he too had been beaten several times by a team leader and that injured and sick prisoners were forced to work despite their illnesses. He also described harsh living conditions, with prisoners being given insufficient food and medical treatment being practically non-existent<sup>10</sup>.

Many other sources have reported that ill-treatment by prison or camp "trustees" - usually common criminal prisoners who are entrusted by the prison or camp authorities with supervising other prisoners - was common in penal institutions across China. According to former prisoners, such ill-treatment practically always occurs either at the instigation of, or with the knowledge and connivance of prison officials; however, if an investigation takes place, the latter usually deny any responsibility by stating that they were not involved in the ill-treatment.

In one case in January 1995, Tong Yi, assistant to leading dissident Wei Jingsheng, described in a letter how she had been repeatedly beaten by two inmates who were camp trustees at the Hewan labour camp in Wuhan, Hubei province. The beating closely followed a complaint Tong Yi had made to the labour camp authorities about her long hours of work. According to her letter, following the beating, she complained to camp officials about her treatment, but they took no action to protect her or punish the perpetrators. Instead, the following day, Tong Yi underwent another round of beatings, this time by more than 10 women prisoners, as a result of which her face and body were covered with bruises. One week later, her parents were denied permission to see her when they came to the camp to visit her<sup>11</sup>.

This is the second time since mid-1994 that specific allegations of ill-treatment have been made by prisoners held at the Hewan Labour camp. The camp, which is one of the largest "reeducation through labour" centres in Hubei province, holds both male and female detainees in separate sections. Qin Yongmin, another prisoner who is held in a section of the camp for male prisoners, was reported to have been severely beaten there by guards and inmates in June and July 1994. Family members who visited him at the camp in July and

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<sup>10</sup> For further information on this case, see Amnesty International's Urgent Action, UA 435/94, ASA 17/38/94, issued on 7 December 1994.

<sup>11</sup> For further information, see Amnesty International Urgent Action, UA 21/95, ASA 17/04/95, issued on 26 January 1995.



August 1994 reported that his body was swollen and covered with bruises, and that he was too weak to stand<sup>12</sup>. In a letter of appeal sent out of the camp in February 1994, Qin Yongmin had also described the intimidation and abuses to which prisoners were subjected at the camp.

Many other instances of torture or ill-treatment of prisoners were reported during the past year. Police brutality at the time of arrest appears to have been particularly frequent during police raids on religious meetings and during the arrests of suspected pro-independence activists in Tibet. In January 1995, for instance, two young monks from the Jokhang temple in Lhasa who were held in police custody for three days were reportedly severely beaten before being released. One of them, Pasang, was reportedly beaten so severely that he could not stand up and had a severe back pain. Upon release, the two monks were apparently given no explanation as to why they had been detained, and were threatened by police with further punishment if they reported what had happened,

A young Tibetan nun imprisoned in Lhasa died in custody and another one died shortly after being released from prison on medical bail. Both had reportedly been ill-treated in detention.

One of them, Phuntsog Yangkyi, a 20 year-old Tibetan nun serving a five-year sentence in Drapchi prison in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, died in a police hospital in Lhasa in June 1994. Imprisoned for taking part in a brief demonstration in 1992, she was reportedly beaten by prison guards in February 1994 when she and other jailed nuns started singing nationalist songs. She apparently lost consciousness after medical staff in the prison gave her medication because she was "speaking uncontrollably". On 4 June 1994, she was transferred to the police hospital in Lhasa where she died, a few days after being given a lumbar puncture. The Chinese authorities claimed later that she had been transferred to hospital after the prison administration discovered she had tuberculoma - an illness which would not normally cause death provided proper medical care was available. Furthermore, no inquiry is known to have taken place to establish the cause and circumstances of her death, despite provisions in Chinese law requiring such inquiries in cases of death in custody<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> For further information, see Amnesty International Urgent Action, UA 317/94, ASA 17/29/94, issued on 30 August 1994.

<sup>13</sup> See ASA 17/18/95, *op. cit.* (footnote 4)

## VI. THE DEATH PENALTY

The death penalty is used extensively in China. Chinese legal experts have estimated that as many as 65 criminal offences are currently punishable by death.

In 1994, Amnesty International recorded 2496 death sentences and 1791 executions in China, but it believes that these figures - based mainly on monitoring of published reports - are far below the actual number of death sentences passed and executions carried out during the year. Though some death sentences and executions are publicised, the Chinese authorities do not publish statistics about the death penalty - these are treated as a "state secret".

Amnesty International has long been concerned about various aspects of the use of the death penalty in China, including the large number of offences punishable by death, the high number of executions, the use of legislation introduced in 1983 which provides for summary trial procedures in some death penalty cases, the practice of shackling prisoners sentenced to death while they await execution, and other practices which amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Many of the offences currently punishable by death in China are non-violent ones, of a kind which in other countries lead only to imprisonment. In recent years, a growing number of death sentences have been passed for economic offences, theft and drug trafficking. Among cases of execution for theft reported last year were those of two peasants from Henan province convicted of stealing 36 cows and small items of agricultural machinery worth a total of US\$9,300, and 12 people executed for car theft in Shanghai in July 1994<sup>14</sup>.

Many people were also sentenced to death or executed for corruption, speculation, fraud and other economic offences. Among the cases reported by official Chinese sources was that of Yu Jianan, former vice-president of the Linxian County No.2 People's Hospital in Henan province. In October 1994, he was executed after being convicted of having taken bribes for issuing false sterilization certificates to women seeking to avoid sterilization. According to the accusations against him, between 1986 and 1991, he "colluded" with five other people at the hospital to issue 448 false sterilization certificates to women who were not sterilized, taking some 200,000 Yuan (about US\$23,000) in bribes in the process. More than half of this amount reportedly went to Yu Jianan alone. The five others were said to have been

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<sup>14</sup> For information about cases of death sentences and executions recorded by Amnesty International in 1994, see *China: Death penalty figures recorded for 1994*, issued in March 1995, AI Index: ASA 17/17/95.

"punished according to law", but the official reports on the case did not specify what sentences they received.

Though the national figure for the number of people sentenced to death for drug trafficking is not available, Chinese official sources revealed in early 1995 that 466 people had been executed for drug trafficking in the southern province of Yunnan in 1994.

In many places, public sentencing rallies were held to announce death sentences. For example, in Jinjiang, Hainan province, 10,000 people attended a rally in September 1994 to hear the announcement of death sentences against seven prisoners convicted of robbery and other crimes. Five of them were executed immediately after the rally.

During such rallies, condemned prisoners are usually exposed to the public with their head bowed, hands tied behind their back and a placard announcing their name and crimes tied around their neck. Amnesty International considers this practice to amount to cruel and degrading treatment of prisoners. It is also concerned that prisoners sentenced to death are routinely shackled throughout the period between sentence and execution - a practice which also amounts to ill-treatment - and that the use of handcuffs and leg irons on prisoners awaiting execution is specifically permitted by Chinese regulations.

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: RECENT DOCUMENTS ON CHINA

Urgent Action Appeal: Harry Wu, July 12, 1995

Women in China: Imprisoned and Abused for Dissent, June 1995

Six years after Tiananmen: increased political repression and human rights violations, June 1995

Forty Public Security and Reform-Through-Labor officers take Chen Ziming back to prison, June 28, 1995

Medical Concern: Deaths of female ex-prisoners in Tibet, June 22, 1995

Persistent Human Rights Violations in Tibet, May 30, 1995

New crackdown on dissidents before 4 June anniversary, May 25, 1995

Christians arrested during Easter and others serving sentences, May 12, 1995

Trade Unionists in China; A Ban on Pluralism, May 1, 1995

Use of Organs from Executed Prisoners, March 1995

Death Penalty Figures Recorded for 1994, March 1995

Dissidents Detained Without Charge or Trial Since 1994, February 1995

The Imprisonment and Harassment of Jesus Family Members in Shandong Province, November 1994

Journalist Gao Yu Jailed For Six Years After a Secret Trial, November 18, 1994

Protestants and Catholics Detained Since 1993, March 1994

Heavy Sentences for Nuns in Tibet, February 2, 1994

The Death Penalty: Unprecedented Rise in Death Sentences and Executions Since September 1993, January 1994

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**Testimony of**

**John Ackerly, Director  
International Campaign for Tibet**

**before the  
Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights,  
International Relations Committee,  
U.S. House of Representatives**

**July 18, 1995**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this Committee, for providing me with the opportunity to testify before you today regarding China's campaign to keep Tibetan women from attending the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. My name is John Ackerly and I am the Director of the International Campaign for Tibet, an American non-governmental organization dedicated to the promotion of human rights and democratic freedoms for the Tibetan people.

The International Campaign for Tibet, along with every U.S.-based Tibet organization, has been denied accreditation to the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September. Initially, we were denied accreditation because the United Nations Conference Secretariat determined that the International Campaign for Tibet did not meet the requirement for accreditation of "engaging in activities and objectives clearly relevant to a global conference on women." This is patently false. We appealed the United Nation's decision on the grounds that as a human rights organization, the International Campaign for Tibet has done extensive work on torture against female prisoners of conscience and coercive birth control measures. Our work monitoring human rights and environmental issues in Tibet includes numerous activities and programs which monitor the status of Tibetan women, both in Tibet and in refugee communities around the world. In our appeal, we provided the United Nations with a detailed description of our work on behalf of Tibetan women, copies of which I am glad to make available to the Committee.

The Conference Secretariat at the United Nations rejected our appeal, once again on the grounds that we were "not relevant" to a global conference on women. In addition, two other U.S.-based groups -- the Tibetan Rights Campaign and the International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet -- have been denied accreditation thus far. These groups also appealed the decision and proved to the United Nations that they are engaged in relevant work on behalf of Tibetan women. China recently objected to the accreditation of these groups at an ongoing meeting of the United Nation's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Both organizations are awaiting a final decision on their accreditation to be made by ECOSOC in Geneva. We are skeptical however, that the United Nations will stand up to China and grant Tibet organizations their rightful place at the women's conference.

China has a history of effectively pressuring the United Nations to bar Tibetans and Tibet organizations from United Nations conferences, and the Fourth World Conference on Women is no exception. In 1993, ICT was initially given official accreditation to the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. When our representative attempted to enter the conference however, she was stopped at the door and told that her accreditation had been canceled. A black line had literally been drawn through her name on the list, indicating that China had put sufficient pressure on the United Nations to keep us out.

We are concerned that China is now pressuring the United Nations to prevent the International Campaign for Tibet from participating in the Fourth World Conference on Women because of our high profile work on behalf of the people of Tibet. To allow China to exclude us is to reinforce the idea that people and organizations can be excluded based solely on political ideology. If this is truly to be a global conference on women, all organizations engaged in work relevant to the conference must be allowed to participate, and China must not be allowed to dictate to the world which individuals can and can not attend.

I would add that the pressure that China exerts on Tibetans and Tibet organizations is much greater than what I have described in my testimony thus far. The fact is that many Tibetan women in exile do not dare to try to attend the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women because it is being held in Beijing. China's brutal legacy of invasion, occupation and cultural genocide of the Tibetan people continues to this day.

Women in Tibet are routinely tortured and imprisoned. According to Amnesty International's most recent report, "...by far the largest group of female political prisoners known to Amnesty International in China is imprisoned in the Tibet Autonomous region." Women who are arrested are likely to be tortured in prison. Since 1991, five Tibetan women have died in custody or shortly after being released from jail.

I will recount the story of one of these young women. Her name was Phuatsog Yangkyi, a 20-year-old Tibetan nun and prisoner of conscience who was serving a five-year sentence for taking part in a brief demonstration in 1992. She and other nuns were reportedly beaten by prison guards for singing nationalist songs in February, 1994. She apparently lost consciousness after medical staff at the prison gave her medication because she was "speaking uncontrollably." She died shortly after on June 4, 1994. It is not surprising, given China's treatment of Tibetans, that many Tibetan women fear for their safety should they attempt to attend the United Nations conference in Beijing.

In closing, I would add that with China preventing Tibetan women and Tibet organizations from attending the official women's conference in Beijing, the International Campaign for Tibet is making every attempt to attend the parallel forum for non-governmental organizations. This forum, known as the NGO Forum, will be held outside of Beijing in Huairou at the same time as the official conference. We are concerned that China's next step in its campaign to keep Tibetan women and their supporters from participating in the women's conference will be to deny them visas even to attend the NGO Forum. In May, officials from the All China Women's Federation were quoted as saying that "separatists" in support of Taiwan or Tibet independence would be forbidden from entering Beijing. This is clearly an attempt once again to restrict access to the conference.

We urge the United States Administration and the Congress to do all that they can to ensure that those who want to attend the Fourth World Conference on Women as well as the NGO Forum are allowed to do so.

*The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) was established in 1988 to monitor and promote internationally recognized human rights and democratic freedoms in Tibet. ICT is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization incorporated in Washington, DC.*



**Taiwan International Alliance**  
**台灣國際聯盟**

**Taiwan Office:**

10F, 83 Chung-Hsiao E. Rd., Sec. 1, Taipei, Taiwan  
 台北市忠孝東路1段83號10樓  
 Tel: (02) 321-2134 Fax: (02) 395-1529

**Headquarters:**

Suite 17B, The Corinthian Plaza  
 330 E. 38th St., New York, NY 10016, USA  
 Tel: (212) 983-0480 Fax: (212) 983-1097

**Statement of Margie Joy Walden, Executive Director, Taiwan International Alliance before the  
 US House of Representatives  
 Sub-Committee on International Operations and Human Rights—July 18, 1995**

**Mr. Chairman, Members of the Sub-Committee:**

Recently, six organizations from Taiwan, with expertise in the advancement of women and women's rights, were denied accreditation to participate as non-governmental organization (NGO) observers to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women (UNFWCW). The names of the NGOs under discussion are: **Awakening Foundation, Modern Women's Foundation, National Organization of Women (NOW) in Taiwan, Women's Ministry Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan General Assembly, YWCA of Taiwan, and Taiwan International Alliance.** These organizations provided the UN Secretariat all the necessary documents that demonstrated their competence with regard to the advancement of women.

NGOs from Taiwan were told that they were denied accreditation because they were not incorporated in the country where their headquarters are located. Because the People's Republic of China (PRC) claims that Taiwan is part of China, the Taiwanese NGOs are being required to incorporate their organizations in the PRC in order to participate in the Conference. In actuality, the PRC has never, even for one day, held jurisdiction over Taiwan. As a result of the UN's compliance with this PRC manipulation, the PRC is using the UN as a cover in an attempt to extend its jurisdiction over Taiwan. Using an international organization dedicated to peace for imperialistic aims is unjust, inappropriate, and unacceptable.

Last year, Taiwan International Alliance attended the high-level segment of the European and North American Preparatory meeting. At this meeting, China pressured and protested to the General Secretary to have our accreditation withdrawn. It became clear how far the pressure tactics would be applied when Taiwan International Alliance and the Tibetan Women's Organization of Switzerland were not included on the official List of Participants. Upon investigation, it was revealed that someone had tampered with the computer files to remove the names of these two NGOs. Under pressure from the United States and the Swiss delegations the original list was reprinted. Even though Taiwan International Alliance was accredited to this UN Regional Preparatory meeting, we have been denied accreditation for the Beijing meeting. Why? Despite the fact that we are a United States NGO, registered in New York State, and have submitted our New York State incorporation certificate, the UN has bowed to PRC pressure and said that we must be incorporated in Beijing!

The United States, as the world leader of democratic ideals and an avid defender of human rights, has supported Taiwan's participation in international fora. This support is in full accord with the Taiwan Relations Act: Public Law 96-8-Apr. 10, 1979(H.R.2479), which specifies that it is US policy to preserve and to promote extensive and close ties with the people of Taiwan. It also affirms that preservation and enhancement of the human rights of all



the people on Taiwan are objectives of the United States. The Taiwan Relations Act is further enhanced by the recent Taiwan Policy Review which states that the United States "will support opportunities for Taiwan's voice to be heard in organizations where its membership is not possible."

The recent unofficial visit of President Lee Teng-hui to the United States has touched off a firestorm of protests from China. Some experts have suggested that relations between Washington, China, and Taiwan are terribly adrift and blame Taiwan. However, preserving unofficial cultural relations is settled policy. President Lee's unofficial visit to an American university did not violate agreements between the United States and China. The storm of protests has not stopped China from accepting large humanitarian donations from Taiwan and Taiwanese NGOs for vast flooding that recently devastated the southern coastal provinces.

Government officials and the Congress of the United States are mandated to ensure that progress concerning Taiwan's participation in international fora continues, and is not reversed. At the UN Charter Celebration in San Francisco in an exhibit of the fifty original signatory flags, the Republic of China on Taiwan flag was removed because of PRC protest and replaced with a PRC flag, but the PRC did not even exist in 1945 when the UN was founded. Moreover, the Taiwanese press has been denied UN press credentials although the Serbian New Agency which is controlled by the Bosnian Serbs has been accredited by the UN. The Bosnian Serbs are currently holding UN Staff hostage and are responsible for the tragedy in Srebrenica and Zepa. The Serbian News Agency's accreditation was only revoked by the UN after it was compared with Taiwan. It is clear that as the United States pursues a policy of "constructive re-engagement" with mainland China that we also need to simultaneously move forward in supporting the human rights of the 21 million people on Taiwan. The Taiwan Relations Act says so.

Unfortunately, legitimate NGOs from Taiwan are being denied accreditation to represent their nation as NGO observers to the official conference for governmental delegations. Some progress can be reported since a number of individual women from Taiwan have recently received letters of acknowledgment required to attend the unofficial NGO Forum. Although this is an important step forward, there are still a number of hurdles that remain for Taiwanese women's participation to be realized. First, the women from Taiwan are still waiting to receive confirmation of their hotel reservations from the China Organizing Committee. Second, they need to be granted special visas to travel to Beijing upon receipt of their hotel confirmation letters. We hope that the US and the international community will strongly encourage China to quickly actualize this next phase.

Finally, in light of unanswered questions surrounding the Qiandao Lake murders, the frequent incidents of airplane hijackings on flights from mainland China to Taiwan, and the arrest of Harry Wu, we hope that the US and the international community will pressure China to ensure the safety and security of the participants during their stay in China. Chairman Smith, we are asking you, and the members of this Sub-Committee to take all these matters under due consideration. Thank you for the invitation to share these thoughts with you today.



TESTIMONY

by

Laurel Heiskell, Legislative Coordinator

Concerned Women for America

before

U.S. House of Representatives

Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights

July 28, 1995



**TESTIMONY**

by

**Laurel Heiskell, Legislative Coordinator**

**Concerned Women for America**

before

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights**

**July 28, 1995**

Good Morning. My name is Laurel Heiskell, and I am the Legislative Coordinator for Concerned Women for America. I am here today on behalf of Dr. Beverly LaHaye, our President and Founder, and on behalf of CWA's 600,000 members who reside in the United States and in 48 nations abroad.

In December of 1994, Concerned Women for America applied for official U.N. accreditation as a "nongovernmental organization" or NGO. As the largest pro-family women's organization in the United States, CWA wanted to be a voice in Beijing; a voice to represent the traditional values that most American families hold dear.

In February of 1995, Concerned Women for America was denied U.N. NGO accreditation.<sup>1</sup> Calls to a State Department official revealed that the United Nations did not consider CWA "relevant to women's issues."<sup>2</sup>

We were not satisfied with that answer, so I called an individual who works for the United Nations Economic and Social Council to find out why we were denied. He put me on hold and said, "let me get the list." When he returned to the phone he said,

"Yes, here you are. CWA is on the 'No-No' list." I asked for a copy of that list, and he said that he doubted it would ever be made public.

The "No-No" list was composed of every organization whose request for NGO accreditation had been denied. Interestingly enough, I later learned that many of those organizations were pro-family and pro-life.

In April of this year, Senator Jesse Helms began to make inquiries on behalf of CWA. Suddenly, the office of the Secretariat for the Fourth World Conference, which had previously turned down CWA's accreditation request, changed their story. They claimed that our original paperwork had not been complete, and they cited a letter, which had never arrived at our office. When CWA asked for a copy of that letter, the U.N. was never able to produce it.

Dr. LaHaye then had a **personal** meeting with Senator Helms. She asked him how CWA was ever placed on the United Nations' "No-No List." Soon after that meeting, CWA received a letter from the United Nations, telling us that our file -- with no changes -- was complete and the Secretariat was recommending CWA for accreditation.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, that accreditation was still pending approval by the Economic and Social Council, which did not meet until **late June**.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, two weeks ago in **July**, Concerned Women for America received its formal notification of NGO accreditation.<sup>5</sup> The United Nations changed its mind three times, and then forced us to wait two months until the Economic and Social Council met in Geneva. That created huge financial constraints. Through this accreditation process, CWA was forced to enlist the aid of a Senator and his staff in order to receive something that should never been denied to us in the first place. So the question remains: Why? Why was Concerned Women for America turned down for accreditation, when our

original application clearly demonstrated our relevance to women's issues, our size and our legitimacy as an organization? And who told the United Nations that Concerned Women for America should be put on a "No-No" list?

The answer to the first question is quite simple: CWA was not originally accredited because we do not fit the radical feminist agenda that this conference hopes to further. Let me give you some examples:

At the last pre-conference meeting, held in March, 1995, in New York City, former Congresswoman Bella Abzug spoke to the delegates. She was the official representative of NGOs, and she said that women "will not be forced back into the 'biology is destiny' concept."<sup>6</sup> She does not believe that women should be defined by their "physical sexual characteristics." So according to the platform document, how should women be defined in an official platform document?

Well, the current draft of the platform document rarely mentions women's rights. Rather, it talks about gender rights, such as gender equity programs for all children, and gender sensitivity training for all teachers, judges, lawmakers and employers. If, as Bella Abzug claims, a woman's destiny should in no way be linked to her biology, would she agree with a paper that was circulated at that pre-conference meeting; a paper that defined gender **five** ways – as male, female, homosexual, bisexual and transsexual? In the end, what Bella Abzug believes is not important. The important question is: where does the U.S. delegation stand on this issue? At the March meeting, some less developed nations asked that the word "gender" be bracketed in the platform document, because they wanted assurances that "gender" meant men and women, only. If a word or phrase is bracketed, it is still open for discussion in Beijing.

Yet I have attended meetings where officials from our own State Department said

that they knew which countries had bracketed gender, and would try to apply diplomatic pressure to make those nations remove the brackets. Is this the level to which American diplomacy has been reduced? If our government pressures foreign nations because of the word "gender," then the U.S. delegation should be required to **define "gender."**

This is not the only issue in which Concerned Women for America would differ with the apparent goals of this conference. Members of Congress, I have also attended meetings where powerful American NGOs, like Fund For A Feminist Majority and Planned Parenthood, have voiced their desire to see abortion-on-demand policies clearly expressed in this document. And I have heard officials from our own State Department agree that such language, which was not added at the Cairo Population Conference, should and will be added in this document. Is the exportation of abortion-on-demand, to every nation of the world, truly the number one priority of our State Department? Is this what America represents?

Above all, CWA stands for women. We believe God created **both** women and men with certain inalienable rights. Our own Declaration of Independence affirms those rights to *mankind*. The United States does not need an Equal Rights Amendment, which this platform document mandates.<sup>7</sup> And our Senate must never ratify the U.N. women's treaty, which would put the radical objectives of this Beijing conference into United States law.<sup>8</sup> True womanhood finds security and empowerment in celebrating the differences between men and women. Most men are not abusers of women and children -- as this document insinuates when it says that the family is the unit of society where violence against women is nurtured and encouraged.<sup>9</sup> Real women know that strong men and strong families are vital to our culture if America is to survive.

God intended for women to be treated with dignity and respect, and we recognize that many women in many nations are not treated according to that model. CWA joins you in abhorrence of true abuse. We join you in desiring literacy and betterment for the women of the world. But **this** conference has been sold out to **one** voice -- the voice of radical feminism. That is not the voice leading most women in the United States of America. That is not the voice that we spend our tax dollars to support.

Members of Congress, ask President Clinton who will be representing the United States of America on the official U.S. delegation. Senator Helms asked Ambassador Madeleine Albright to include Dr. LaHaye on the delegation, since many of America's official delegates will be NGO representatives. Senator Helms was told that the White House will make the decision. So, ask President Clinton if the voices of ardent feminists will be balanced by the voices of pro-family Americans like Dr. LaHaye. We still do not know, but I fear that the answer is already clear. The true beliefs of citizens of this nation will not be heard in Beijing. Thank You.

1. See Appendix A for the letter denying accreditation to Concerned Women for America.
2. According to U.N. General Assembly Resolution 48/108, Concerned Women for America was an organization whose "objective and purpose...was either not clearly relevant or seemed to be outside the substantive scope of the 4th World Conference on Women and its preparatory process." This reason was substantiated by the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women.
3. See Appendix B for the letter informing Concerned Women for America that it was recommended for accreditation by the United Nations. Contrary to the text of the letter, CWA had not, at that time, submitted any additional information.
4. After the March pre-conference meeting (PrepCom) in New York City, the United Nations created an official appeal process by which NGOs who had been denied accreditation could re-apply. On April 21, 1995, the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution outlining this appeal process. However, unlike other organizations, CWA was not required to submit more information because the Secretariat for the Fourth World Conference changed its mind after Senator Helms made inquiries on our behalf. Yet, CWA was still

required to wait until the U.N. Economic and Social Council met in July. This put intense financial pressures upon CWA, and certainly upon other organizations. The General Assembly could have approved new NGOs sooner, and we believe that the appeal resolution was deliberately worded to exclude organizations that could not wait until July to make financial decisions regarding a trip to Beijing.

5. See Appendix C for the letter that informed CWA of its final NGO accreditation by the United Nations.
6. Bella Abzug, "A Message From NGO Women To UN Member States, The Secretariat And The Commission On The Status Of Women," April 3, 1995. Speech given at the U.N. pre-conference meeting (PrepCom) in New York City.
7. Section 125.b.; 159.b.; 159.c.; and 159.ter. of the April 17, 1995 version of the Draft Platform for Action.
8. This treaty is called the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It was signed by President Jimmy Carter in 1980, and currently resides in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee where it has sat for fifteen years. A favorable committee vote could bring this treaty to the Senate floor at any time, where it would need a 2/3 majority to be ratified. Indeed, it was favorably voted out of committee in October of 1994, and narrowly missed coming to the Senate floor at that time.
9. See Strategic Objective D, Sections 188 and 199 of the Draft Platform for Action, May 15, 1995. Note that these references are not bracketed. (Non-bracketed sections of the platform document are considered final, and will not receive further consideration in Beijing.)





**APPENDICES**  
to  
**Testimony**  
by  
**Laurel Heiskell, Legislative Coordinator**  
**Concerned Women for America**  
before U.S. House of Representatives  
**Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights**  
July 18, 1995

## APPENDIX A

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIESPOSTAL ADDRESS—ADRESSE POSTALE UNITED NATIONS N.Y. 10017  
CABLE ADDRESS—ADRESSE TELEGRAPHIQUE UNATIONS NEWYORK

REFERENCE

22 February 1995

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for submitting your organization's application for accreditation to the Fourth World Conference on Women and its preparatory body, the Commission on the Status of Women.

Following a review based on the guidelines set out by the General Assembly in resolution 48/108, the name of your organization has not been included on the list of organizations recommended to the Commission on the Status of Women for accreditation.

However, we have forwarded the address of your organization to the Planning Committee for the NGO Forum on Women, Beijing '95 with a request to send information on registration for the Forum which will be held at Beijing from 30 August to 8 September. The deadline for registration for the Forum is April 30, 1995.

Should you wish to contact the NGO Forum office directly, the address is as follows:

NGO Forum Planning Office  
211 East 43rd Street  
New York, New York 10017, USA  
Fax. No. (212) 922-9269

Thank you for your interest in the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Secretariat for the Fourth  
World Conference on Women

CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA  
BEVERLY LAHAYE  
370 L'ENFANT PROMENADE, S.W.  
WASHINGTON, DC 20024  
USA

## APPENDIX B

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIESPOSTAL ADDRESS—ADRESSE POSTALE: UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. 10017  
CABLE ADDRESS—ADRESSE TELEGRAPHIQUE: UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK

4 May 1995

Dear Madam/Sir,

The Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the preparatory body for the Fourth World Conference on Women, has reviewed the organizations recommended for accreditation to the Conference. A working group of the Commission also considered those requests, which, following the preliminary review by the Conference Secretariat, did not appear to meet the requirements. Subsequently, the General Assembly asked the Conference Secretariat to review again those organizations which, based on the material submitted, did not appear to meet the requirements for accreditation.

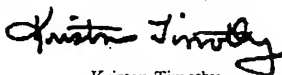
Please be advised that the application of your Organization has been reviewed again in light of the additional information received. We are pleased to inform you that a recommendation for accreditation will be made to the Economic and Social Council meeting to be held from 26 June to 28 July 1995. The Council will make the final decisions on accreditation for the Conference.

You will be notified of the decision taken as early as possible. Please keep in mind that once accredited, national organizations may send two representatives; international organizations may designate five representatives as observers to the Conference.

NGO's are responsible for their own travel and daily expenses. All hotel bookings are handled by the China Organizing Committee for the Conference in Beijing. Visa applications can be made at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in your country.

Thank you for your continuing interest in the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Yours sincerely,



Kristen Timothy  
Deputy Director and Coordinator  
Fourth World Conference on Women

BEVERLY LAHAYE  
CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA  
370 L'ENFANT PROMENADE, S.W.  
WASHINGTON, DC 20024  
USA  
(202) 488-0806

## APPENDIX C

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES

FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN  
Two United Nations Plaza, DC2-1220  
New York, New York 10017  
Telexfax: (212) 963 3463

June 30, 1995

Dear Madam/Sir,

Your organization has been accredited to the Fourth World Conference on Women by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1995. Your organization is invited to send representatives as observers to the Conference. The Conference will be held at the Beijing International Convention Center from 4-15 September, 1995.

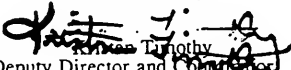
In accordance with previous practice at recent United Nations conferences, and in view of space constraints, international organizations are invited to designate five representatives. Should your organization have been classified as a national organization and approved as such for accreditation, it is entitled to send two representatives.

Please send the names of your designated representatives, using the attached form, to the Secretariat of the Conference, preferably by August 4, 1995.

Enclosed please also find a hotel reservation form for your designated representatives who require hotel reservations. Your designated representatives will need a hotel confirmation letter from the China Organizing Committee along with the invitation letter from the Secretariat to apply for a visa at the nearest Chinese Embassy or Consulate.

Thank you for your interest in the Conference.

Yours sincerely,

  
Christine Timothy  
Deputy Director and Co-Chair  
Fourth World Conference on Women  
Division for the Advancement of Women

BEVERLY LAHAYE  
CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA  
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Fax: (202) 488-0806

Ref: 202

*HEARING ON CONTROVERSIES RELATED TO THE UPCOMING U.N.  
CONFERENCE IN BEIJING*

International Relations Hearing Room  
2172 Rayburn House Office Building

Tuesday, July 18, 1995

**STATEMENT ON THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION  
THE U.N. 4TH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN**

*Mercedes Arzu Wilson, Ph.D.  
President  
Family of the Americas*

**Introduction**

Having participated in each of the current series of U.N. conferences on women, I have witnessed an attack on traditional moral values that, if allowed to continue, will ultimately destroy the family as the basic unit of society. There exists among some delegations to these conferences an extreme element of hostility toward those who disagree with them and a desire to divide men and women by driving a wedge between them over the issue of the traditional vocation of marriage and the beauty of the family.

The *Platform for Action* rightly calls the attention of governments to many important topics, among which are poverty and illiteracy (problems primarily facing women and children), as well as those of prostitution, pornography, and physical and mental abuse. However, this document puts pressure of an ideological nature upon women all over the world and advances a social philosophy that is prevalent in particular sectors of Western countries and does not represent the views of the rest of the world.

I find it disturbing that what should have been a truthful effort to enhance, respect and dignify the beauty of being a woman in today's society has become a tool for advancing an elitist population agenda and draconian ideology. I say this not only because of my experience as a delegate from Guatemala to the Conference on Social Development in Copenhagen and the Preparatory Committee meeting for the Beijing Conference, but also because of my own personal concerns as a woman and mother.

## The Document

### Inappropriate Authors

It is important to understand that while *The Platform for Action* has, for the most part, been "authored" by duly elected or appointed representatives of the people of the world, the role of nongovernmental organizations can be neither overlooked nor understated. The *Platform* indisputably represents a social and political philosophy and agenda; one espoused by organizations such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). In fact, it would be fair to say that the primary authors of the *Platform* could just as easily serve on the board of directors of IPPF. Like communism, their philosophy will eventually be seen as the global failure it is--a disaster of cataclysmic proportions that has adversely affected the lives of hundreds of millions of people, most of whom are female and poor.

The *Platform for Action*, with its ideological dogma created by radical population controllers, was neither written nor influenced by the right people. Rather than turning to the moral/religious and civic leaders of our time, undue influence has been given to organizations like IPPF. Such groups have convinced First World governments that population control is our god and it must be worshipped, even if barbaric practices are instituted to do so. It is clear that the *Platform* would be radically different had the true leaders (not just political) of the world been involved in its writing.

Done in the name and with the authority and prestige of the United Nations, the conferences preceding the Beijing gathering have been universally co-opted by nongovernmental organizations with a need to legitimize their agenda. We cannot and will not allow this blatant corruption of the rights and freedoms of women.

### Language

There are several aspects of the rhetoric used (and not used) in *The Platform for Action* which I believe most people would find disturbing. The recurrence of certain words, backed by ambiguous concepts, leads one to realize the social philosophy contained in the *Platform for Action*.

The Preparatory Committee meeting this spring erupted with controversy over the term "gender." It was clear this was a pivotal debate. As part of the Contact Group formed to

define "gender" after the Preparatory Committee meeting, delegates from the developing countries asked that the term be defined and suggested the following: "The word 'gender' in this document means the existence of woman and man as the two sexes of the human being."

The U.S., Canada, Germany, Austria and Chile opposed our definition while all of the developing countries, with the exception of Chile, supported it. Since no consensus was reached (and to avoid conflict with the developing countries) discussion was postponed to a separate Contact Group meeting which was scheduled to take place from May 15 through June 15. The delay gave the developed countries' delegations time to put more pressure on the developing countries to reach consensus on a non-definition of "gender." The first definition offered implied that "gender roles are socially constructed." This sentence was removed, however, after two meetings in the month of May. The following statement on "gender" was eventually passed:

Having considered the issue thoroughly, the Contact Group noted that: (1) the word gender has been commonly used and understood in its ordinary, generally accepted usage in numerous other United Nations forums and conferences; (2) there was no indication that any new meaning or connotation of the term, different from accepted prior usage, is intended in the draft Platform of Action.

Accordingly, the Contact Group agreed to reaffirm that the word 'gender' as used in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women is intended to be interpreted and understood as it is in ordinary, generally accepted usage. The Contact group also agreed that this report be read by the Chair of the Conference as a Chairperson's Statement, and that the Statement should be part of the documentation of the final report of the Conference.

The Beijing paper is tireless in its repeated use of the word "gender." It defines the mission (goal) of the Conference as the achievement of "gender equality." It speaks of "gender perspectives" and "gender relations." In 121 pages, the document employs the word "gender" about 200 times.

The substitution of the word "gender" for "sex" in U.N. documents is a relatively new development, primarily occurring since 1991 (approximately the time when WEDO began working in close partnership with various U.N. bodies on projects relating to women). The use of the word was originally restricted to minor documents--usually those produced by "expert groups" of social scientists and psychologists associated with the U.N. Division for the Advancement of Women and with the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA). On the other hand, the major legal instruments on which the U.N. is built (United Nations Charter [1945], Universal Declaration of Human Rights [1948], International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights [1966], International Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms

of Discrimination Against Women [1979], and the Convention on the Rights of the Child [1989]) never used the word “gender” as a substitute for “sex.” In all of these basic documents, the word “sex” (not “gender”) is used to signify this difference.

Only those familiar with feminist literature can appreciate the far-reaching implications of what the “gender perspective” implies. As Dale O’Leary writes, “According to the gender perspective, the advancement of women requires that all of society be freed from this social construction so that men and women will be the same. The list of things Gender Feminists are interested in deconstructing includes, but certainly is not limited to, language, family relationships, reproduction, sexuality, work, religion, government, and culture.” Thus, the “gender perspective:”

- ◆ denies that the differences between men and women are natural;
- ◆ wants the structure of society changed to make men and women the same;
- ◆ attacks “traditional female roles;”
- ◆ promotes 50/50 male/female quotas for all elected and appointed offices and occupations;
- ◆ ignores marriage and is hostile to the family;
- ◆ demands recognition of “sexual and reproductive rights” including the acceptance of homosexual lifestyles and the right to abortion on demand;
- ◆ offers no protection to housewives or full-time mothers; discourages the choice to care for one’s own children;
- ◆ targets “fundamentalist” religions as a barrier to women’s rights and demands that religions be “reinterpreted;” and
- ◆ blames the problems of women on male power and control.

The specific details of the effects this could have in the daily life of women around the world is even more devastating. O’Leary writes:

For Gender Feminists “inequality” (meaning any differences between men and women) can be overcome only by forcing all women into the work force and forcing men to accept responsibility for half the housework and half the childcare. Furthermore, if the children are placed in day care, half the daycare workers should be men.

There is nothing wrong with couples deciding for themselves that they will both work outside the home and share equally in the work of the home; the question is: Should all couples be forced into this arrangement or should they be free to decide for themselves? Gender Feminists believe the elimination of “inequality” must take precedence over the decisions of women, particularly since these decisions were really they insist “socially constructed.”



O'Leary details the threat to the family as we know it:

Women who want to devote themselves to the work of the home or the care of their children will not be allowed to, since such privileged women would serve as a constant reminder of the sex class society. Feminist writer, Simone de Beauvoir admitted this in an interview with Betty Friedan. *"No, we don't believe that any woman should have this choice. No woman should be authorized to stay at home to raise her children.. Society should be totally different. Women should not have that choice, precisely because if there is such a choice, too many women will make that one."*

Yet the gender perspective would authorize the murderous choice for abortion, at any time in the pregnancy and for any reason, as a part of the "right" of "reproductive health" and assert the "right" to choose an alternative sexual identity, legitimizing homosexuality. The Gender Perspective is a narrow ideological world view which does not represent the world's women. We need a document that will promote marriage, responsibility, family life and protect human life. That is the woman's perspective. Women and men are equal in the eyes of God, but are biologically different. It is absurd for the UN to try to make women and men the same.

If gender is left undefined or defined as socially constructed roles that can be changed, all the energies this conference could have directed toward improving the lives of women will be dissipated in a futile attempt to abolish human nature.

It has been tragic to observe the changes during these meetings. At first various delegates from the developing countries openly and enthusiastically supported language that defended the rights of parents over their children, upheld the vocation of motherhood, supported "self-control" instead of "birth control" for adolescents and pre-adolescents, opposed female feticide, demanded a clear definition of the term "gender" as *"the two sexes of the human being,"* and much more. However, as the delegates from the powerful nations perceived a mini-revolt was emerging - when a few courageous delegates from the little republics dared to voice their opinion and tried to correct the language of such a disgraceful document on women - the developed countries' delegates became alarmed. Such deviations from their anti-woman, anti-life, anti-family agenda demanded a quick change in the rules of the game! Suddenly we hear that meetings are postponed, the voting is halted, the date of the meeting's conclusion is extended, a full month is exclusively booked to study the definition of "gender," which should have taken five minutes to resolve. The developed countries engaged in powerful lobbying upon the developing nations' delegates who dared to speak out in defense of the family and its future. Some Ambassadors received phone calls from the office of the Secretary General of the United Nations, complaining about their outspoken delegates who dared to request that the term "gender" be defined clearly. Others

were directly approached by the US delegation.

Others received pressure from the European delegations. Is this democracy at work? Or is it coercion and manipulation in practice?

How tragic were the consequences that followed. One by one my friends and supporters backed down as the voting began, even those who supported us and co-authored the clear definition of "gender" as "the existence of woman and man as the two sexes of the human being." When we asked one of these delegates why he had changed his position, he apologized and said: "I am sorry, but the US delegation is putting so much pressure on my country that I am no longer able to support you." Some told us that their Ambassadors had given them instructions to remain silent and not to support us. Other delegates would confidentially agree with our position, but were afraid of reprisals on their international loans that would affect their economy if they openly voiced their opinion. As a result, a non-definition passed. "Gender" means whatever you want--one, two, three, four or five sexes, your choice.

### Omissions

Not only have terms used in the *Platform for Action* been craftfully and strategically selected, important language designed to benefit and protect women and the poor were omitted from the document. The document mentions health problems related to sexual life (reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections, fertility control, etc.) more than 400 times. Yet tropical diseases are mentioned only twice.

While the World Health Organization estimates, for example, 4 million cases of HIV infection in 1994, the same organization estimates the cases of tropical diseases during the same period as hovering between 650 and 850 million. While HIV is a deadly infection, many others are killing women and their children as well, but they are virtually ignored in the document.

Another area of grave concern is paragraph 107j which, if left as is, would cancel out the statement, "in no case will abortion be promoted as a method of family planning," an affirmation agreed upon at the International Conferences in Mexico City (1984) and Cairo (1994).

Fortunately, the document takes into consideration the exploitation of young girls steered into prostitution, a phenomenon that has reached international proportions. Everyone condemned the violence against women as a means of repression in times of war, as well as the genital mutilation of women. A more decisive and radical condemnation would consist of every kind of violence against women, including psychological abuse, forced sterilization, forced use of birth control or induced abortion. Moreover, it must include the

many women who have been made objects of systematic sterilization plans which take place especially in developing countries. Such practices constitute a grave violation of the rights of women, and still more indefensible when they are funded from scarce economic and educational resources.

Another damaging influence is pornography and violence in movies, television, books, magazines, and music distributed worldwide. Any attempt to hold the entertainment industry accountable is immediately dismissed as an attack on freedom of expression. It does not require expensive studies or research, only common sense, to conclude that these influences are among the leading causes of the deterioration of morals and values and violence in the streets and in the families.

Surprisingly, the theme of family and motherhood receives scarce attention and little space in a document of nearly 149 pages on women. In Chapter II, the concept of the family as “the fundamental unit of society...” (cf. par. 30), is placed within brackets, in contrast with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 16.3. In fact, all of paragraph 30 will go to Beijing in brackets.

### Ignoring Parental Rights

The *Platform for Action* lacks continuity with previous documents—often with United Nations Declarations. For example, the section of the document dedicated to health and the education of adolescents that says “taking into account the rights and duties and responsibilities of parents . . .” (cf. 107 l, 107 l, 107 m, etc.), which was accepted in prior international documents, was placed in brackets. Furthermore, a similar sentence was approved by the Heads of State and Governments or their representatives at the Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen (March 6-12, 1995).

If this were not enough, proponents of the Platform for Action insist that all methods of fertility control be made available to minors without parental consent or knowledge. Confidentiality is a cornerstone of their agenda and necessary because when parents are forced out of the picture, those with a radical agenda and philosophy are empowered to fill in the gap.

### Secrecy

The greatest advantage enjoyed by those who wish to force the population control philosophy on poorer countries is that of secrecy. Dangers of artificial methods of birth control are completely ignored. The myth that condoms are the cure-all for sexually transmitted infections is perpetuated.

More Bracketing

It would seem logical and proper to believe that the unanimous goal in Beijing should be to attain a common operative effort to defend the dignity of women and the promotion of their universal human rights. Nevertheless, it seems paradoxical and incomprehensible that the word "dignity" (referring to women) appears systematically within brackets throughout the document. Similarly, the term "universal" has been placed in brackets when referring to the human rights of women (cf. par. 2,4,11,14,43, etc. of the Platform of Action).

**Politics**Coercion & Manipulation

The delegations from the powerful Western democracies have exerted undue pressure on the developing countries' delegates to force acceptance of the radical ideological agenda being advanced against women at these conferences. Mr. Timothy Wirth, co-chairman of the Clinton delegation, held a special session June 19 with the UN delegates who belong to the Group of 77. (There 143 countries now in this group, most of whom represent developing nations.) These delegates were "encouraged" to vote in favor of removing all the language bracketed by the Western delegations at the "informal consultations" to be held in New York July 31 through August 4. Mr. Wirth also noted that he had met with the president of the World Bank, who indicated the Bank's commitment to providing the financial means for the implementation of the *Platform for Action*. This subtle attempt to link World Bank support for developing countries with their delegates' support of Western language and ideology can be seen as nothing but pure coercion.

Guatemala together with other countries from the Sudan and Slovakia, noticed that sentences and even paragraphs that had been inserted by developed nations' delegates and, of course, bracketed by the developed countries' delegates were purposely left out of the final draft. This is in direct violation of UN rules. The following is an example of a paragraph I requested to be inserted that was left out completely:

It is important to recognize that the only true protection for women is a society where men are taught from infancy that acts of violence or disrespect toward women are unmanly and unacceptable. Mothers, as the primary teachers of children and the formers of consciences, must raise their sons to understand that men must respect women and protect them from all forms of violence and abuse. Fathers must

reinforce these teachings in their words and actions. Society, religious and educational and religious institutions, and the media must reinforce these teachings, if we are to create a world where women are free from the threat of violence and abuse.

On another page, paragraph 90 read:

Images of violence against women, rape, or sexual slavery portrayed in the media can be a contributing factor to its continued prevalence, adversely influencing young people and the community at large.

I had requested that the following sentence be added:

And the deterioration of morals and violence in society are contributing factors to its continued prevalence, adversely influencing young people and the community at large.

I repeatedly complained to the Chairperson about these “oversights” but she just told me, “Bring it up in Beijing.”

I know that if the American people could see what their representatives were doing, they would be outraged with President Clinton for sending delegates who were promoting their own personal agenda, a “*culture of death*,” in this disgraceful document.

#### “Liberation”

What real reason have the Western powers given the poorer nations for accepting their plan for the “liberation” of women? In the discussions at the Preparatory Committee meeting we asked the following questions of the Western delegates:

- a) If the U.S. is presently experiencing an epidemic of sexually transmitted infections, with 1 of every 5 Americans infected, why are you proposing such a philosophy and mandating costly programs for our developing countries? Is this the future you want for our developing countries?
- b) Wouldn't the addition of costly programs increase problems developing nations are not equipped to handle, especially programs that have failed even in the richest

nations of the world? Aren't there enough problems with corruption, injustice, poverty and misery in developing countries?

### A Sensible Alternative

Delegates from the developed countries thought it laughable when I suggested that, instead of teaching our youngsters "birth control" we should teach them "self control." They ridiculed my proposal that national programs be initiated to promote abstinence until marriage (cf. par. 109L).

I have repeatedly tried to make the delegates from the U.S. and other Western countries understand that freedom without responsibility becomes anarchy and that responsibility must be accompanied by self control. We do not want to turn our children into sexual addicts. Rather, we want to turn them into responsible parents and citizens. True love is not only to be found in sexual pleasure; true love waits until marriage.

### Imposing the Radical Agenda

The delegate from the Sudan often referred to the Western powers, saying: "Perhaps what is missing in the lifestyles of the powerful leadership of the Western nations is the belief in God? Hence their desire to impose their culture of death to the rest of the world. True happiness will not be found in liberating ourselves from nature and challenging God; our people are poor all they have is their life-long traditions and their religious beliefs, that are in clear opposition to what you are imposing upon us."

At one time when I was suggesting an amendment to the document which said the reason for the lack of respect for women was due to "deterioration of morals and values in society." She turned to the chairperson and said, "Oh, let her put it in the document we are going to bracket it [set it aside for further discussion] anyway!"

It is an unfortunate fact—the Western model of female advancement does not take into account the values, tradition and diverse religions of women in the majority of countries of the world.

Natural Family Planning

I find it difficult to understand why “natural family planning” was put in brackets when speaking of techniques for the regulation of births (par 110 h).

I was able to include Natural Family Planning in the Chapter on Health in one of the paragraphs where they were advocating to, “Provide financial and institutional support for research on safe, effective and affordable technologies for reproductive and sexual health of women and men, including more safe and effective methods”—I added, “like Natural Family Planning.” This was immediately bracketed by the U.S. delegate with the remark, “I have to check and see if this is an acceptable method of family planning.” The Australian delegate whose specialty was to bracket the word “mother” every time I suggested it be added to the document, remarked, “It is not natural to have to abstain anyway.” I argued that we should help governments encourage the use of the new method of Natural Family Planning (NFP)—the Ovulation Method—for the following reasons:

1. It is extremely effective and always under the control of a couple.
2. A recent study of NFP of 19,843 couples from Calcutta, India, was published in the *British Medical Journal* of September 13, 1993. It confirmed an effectiveness rate of 99.06% for avoiding pregnancy—far superior to any artificial method of birth control. This study was sponsored by the World Health Organization and included Hindu, Moslem and Christian couples.
3. A study of the Ovulation Method in the People’s Republic of China conducted by their government obtained similar results among couples of no religious conviction (98.7% effective). The most impressive result of the study was the continuation rate--93% after the first 12 months. This is the highest continuation rate ever recorded for any method of family planning.
4. Artificial methods of birth control such as the Pill and IUD have a 50% dropout rate after 12 months among strong and healthy Americans. Women of marginal health in the developing world have a much higher discontinuation rate. Already weak and anemic, they often cannot tolerate the excessive bleeding caused by the abortifacient effect of IUDs, Norplant, or injectible contraceptives. The side effects of the pill are even more severe. The high discontinuation rates of artificial methods of birth control make it even more costly and wasteful to taxpayers.

Such programs are not only costly for U.S taxpayers, but also to the governments in developing countries that must provide, distribute and insert such barbaric and distasteful

procedures. Furthermore, these poor governments in turn must provide the healing services for the numerous side effects of such chemical and mechanical devices and massive sterilization programs. We know all too well how inferior and impoverished the Third World clinics are, how can they then provide emergency services to their people?

I specifically mentioned the unfairness of submitting women to the slavery of artificial methods of birth control when women are only fertile for about 100 hours each cycle. I further insisted that we encourage the natural alternative that respects the autonomy and dignity of the couple. An alternative that is cheaper, safer and more culturally acceptable. Or are the developed countries hesitant to relinquish control instead of resorting to coercion?

### Conclusion

There is no doubt in my mind that the Clinton Administration is using everything in their power to make sure that by the time the delegates arrive in Beijing, the document will have very few sections left to be negotiated. Most of the treacherous provisions that will force all the countries to accept programs that are against human nature will be incorporated, and our recommendations to protect the family will have been deleted.

The powerful Western democracies, through the UN system are violating democratic principles by forcing their will upon the weaker and less developed nations. Their agenda to deconstruct the natural order seems to have begun already, when we read that two male homosexuals have been given permission by the D. C. Court of Appeals to adopt a 4 year old little girl (*Washington Post*, July 4, 1995). Surely we don't want a world where children will grow up with no idea of what it means to be a man or a woman, doing away with everything which recognizes the differences between the two sexes, where gender is regarded as a socially constructed role rather than as a biological fact.

If we foresee the danger to our children, grandchildren, and the future of humanity, then we must join together to stop them. There are very few Davids willing to confront the Goliaths of this world in spite of pressure. What is needed now is not words of praise and sympathy, but active support and voices raised in protest. We must stand up, speak up, and be counted.

Any agreement made under coercion or duress must be considered illegal and non-binding. It is on this basis that we request that the whole conference be canceled. The future of mankind is being decided by the anti-woman/anti-life/anti-family delegations, supported by



the Western governments, with total disregard for the culture, religion, and traditions of their own people and those of the developing world.

I am appealing to you from my heart. I appeal to your wisdom and common sense to stop the pressure from the delegation of the United States upon the developing countries. We do not want to barter our beliefs for food and loans. Don't force the poor countries to trade their traditional family values and morals--lift the pressure so we may all answer with one voice--they are not negotiable!

July 18, 1995

Testimony on the Platform for Action  
of the Fourth U.N. Conference on Women  
House Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights  
by Mary Ellen Bork, Catholic Campaign for America  
July 18, 1995

I thank the Committee for the invitation to speak about the Platform for Action for the Fourth U.N. Conference on Women.

The Fourth U.N. Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace should be an important step in enhancing the status of women, and taking actions that will advance women's education, development and well-being. This is especially important for poor women in developing nations. Unfortunately the document under discussion, the Platform for Action, is seriously flawed by endorsement of radical feminist views of equality, and gender, which leads to inadequate treatment of motherhood and traditional marriage, and inadequate treatment of religious and cultural values that women bring to society. The Catholic Campaign for America has reservations about the U.S. delegation endorsing such a document. The Platform for Action does not represent the views or thinking of a whole segment of humanity, billions of women, thereby making the document less than representative of the views of women worldwide.

The Platform sets forth twelve areas of concern, poverty, education, health, violence to women, peace, economics, power and decision-making, mechanisms to advance women, human rights,

media, environment, and the girl child. In each area the formula for the "empowerment of women" turns to a notion of equality that as an American I find hard to recognize. According to the document women cannot achieve real equality unless there is absolute statistical parity between men and women, 50/50 representation in every sphere of life, starting with the family, extending to the workplace and in politics. All women would work outside the home and be economically autonomous and all men would accept responsibility for half the childcare and half the housework. Parity democracy would require the alteration of constitutions and changing of national laws. Since this goal will not be achieved immediately the interim measure is: forcing political parties to be 50% women. ( #193 p.76) This may be a utopian's dream but it is certainly not the democratic understanding of equality of opportunity which historically does not produce statistical equality. When people exercise freedom the results are not equal. Government imposed numerical quotas, re-education, and penalties involve coercion, which is not empowering for anyone. Such an approach is in conflict with a democratic understanding of freedom.

The central theme of the Platform for Action is gender and "mainstreaming the gender perspective". The word gender appears 200 times, "gender perspective" 45 times. In the context of the Platform, "mainstreaming of the gender perspective" means loosening the idea of gender from its biological roots and

claiming new roles and new sexual licence. Gender does not refer to sexual differences any more but has "evolved", as Bella Abzug said to the U.N. delegates in April, to mean differences between men and women resulting from "socially constructed gender roles rather than immutable biological difference." (Para. 28) Gender has evolved to be many, indeed, to be five, of which the polar opposites are male and female and in between are homosexual, bisexual and transsexual. To claim that sexual differences are merely culturally conditioned means two things: that the traditional understanding of gender as male and female no longer holds; and that sexual difference is something that is malleable and can be anything the individual wants it to be or, indeed, the government wants it to be. Marriage and motherhood take second place while unrestricted sexual freedom for adolescents and unmarried persons is endorsed. Families have become "households." The amorphous, non-traditional, and false concept of gender permeates the entire text of this international document. The goal is to have gender perspective approved in Beijing and then imposed on women through their governments and NGO activities, many of which are supported by taxpayers money.

This narrow ideological view does not represent the thinking or the experience of most American women (or men). We are witnessing a blatant form of cultural imperialism that undermines the values and standards on which American society is based. Furthermore the "gender perspective" is offensive to those who

come from the major religious traditions, Christian, Jewish, and Muslim. It contradicts the religious teachings of the world's major religions which hold that women and men are equal in dignity and personhood but complementary in nature. Traditional female and male roles do not deny women opportunities for partnership in society. Women who do not choose to work outside the home participate fully in society, for example as activists, volunteers, and lobbyists. Their activism has been responsible for many positive social changes. This document is disparaging of that choice.

What is missing from this document is a realistic understanding of women's indispensable role in society as life-giver and transmitter of cultural values. In substituting an ideological view of gender for the basic understanding of the relationship of women and men as complementary (the basis of Western culture) this document, and the actions that will flow from it, puts in jeopardy the basis of family and social life as we know it. The Platform of Action should be an honest assessment of the problems faced by real women in many cultural situations. It should address itself to finding answers for better economic development, educational possibilities, and basic health services, the lack of which inhibit many women's advancement to a better, more productive and happier life. Statistical inequality is simply not the cause of the problems women face nor will "gender perspective" lead to effective solutions. The U.N. should

try to find common ground where people from many cultures can work together. The gender perspective is a view promoted by the gender feminists and simply does not represent the views of the majority of the world's women.

Endorsement by the U.S. delegation of such a seriously flawed document will do lasting damage to our society by promoting false solutions to very real problems. This hearing will alert Americans to a destructive view of woman they would never accept themselves and would never dream of imposing on an unsuspecting world.

**I N D E P E N D E N T  
W O M E N ' S  
F O R U M**

BEFORE THE  
HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

18 JULY 1995

TESTIMONY OF BARBARA LEDEEN

ON BEHALF OF THE  
INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM

My name is Barbara Ledeen, and I am testifying today on behalf of the Independent Women's Forum, where I am Executive Director for Policy and Liaison. The IWF is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group of independent women who believe in freedom, achieved through limited government and individual responsibility. We appreciate the opportunity to speak to this Subcommittee today on the subject of human rights in China, with reference to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, scheduled to be held in Beijing in September. The cause of human rights should supersede considerations of so-called "women's rights," particularly as "women's rights" have been enunciated by the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women.

Naturalized U.S. citizen Peter "Harry" Wu was seized upon his entry to China on June 19, 1995, despite having all required travel documents in good order and despite the fact that no charges whatsoever were pending against him. Chinese authorities subsequently leveled spurious charges of espionage against Mr. Wu, who is still being held at an undisclosed location and under undisclosed conditions. Mr. Wu's detention violates consular agreements, and it is an outrageous transgression of universal human rights. This alone is a compelling cause for withdrawal of the U.S. delegation from the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. The United States should not participate in any gathering in China at this time.

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There are four other compelling reasons that the United States should cancel participation in the conference, no matter where it may be held.

**First**, the United States should not participate in any endeavor or endorse any document whose conception of human rights differs fundamentally from this country's foundational ideas and documents.

**Second**, a representative democratic government should not be party to constructing or adopting a policy agenda that does not reflect the principles and beliefs generally espoused by this nation's citizens.

**Third**, a representative democratic government has no business endorsing a policy agenda whose design for implementation is totalitarian.

**Fourth**, the United States should not agree to permit any other entity to dictate this country's domestic policies. Virtually all of the draft Platform for Action,<sup>1</sup> the major statement to be adopted at the conference, involves matters of domestic policy concerning which the United Nations should play no role whatsoever. The United States also should not be a party to dictating social policy in other countries.

Section I of the Platform for Action concerns human rights. The bracketed language – that is, the language that remains open to debate – includes numerous statements regarding whether human rights are or should be universal and universally recognized. The argument is over whether alleged women's rights take precedence over universal human rights, and is particularly relevant at the moment, given that Peter "Harry" Wu is male.

To raise the question whether women have or need special rights that are separate and distinct from universal human rights is to raise the question whether women are human. The authors of the Platform do not wish to raise that question openly, and so resort to discussion of "the human rights of all women," mentioned in Paragraph 215, among others. The authors then seek to assure that alleged women's human rights are of an order different from universal human rights. In language already adopted, Paragraph 218 asserts that

[u]nless human rights of women, as defined by international human rights instruments are fully recognized and effectively protected, applied, implemented and enforced in national law as well as in national practice in family,

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<sup>1</sup> U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, Proposals for Consideration in the Preparation of a Draft Declaration and the Draft Platform for Action, U.N. Doc. Future A/CONF.177/L.1 (advance unedited version dated 15 May 1995).



civil, penal, labour and commercial codes and administrative rules and regulations, they will exist in name only.

This language reflects rights as embodied and, as cited, implemented in law, and hence presumes that rights are conferrable by law. The language does not acknowledge rights as inherent in Man's nature. Trivializing the very idea of human rights, the construction presumes that individual have no rights, and enjoy only such rights as governments permit them. The concept is thoroughly alien to the American foundational idea of universal human rights endowed by the Creator, that is, of natural rights inherent in individuals. It is also thoroughly alien to the concept of individual freedom.

Within the framework of the Platform's overarching reach to dictate to U.N. member countries exactly what their domestic policies should be, there are five central themes concerning the exercise of alleged women's rights. The first is that government involvement, control and bureaucracy constitute the preferred, primary and most necessary solution to problems. The presumption is that people, particularly women, are incapable of exercising, or learning to exercise, freedom. A component of this presumption is that people, particularly women, are incapable of solving problems or learning to solve problems by themselves. The Platform insults human dignity and freedom – particularly the dignity and freedom of women.

In language already adopted, Paragraph 26 of the Platform asserts that "[m]any Governments have enacted legislation to promote equality between women and men and have established national machineries to ensure the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all spheres of society." Laws to confer alleged women's rights, to establish quotas and preferences – and bureaucracies to enforce them – are to be expanded where they exist and put in place where they do not, with enforcement directed to precisely proportional representation of women and men in every sphere of life. Though the discussion at home is about how to redress the excesses of affirmative action that result in discrimination, in Beijing the United States is to advocate more of what we know has caused harm here.

The second central theme is that in addressing each of the 12 major issues covered in the Platform, including human rights, "Government and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects for women and men respectively."<sup>2</sup> This divisive and polarizing theme is the document's mantra; its intent is to assure

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<sup>2</sup> This theme is repeated in paragraphs 59, 81, 106, 124, 143, 166, 191 and 203, as well as bracketed paragraphs 204, 229, 238, 252 and 273.

that we argue endlessly over whether domestic policies and programs treat women and men identically – or, if there is a difference in treatment, whether it favors women.

The Platform asserts in Paragraph 19 that "only a radical transformation of the relationship between women and men to one of full and equal partnership will enable the world to meet the challenges of the next century." The heart of the radical transformation cited is found in Paragraph 28: "In many countries, the differences between women's and men's achievements and activities are still not recognized as the consequences of socially constructed gender roles rather than immutable biological differences." If gender is a matter of "roles" that are "socially constructed" and have no relation to nature or biological fact, then all sexuality (hetero-, homo-, trans- and bi-) is a matter of choice – and any sexual behavior is valid as a matter of preference. The language cited has already been adopted. It is the reason that the statements in Paragraph 30 that "[w]omen play a critical role in the family, the basic unit of society" and in Paragraph 31 that "[r]eligion plays a central role in the lives of millions of women" have not been adopted and are still subjects of debate.

A thoroughly discredited Marxist view of economics constitutes the third central theme. In Paragraph 57, the United States has already agreed that governments should have charge of "the productive capacity of women . . . through access to capital, resources, credit, land, technology, information, technical assistance and training so as to raise their income and improve nutrition, education and health care and status within the household." By "access" is means expropriation, often by regulation, and with preference to women. Even if command economies functioned to provide benefits to the people subjected to them, the idea that women require unearned benefits secured by government coercion demeans their capacities, abilities and accomplishments.

The words *mother, father, wife and husband* do not appear anywhere in the Platform, signifying the document's fourth central theme, that the definition of *family* is fluid. In place of the idea of family, the document speaks of the "household," claiming in Paragraph 24 that "[o]ne-fourth of all households world wide are dependent upon female income even where men are present." Voluntary marriage as the quintessential social contract is not mentioned in the Platform. There is no discussion of whether the presence of men who are married to the women with whom they are living, as husbands to wives and fathers to the children of marriage, is or might be beneficial to the men, women and children involved.

Instead, approved Paragraph 52 asserts that "because of the gender division of labour and responsibilities for household welfare, women bear a

disproportionate burden, attempting to manage household consumption and production under conditions of increasing scarcity." Paragraph 20, also approved, asserts that the poverty of women and children is "exacerbated when responsibilities for basic social services have shifted from Governments to women." Thus, when the debate here at home is about how to get the government out of the entitlements business so that, in particular, women and children enslaved by a failed system can be set free, in Beijing the United States is to advocate the expansion of government dependency and encourage other nations to adopt policies of failure.

The fifth central theme of the Platform is that nongovernmental organizations should be funded by governments and should function transparently, which is to say as arms of, and with co-equal authority in relation to, governments. The Platform does not go so far as to mandate that nongovernmental organizations have police powers, but that matter is encompassed by "transparency," precisely why such an obfuscating word is employed. Implicitly if not explicitly, the Platform calls for the United States and other nations to use citizens' tax dollars to support the promotion of radical Feminism, worldwide, as a legitimate political and social movement equivalent to a publicly funded political party.

The Platform is a radical recipe for governments to consign the world's women to second class citizenship by assigning them unnecessary special privileges that demean and trivialize universal human rights. Fighting discrimination by imposing discrimination does violence to the idea of equality as natural to every person. It also does violence to both the ideals and the functions of liberty and equity. The United States should cancel participation in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and, in addition, should assure that the Platform's radical agenda has no government endorsement in this country.

## INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM

There are four other compelling reasons that the United States should cancel participation in the conference, no matter where it may be held.

**First**, the United States should not participate in any endeavor or endorse any document whose conception of human rights differs fundamentally from this country's foundational ideas and documents.

**Second**, a representative democratic government should not be party to constructing or adopting a policy agenda that does not reflect the principles and beliefs generally espoused by this nation's citizens.

**Third**, a representative democratic government has no business endorsing a policy agenda whose design for implementation is totalitarian.

**Fourth**, the United States should not agree to permit any other entity to dictate this country's domestic policies. Virtually all of the draft Platform for Action,<sup>1</sup> the major statement to be adopted at the conference, involves matters of domestic policy concerning which the United Nations should play no role whatsoever. The United States also should not be a party to dictating social policy in other countries.

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To raise the question whether women have or need special rights that are separate and distinct from universal human rights is to raise the question whether women are human. The authors of the Platform do not wish to raise that question openly, and so resort to discussion of "the human rights of all women," mentioned in Paragraph 215, among others. The authors then seek to assure that alleged women's human rights are of an order different from universal human rights. In language already adopted, Paragraph 218 asserts that

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<sup>1</sup> U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, Proposals for Consideration in the Preparation of a Draft Declaration and the Draft Platform for Action, U.N. Doc. Future A/CONF.177/L.1 (advance unedited version dated 15 May 1995).

civil, penal, labour and commercial codes and administrative rules and regulations, they will exist in name only.

This language reflects rights as embodied and, as cited, implemented in law, and hence presumes that rights are conferrable by law. The language does not acknowledge rights as inherent in Man's nature. Trivializing the very idea of human rights, the construction presumes that individual have no rights, and enjoy only such rights as governments permit them. The concept is thoroughly alien to the American foundational idea of universal human rights endowed by the Creator, that is, of natural rights inherent in individuals. It is also thoroughly alien to the concept of individual freedom.

Within the framework of the Platform's overarching reach to dictate to U.N. member countries exactly what their domestic policies should be, there are five central themes concerning the exercise of alleged women's rights. The first is that government involvement, control and bureaucracy constitute the preferred, primary and most necessary solution to problems. The presumption is that people, particularly women, are incapable of exercising, or learning to exercise, freedom. A component of this presumption is that people, particularly women, are incapable of solving problems or learning to solve problems by themselves. The Platform insults human dignity and freedom — particularly the dignity and freedom of women.

In language already adopted, Paragraph 26 of the Platform asserts that "[m]any Governments have enacted legislation to promote equality between women and men and have established national machineries to ensure the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all spheres of society." Laws to confer alleged women's rights, to establish quotas and preferences — and bureaucracies to enforce them — are to be expanded where they exist and put in place where they do not, with enforcement directed to precisely proportional representation of women and men in every sphere of life. Though the discussion at home is about how to redress the excesses of affirmative action that result in discrimination, in Beijing the United States is to advocate more of what we know has caused harm here.

The second central theme is that in addressing each of the 12 major issues covered in the Platform, including human rights, "Government and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects for women and men respectively."<sup>2</sup> This divisive and polarizing theme is the document's mantra; its intent is to assure

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<sup>2</sup> This theme is repeated in paragraphs 59, 81, 106, 124, 143, 166, 191 and 203, as well as bracketed paragraphs 204, 229, 238, 252 and 273.

that we argue endlessly over whether domestic policies and programs treat women and men identically — or, if there is a difference in treatment, whether it favors women.

The Platform asserts in Paragraph 19 that "only a radical transformation of the relationship between women and men to one of full and equal partnership will enable the world to meet the challenges of the next century." The heart of the radical transformation cited is found in Paragraph 28: "In many countries, the differences between women's and men's achievements and activities are still not recognized as the consequences of socially constructed gender roles rather than immutable biological differences." If gender is a matter of "roles" that are "socially constructed" and have no relation to nature or biological fact, then all sexuality (hetero-, homo-, trans- and bi-) is a matter of choice — and any sexual behavior is valid as a matter of preference. The language cited has already been adopted. It is the reason that the statements in Paragraph 30 that "[w]omen play a critical role in the family, the basic unit of society" and in Paragraph 31 that "[r]eligion plays a central role in the lives of millions of women" have not been adopted and are still subjects of debate.

A thoroughly discredited Marxist view of economics constitutes the third central theme. In Paragraph 57, the United States has already agreed that governments should have charge of "the productive capacity of women . . . through access to capital, resources, credit, land, technology, information, technical assistance and training so as to raise their income and improve nutrition, education and health care and status within the household." By "access" is meant expropriation, often by regulation, and with preference to women. Even if command economies functioned to provide benefits to the people subjected to them, the idea that women require unearned benefits secured by government coercion demeans their capacities, abilities and accomplishments.

The words *mother, father, wife and husband* do not appear anywhere in the Platform, signifying the document's fourth central theme, that the definition of *family* is fluid. In place of the idea of family, the document speaks of the "household," claiming in Paragraph 24 that "[o]ne-fourth of all households world wide are dependent upon female income even where men are present." Voluntary marriage as the quintessential social contract is not mentioned in the Platform. There is no discussion of whether the presence of men who are married to the women with whom they are living, as husbands to wives and fathers to the children of marriage, is or might be beneficial to the men, women and children involved.

Instead, approved Paragraph 52 asserts that "because of the gender division of labour and responsibilities for household welfare, women bear a

disproportionate burden, attempting to manage household consumption and production under conditions of increasing scarcity." Paragraph 20, also approved, asserts that the poverty of women and children is "exacerbated when responsibilities for basic social services have shifted from Governments to women." Thus, when the debate here at home is about how to get the government out of the entitlements business so that, in particular, women and children enslaved by a failed system can be set free, in Beijing the United States is to advocate the expansion of government dependency and encourage other nations to adopt policies of failure.

The fifth central theme of the Platform is that nongovernmental organizations should be funded by governments and should function transparently, which is to say as arms of, and with co-equal authority in relation to, governments. The Platform does not go so far as to mandate that nongovernmental organizations have police powers, but that matter is encompassed by "transparency," precisely why such an obfuscating word is employed. Implicitly if not explicitly, the Platform calls for the United States and other nations to use citizens' tax dollars to support the promotion of radical Feminism, worldwide, as a legitimate political and social movement equivalent to a publicly funded political party.

The Platform is a radical recipe for governments to consign the world's women to second class citizenship by assigning them unnecessary special privileges that demean and trivialize universal human rights. Fighting discrimination by imposing discrimination does violence to the idea of equality as natural to every person. It also does violence to both the ideals and the functions of liberty and equity. The United States should cancel participation in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and, in addition, should assure that the Platform's radical agenda has no government endorsement in this country.

## TESTIMONY

by Diane L. Knippers  
 President, the Institute on Religion and Democracy  
 on behalf of the Ecumenical Coalition on Women and Society

before the  
 Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights  
 Committee on International Relations  
 United States House of Representatives

July 12, 1995

The adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948 gave the world a powerful mechanism for holding nations accountable for the basic rights of all persons. Sadly, in recent years we have seen efforts to erode these basic standards, as authoritarian governments argue that human rights are not universal, but are culturally relative. But another form of erosion is more subtle, more insidious, and more dangerous. It is the trend toward defining every conceivable social goal as a human right -- whether or not these social goals are properly the responsibilities of governments and whether or not they are even obtainable. The result is obvious. When everything is considered a right, finally nothing can be defended as a right.

The Fourth World Conference on Women and its draft Platform for Action offer prime examples of this erosion. The adoption of this platform will undermine the pursuit of basic human rights. Even more troubling, it will also sacrifice efforts on behalf of women whose rights are the most repressed and abused in favor of the controversial social goals of Western gender feminists. This is a tragedy.

Let me cite several examples of the human rights flaws in the draft Platform for Action and the conference itself.

A. The draft Platform's commitment to universality is unsure.

Every reference to universal human rights is bracketed. If this document does not affirm universality it will mark a serious regression in the progress toward human rights within the international community.

B. The call to address the basic rights of women is blurred and minimized in the draft Platform's context of social engineering and expansive and questionable goals.

Serious abuses of rights of women, even when mentioned in the document, are diminished in the context of grandiose



plans for re-engineering society. For example, achieving for all women the basic right to vote and participate in elections is a much more urgent task than working to ensure equality of outcomes such as equal numbers of men and women in all parliaments.

Let me offer examples of abuses of women that are mentioned in the draft Platform, but diminished by the larger context. There is the urgent need to combat prostitution and pornography, particularly involving children. A recent report of a religious group which operates ministries in Thailand to young women who have been forced into prostitution tells of girls as young as 12 sold to brothels. One child said the brothel owner would beat her to make her stop crying while she was "entertaining" customers.

Another example is slavery, which has not been eradicated but is still practiced in nations such as Mauritania and Sudan. A recent fact-finding team organized by Christian Solidarity International reports that local officials estimate that some 1,000 women and children have been taken into slavery in the last five years from one Sudanese town alone. Team members met a 14-year-old Sudanese girl who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery when she was seven. Yet the atrocity of human slavery gets only passing mention in the 121-page Platform for Action.

Such blatant and egregious human rights abuses are trivialized in the context of a document that takes on the grandiose aim to redefine gender roles in every society with no reference to biological differences between men and women.

- C. The Platform will result in the expansion of the coercive and intrusive powers of governments and international agencies in the lives of individuals and families.

The goals of the draft Platform for Action -- particularly (1) defining equality as outcome rather than opportunity and (2) obliterating any distinctive male or female roles -- will lead inexorably to the expansion of the coercive power of governments. There is no question that this will contribute to anti-democratic practices. It will also undermine the rights of individuals and families (beginning with the rights of parents to train their own children).

- D. Serious human rights abuses, such as religious repression, are ignored.

The most serious omission in the draft Platform is any acknowledgement of freedom of conscience or of religion for women. Throughout the document, religion is cited as a source of repression of women. There is only one brief (and still bracketed) acknowledgement of the spiritual needs of

women. But nowhere in 121 pages does the document call for religious freedom for women.

Women should have the right to engage in religious practice, to change their religion, and to propagate their religious faith, particularly to their children. Women who change their religion should be free of the threat of state-imposed divorce or the threat of having their children taken from them. The irony is that this conference on women is being held in a country which currently imprisons women for practicing their faith.

E. Holding the Fourth World Conference on Women in China also serves to undermine international human rights standards.

The Ecumenical Coalition on Women and Society is calling upon the U.S. government to boycott the Beijing women's conference unless two conditions are met. The first is that Harry Wu must be freed from prison. The second is that our government must obtain assurances from the Peoples Republic of China that U.S. citizens and other UN conference participants will enjoy the basic rights of freedom of conscience, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Women in non-governmental organizations going to Beijing are being told that they risk interrogation if they meet in groups of more than five, that they cannot meet in hotel rooms, they can't unfurl banners, they can't take in religious literature, they can't engage in corporate prayer outside a special tent, they can't take unregistered computers or fax machines into hotel rooms. How can we begin to discuss human rights in a climate in which those rights are ignored and abused? It would be unconscionable for the United States to participate in such a sham.

Conclusion

Women are brutally denied basic human rights in many parts of the world. Women suffer denial of educational opportunities and property rights, forced abortion and forced sterilization, genital mutilation, prostitution, rape, female infanticide, the threat of execution for apostasy or blasphemy, slavery -- the list goes on and on.

The campaign to combat the truly horrible abuses of women is undermined by linking women's rights with highly questionable economic, social, and environmental theories. The Beijing agenda goes far beyond basic rights for women. The draft Platform claims that peace and development cannot be achieved unless women represent 50 percent of all national and international political and economic agencies. How or why women are uniquely capable of

bringing in this utopia is never explained.

The danger of the Beijing women's conference is that it attempts sweeping and unnecessary social change -- change that will undermine rather than enhance the rights of women. The draft Platform for Action equals or surpasses the Marxist-Leninist experiment in its ambition. The draft Platform for Action calls for the most intrusive, arrogant, and radical restructuring of the social order in human history -- all on the baseless assumption that this will produce a just, prosperous, and peaceful world. I'm convinced of the opposite. It is the road to tyranny and oppression for women and for men.

The Ecumenical Coalition on Women and Society is comprised of independent groups in the Disciples of Christ, the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Roman Catholic Church, the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church and others. It also includes official agencies of the National Association of Evangelicals and the World Evangelical Fellowship. The Coalition is an accredited non-governmental organization to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

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STATEMENT BY JEANNE E. HEAD, R.N.  
INTERNATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE FEDERATION, INC.  
TO

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

July 18, 1995

My name is Jeanne Head. I am International Right To Life Federation's (IRLF) Representative to the U.N. in New York and the New York State delegate to National Right To Life Committee (NRLC). IRLF is a worldwide federation of pro-life organizations (including NRLC) dedicated to the protection of all innocent human life from conception to natural death. We see a woman's life as a continuum, beginning at conception, and proceeding through the entire life cycle.

IRLF has been accredited to the United Nations as a non-governmental organization (NGO) with consultative status under the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 1987. We have actively participated in the recent critical U.N. Conferences including the Cairo Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), The World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), and what we thought was the final preparatory conference for the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) to be held in Beijing, China September 5 through 15.

I speak on behalf of IRLF as a woman and as an obstetric nurse who has spent my life caring for women and children.

We have serious concerns about the general conduct of these U.N. conferences and particularly about their attempts to impose the failed and tragic social policies of the U.S. and other Western countries on the developing countries.

We are particularly concerned about the extreme pressure and coercive practices that have been exerted on developing countries and their delegations to accept language in these U.N. documents that would violate their laws, their ethical and religious values and their cultural backgrounds.

For example, before, during and after the Cairo Conference (ICPD), these pressures and coercive practices were used by the Clinton Administration's delegations, other Western Governments and their powerful national and international pro-abortion NGO allies in an attempt to enshrine abortion as a fundamental right and as a method of planning worldwide. When they failed in Cairo, some of their more vocal allies vowed to achieve their goals at the WSSD in Copenhagen or at the Fourth world Conference on Women in Beijing. They failed to do so in Copenhagen in March of this year.

The activities of the Clinton Administration in promoting abortion as a

fundamental right and as a method of family planning in relation to the Cairo Conference were well documented. On March 16, 1994 (before the Cairo PrepCom III) the State Department sent an "action cable" to every U.S. ambassador and envoy calling for "senior diplomatic interventions" in support of U.S. priorities for the Cairo Conference and PrepComIII which included the following statement: "The United States believes that access to safe, legal and voluntary abortion is a fundamental right of all women."

The Clinton Administration delegation and its pro-abortion allies worldwide deny that they want to go beyond Cairo in regard to the abortion issue in the Beijing Conference. However, that is what they said about Copenhagen and there was ample evidence during negotiations on the WSSD document of attempts to expand on Cairo -- even though they were less obvious and they failed.

The massive 121 page Beijing document for the FWCW was seriously flawed to start with on a number of issues -- just as were the Cairo and Copenhagen documents. (It is to be noted that all of these documents were written in U.S. type English which often does not translate to mean the same thing in other U.N. languages.) The document that emerged from the grueling 3 1/2 weeks of negotiations during the FWCW PrepComIII was even more seriously flawed than the document presented to the delegates when they arrived at the PrepCom.

At least 1/3 of the document has not been settled. A large part of issues still to be negotiated involve abortion and related issues. This is a matter of serious concern.

When a word, phrase, paragraph or larger part of the document is still open to negotiation, it is put in square brackets.

Among the words and phrases that are presently in square brackets are "mother", phrases related to "taking into account the rights and duties and responsibilities of parents," "universally recognized human rights," and "female feticide" when used along with "female infanticide" in referring to the practice of killing girls before and after birth for the purpose of sex selection, or in discussing violence and discrimination against women and the girl child.

In regard to the use of the term "female feticide" a U.S. delegate objected to the term during a negotiating session in New York because it might hinder reproductive rights.

Much of the ICPD language (and even some rejected by ICPD) relating to the abortion issue has been re-introduced into the FWCW Beijing document (all this without any noticeable protest from the U.S. Delegation) without the modifying language which made it acceptable to some countries such as the Muslims and without the Reservations expressed by many countries.

For example:

The paragraph addressing the need to respect sovereign rights, national laws, and full respect for religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and universally recognized human rights -- which appeared as the first paragraph under principles in the ICPD document -- has been allocated to a footnote, the idea of which has been put into square brackets.

The U.S. participated in a "consolidated amendment" (along with Canada, Japan, Australia and others) which calls for taking "action to ensure the conditions necessary for women to exercise their reproductive rights and eliminate where possible, coercive laws and practices."

The document continues to refer to "unsafe abortion" with the implication that abortion, if legalized can be made safe. This is a false and dangerous concept. Women suffer serious physical, emotional, and psychological damage and even death from so called "safe legal abortion." There is a risk that some may use this language as an excuse to promote the false concept that legalization makes abortion safe.

According to the WHO, the dramatic decline in maternal mortality rates in the developed world coincided ". . . with the development of obstetric techniques and improvements in the general status of women." There is ample data for documenting this in the U.S.. The most significant impact of legalization in the U.S. has been an increase in the number of abortions.

In the U.S. where abortion has been legal for over 20 years, and where health standards are high, maternal mortality is 4 times that of Ireland where abortion is not legal and which has the lowest maternal mortality rate in the world. The key to reduction in maternal mortality from all causes is to improve maternal health care. In the developing world -- where medical care, antibiotics, and even basic asepsis are scarce or absent -- promoting abortion would increase, not decrease, maternal mortality.

And, of course, abortion is never safe for the unborn child.

The pro-life and pro-family delegates to these conferences have had a significant impact on their outcome when we have had access to the delegates. It is the practice at these U.N. conferences to accept already negotiated language from previous U.N. conferences. However, many delegates haven't been at a previous conferences or don't remember the details. That is where the NGO lobbyists can be of help. They help the delegates (some from very small countries without a staff) to sift through the reams of documents and proposals so they can understand what they really mean.

Contrary to previous conferences, a large percentage of negotiations at the PrepCom for Beijing in New York were conducted in "informal-informal" sessions closed to NGOS (and the press). At the ICPD in Cairo and the WSSD in Copenhagen, NGOS were not allowed access to the floor of the conference as they are in Main Committee negotiations at the PrepComs in New York. This was a definite disadvantage for the pro-life and pro-family NGOS in Cairo and in Copenhagen.

In Cairo, in particular, the pro-abortion side had no such disadvantage. The president of the U.S. Planned Parenthood and former Congresswoman Bella Abzug (who is afforded special status even when not sitting in a delegation) among others were part of the U.S. delegation and had full access to the floor.

We ask the Congress to insist that the delegation from the U.S. being sent to Beijing reflect the ethical, religious and cultural values of the majority of the citizens of the U.S. and that they cease and desist from promoting the tragic and flawed social policies on the developing world.

# *The National Institute of Womanhood*

Celebrating what is true and enduring to woman

TESTIMONY OF  
CECILIA ACEVEDO ROYALS, PRESIDENT  
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WOMANHOOD

TO THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
HEARING ON CONTROVERSIES RELATED TO THE  
FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

WASHINGTON, D.C.  
JULY 18, 1995

THANK YOU MR. CHAIRMAN.

It is an honor to have this opportunity to address the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights. I speak as a representative of The National Institute of Womanhood (NIW). An Institute which is a veteran of three global conferences: the Cairo Population and Development Conference (ICPD); the Copenhagen Social Summit (WSSD) and the Preparatory Conference for the Conference on Women (PrepComm).

At the New York Preparatory Conference NIW convened the Well-Being of Woman (WBW) Caucus. This caucus represented major U.S. organizations together with many others from around the globe and was a strong and effective voice for millions of women worldwide.

The U.S. component of the WBW Caucus was well representative of the multiple creeds, denominations and interfaith organizations that characterize the American people. It included women's groups such as The Ecumenical Coalition on Women and Society (which is under the auspices of the Institute for Religion and Democracy and represents women in organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals, the Presbyterian Church in America, United Methodist Church and Episcopalians United), Women's Federation for World Peace, Eagle Forum, Concerned Women For America, Catholic Campaign for America, Women For Women, The National Association of Professional Black Women, and United Families of America.

The Well-Being of Woman Caucus established a strong and effective lobbying presence and was very instrumental in exposing and resisting some of the policies injurious to women contained in the document. Furthermore, and just as important, it exercised a bold leadership that rallied

the scattered efforts of many non-governmental organizations and established once and for all the voice of the common woman.

The Fourth World Conference on Women presents us with a perplexing situation. While it purports to promote the advancement of all women, it is actually injurious to them.

The draft platform of action is injurious to women in the following ways:

**A.: It ignores the central experience of women:**

The Platform for Action aggressively fails to address the central experience of ninety per cent of women: motherhood.

It trivializes and disparages the relational aspect of mother and child and ignores the irreplaceable character and value of this relation. Furthermore, it is disparaging to mothers by making the arrogant presumption that they are interchangeable and replaceable with caretakers, consumers and householders.

The 122 page draft plan condescends to use the term 'mother' or 'motherhood' a paltry 15 times. Of those 15 mentions, 12 frame motherhood negatively. Of the remaining three, two are neutral. There is one and only one positive reference to the role of mothers. It, along with the two neutral references, is bracketed for removal.

- 245(b). Produce and/or disseminate media materials on women leaders, inter alia, as [*caring mothers and nurturers of happy families*] managers and entrepreneurs, to provide role models, particularly to young women;

It is an affront to the dignity of ninety per cent of women that caring mothers and nurturers of happy families are in doubt as role models for young women.

The U.N. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) together with several member states and certain Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) do not want motherhood to appear in a positive light in the document, not even as a mere *inter alia* reference.

The UN has made a 180 degree turn from its 1948 Declaration of Human Rights where it sought to ensure that "motherhood . . . [is] entitled to special care and assistance" (Article 25). In fact, special care and assistance for "mothers" is not found anywhere in the Beijing Platform for Action.

Furthermore it aggressively avoids mentioning them. The following two examples reveal the calculated verbal engineering used to avoid the use of the term "mothers":

37. Women as citizens can help change consumption patterns in their multiple role as consumers, householders, workers and voters.

248. As consumers, caretakers of their families and educators, women play an important role in promoting sustainable development and in their concern for the quality and sustainability of life for present and future generations.



The language of the UN Declaration on Human rights (Art.25) that "Motherhood [is] entitled to special care and assistance" could be included in the Draft Platform of Action text of paragraph 30 as follows and the language should be retained:

30. *[...They have also borne in mind the social significance of maternity and the role of both parents in the family and in the upbringing of children, and are aware that the role of women in procreation should not be a basis for discrimination but rather, motherhood is entitled to special care and assistance, and that the upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between women and men and society as a whole.]*

**B: It ignores the relational dimension of women, the family.**

It trivializes and disparages the relational aspect of the mother and father, parents and children, and the constellation of relations within families. Furthermore, it is directly hostile to the irreplaceable value of a mother and a father in the raising and rearing of the children. The only paragraph that attempts to acknowledge the family and the role of women in the family is bracketed for removal.

What is more, parental rights are being phased out. Almost every reference to the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents is bracketed for removal.

The document does not acknowledge what is generally recognized: that the rights of parents to direct the upbringing of their children is a fundamental right implicit in the concept of ordered liberty and that the role of parents in raising and rearing their children is of inestimable value and deserving of both praise and protection by all levels of government.

(See paras. 85(b), 95, 107(f,i,l,m), 108(e), 108(g), 109(h,j,l), 259, 262, 267, 281(b,c,d,e & g), 283(d))

While withholding support for mothers, families and parental rights, it explicitly attempts to protect diverse sexual orientations and lifestyles, (232(h)). Furthermore while impeding parents, it attempts to interpose miscellaneous men and women as the gender counselors for children and youth (262).

**C: It betrays the woman's perspective in favor of a "gender perspective."**

The document becomes an international tool to tighten the grip on the control of the concept of gender in the girl child. The concept of gender in girls is constructed according to the image of the UN and the women's organizations and not according to the image of parents and family. The delicate integration and harmony of gender identity with sexual orientation in girls and boys is a serious concern in the education of gender.

Consider the following expert from a spring 1995 course description at Hunter College for a course titled "Reimagining Gender":

" In this course, we will... find out how twentieth century thinkers have re-imagined the concept of gender. Is gender a "social construction" or the product of "biological sex"? What is at stake in transgressing the binary categories of female/male, feminine/masculine, heterosexual/homosexual, natural/unnatural? How does gender identity intersect with other

identity categories such as race, class, and sexual orientation? We will be paying particular attention to the ways in which feminist, queer, and transsexual writers and theorists open up these questions."

This is a sample of what is happening in the colleges and universities throughout the country.

The document reads like a how-to manual for government control of gender identity in the girl child at all levels of education. In light of the above paragraph consider the following gender language in the U. N. document:

85 (a) Elaborate recommendations and develop curricula, textbooks and teaching aids free of gender-stereotypes for all levels of education, including teacher training, in association with all concerned: publishers, teachers, public authorities and parents associations;

85 (p) *[Ensure that gender, cultural and religious diversity are respected in educational institutions and reflected in educational materials;]*

262. Girls and adolescents may receive a variety of conflicting and confusing messages on their gender roles from their parents, teachers, peers and the media. Women and men need to work together with children and youth to break down persistent gender stereotypes *[recognizing the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents and other persons legally responsible for children, and consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.]*

The miscellaneous men and women that are not parents may well be instructors like the one that devised the gender re-imagining curriculum for Hunter College.

Therefore, I urge this sub-committee to protect the right of parents to direct the upbringing of their children and their fundamental right to educate their children in their gender roles, and to prevent undue intrusion of government.

**D: It contains a distorted hierarchy of values.**

The document gives excessive attention to sexual and reproductive rights and services, and the introduction of these services to children without regard to legitimate parental concerns (paras. 97 and 232(f)). Conversely the document fails to address the true concerns of mothers worldwide: basic health care for their children and family members. Of the top killers world wide, pregnancy related deaths are a mere one per cent. Deaths caused by infectious and parasitic diseases, on the other hand, is the number one cause of death world wide and is responsible for thirty two per cent of all deaths.

Women are painfully aware that mothers in Kenya must stand by helplessly while their children die of simple pneumonia because their clinics, choked full of costly IUD's, do not have a single vial of penicillin that costs only a few cents; that women in India are lured into government sterilization chambers with promises of houses and loans; that women in many developing communities must submit to taking contraceptives before their community gets a new road, or a water purification tool. As one delegate put it: "They do not want to let go of the money they

are making on us with their reproductive control industry; we need wells, schools, aspirin, and instead they fill our clinics with condoms."

The following paragraph is an example of how the document maligns the natural family by implying that traditional female roles, such as motherhood, deny women opportunities.

76. Curricula and teaching materials remain gender-biased to a large degree, and are rarely sensitive to the specific needs of girls and women. This reinforces traditional female and male roles that deny women opportunities for full and equal partnership in society. Lack of gender awareness by educators at all levels strengthens existing inequities between males and females by reinforcing discriminatory tendencies and undermining girls' self-esteem. *[The lack of sexual and reproductive education has a profound impact on women and men] [taking into account the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents and other persons legally responsible for children and consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child].*

**The question that begs to be asked is: WHY?**

Because the pivotal element of so-called sustainable development is reduction of fertility rates. In other words, the key element is reducing the number of children per mother. Education of the girl child for the purpose of ensuring that she seeks greater use of contraception, abortion and sterilization and selects any occupation, other than motherhood is a well documented population control strategy.

Hence, the scandalous link between the population control and education of the girl child's gender concept. Consider the following quote from "Gender Perspectives in family Planning Programs Expert Group Meeting organized by the Population Division of the U.N. in 1992:

"In order to be effective in the long run, family planning programmes should not only focus on attempting to reduce fertility within existing gender roles, but rather on changing gender roles to reduce fertility."

To achieve this, the only relevant gender role that needs to be controlled and discouraged is motherhood. Since population control is the goal, motherhood is the antithesis.

Mr. Chairman:

The United Nations is creating a new marginalized group. Is the woman who chooses to have children rapidly becoming marginalized by design?

Mr. Chairman:

I urge that your Sub-committee take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the United states does not promote and actively opposes this blatant disregard for women.

Thank you.

STATEMENT BY  
AMBASSADOR MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT  
U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
TO THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AUGUST 2, 1995

A. INTRODUCTION.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to be here to discuss with you the Administration's policy towards the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, China, beginning on September 4.

I will begin by explaining why the Administration believes our participation in the conference is important. Then, the leaders of the team negotiating the conference Platform for Action will be available to respond to your questions about the status of that effort. They are Melinda Kimble, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, and Ambassador Victor Marrero, the United States Representative to the UN Economic and Social Council.

Let me begin, Mr. Chairman, by expressing my appreciation for the interest and attention you have demonstrated in this conference and the issues surrounding it. Your dedication to human rights and to the alleviation of suffering are well known and shared both by the members of your subcommittee and by the Administration. Although we may have differences about some issues, we share a desire to improve the status and treatment of women around the world. On that basis, I hope we can find a substantial amount of common ground in our approach to the Fourth World Conference.

B. UNITED STATES GOALS.

Let there be no doubt, however, the United States will attend and participate in this conference. We will do so because the conference will contribute to goals that are urgent, pro-democratic, essential to sustainable economic growth, and fully in keeping with America's commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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We believe that the series of Women's Conferences initiated twenty years ago in Mexico City has contributed enormously to efforts to advance the status of women--legally, economically and socially. These conferences are part of an ongoing international conversation about the rights of women; a conversation that has led to reforms in law, the creation and growth of self-help and advocacy groups, the exchange of information, the spread of knowledge and gradual change in perceptions about what behavior is acceptable and just and what is not.

This process has altered for the better the lives and prospects of women and girls around the globe. Great strides have been made over the past two decades in expanding educational, economic and policymaking opportunities for women and in increasing awareness about chronic, but often neglected problems, such as domestic violence, the corroding effects of pornography, the plight of refugees and the sexual abuse of children.

The Fourth World Conference for Women presents an opportunity to build on that progress and to hasten the removal of continuing obstacles to the full and equal participation of women in society. As head of our delegation, I believe United States priorities will receive strong support. These include:

- o promoting and protecting the human rights of women and ending violence against women;
- o expanding the participation of women in political and economic decisionmaking;
- o assuring equal access for women to education and health care throughout their lives;
- o strengthening families through efforts to balance the work and family responsibilities of both women and men; and
- o recognizing the increased role of nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) in building strong communities--at the local, national and international levels.

These goals are interconnected, and at the heart of each is a commitment to the freedom of individuals to exercise control over their own lives.

### C. ENDING VIOLENCE, ADVANCING FREEDOM AND PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS.

Mr. Chairman, I have spent the better part of my life striving to promote democracy around the world. As someone whose family was driven from its home when I was a child, first by Hitler, then by Stalin, I believe it is the responsibility of every free person to do what he or she reasonably can to advance the freedom of others. And I intend to see that our delegation to the Women's Conference serves as an unabashed advocate for freedom and respect for the universality of human rights, including the rights of women.

Those who suggest that we boycott the Women's Conference because China, the host country, has a poor record on human rights are well-motivated, but miss the main point. American withdrawal would not halt the conference; it would simply result in a conference in which 130 million American women would not be represented and in which American leadership and influence would not be felt. And our leadership is essential, especially if the cause of human rights is to be advanced.

Unfortunately, today, in countries around the world, appalling abuses are being committed against women. These include coerced abortions and sterilizations, children sold into prostitution, ritual mutilations, dowry murders and official indifference to violence.

The Clinton Administration will use the conference to bolster the view that women should be considered full partners in their communities and nations; to gain broad support for halting discrimination against girls; to combat the despicable notion that rape is just another tactic of war; and to underline the truth that violence against women is no one's prerogative--it is a crime that we all have a responsibility to condemn, prevent, punish and stop.

Mr. Chairman, you are among those who have expressed concern that U.S. participation in the Women's Conference might be construed by some as acquiescence in China's human rights practices. Let me assure you; from the perspective of the Clinton Administration, it is not. Attendance at an international conference has never constituted an implicit blessing of the host country's domestic policies. During the Cold War, we regularly attended meetings that happened to be scheduled in Communist countries. The Women's Conference will be held in Beijing simply because, in 1992, when the selection of a site took place, it was Asia's turn to host the conference and China was the only Asian nation to step forward.

It just does not make sense, in the name of human rights, to boycott a conference that has as a primary purpose, protecting the human rights of more than half the people on earth.

The way to help women, in China and elsewhere, is not to abandon the field to others, but rather to attend this conference, to debate head-on the differences of philosophy and ideology that exist, to lay out before the world the abuses we want to halt and the obstacles to progress we want to remove, and to gain commitments to change from the societies most in need of change. That is what leadership and a commitment to free and open discussion are all about.

And let us not forget the potential impact of this conference on the status of women in China. Conference preparations have contributed already to a heightened awareness within China of women's issues. There is public discussion of previously taboo subjects, including violence against women. Chinese returning from the preparatory meetings in Manila and elsewhere have described their heightened sensitivity to matters such as the treatment of women in the media and the economic exploitation of women. It matters a great deal that more than 5,000 Chinese women will participate in the NGO forum, share their experiences, listen to others and take their impressions back to their communities.

Given the nature of China's human rights record, I do not mean to exaggerate the impact of this one conference. But it has been my experience, as a former board member of the National Endowment for Democracy, that one of the best ways to promote democratic modes of thinking is to expose the citizens of closed societies to new ideas on subjects that relate directly to their own lives.

Exposure to such thinking matters to us not only in China, but around the world, because countries in which women have a fair share of power tend to be more stable, democratic, prosperous and just than those in which women are marginalized and repressed.

#### D. STRENGTHENING FAMILIES.

The Women's Conference will contribute to a freer and more equitable world. And as its recommendations are carried out, it will also strengthen families around the world. The bonds of family affection and protection are the threads out of which the web of community is built. We know from our own experience that when families are strong, children are cared for, socially constructive values are taught and an environment is created in which civility and law may thrive.

In consequence, we want momentum to build around the idea that women and men should share fairly the varied responsibilities of family life; we want to see the lives and futures of girls valued to the same degree as boys; we want parents and prospective parents to be able to make informed judgments as they plan their families; we want to see domestic violence curtailed and condemned.

I note, in this context, the recent letter of Pope John Paul II, in which he expresses deep appreciation to the UN for its sponsorship of the Women's Conference. In the letter, His Holiness cites an:

urgent need to achieve real equality in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with respect to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic state.

#### E. WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. Chairman, there are a host of themes running through the preparations for the conference and the draft Platform for Action; one of the most important pertains to the role of women in economic development.

Although considerable gains have been made in recent decades, women remain an undervalued and underdeveloped human resource. This is not to say that women have trouble finding work; in many societies--especially in rural, agriculturally-based areas--they do the vast majority of the work; but they don't own the land, they are not taught to read, they can't obtain personal or business loans and they are denied equal access to the levers of political decisionmaking.

It is no accident that most of those in the world who are abjectly poor are women, often caring for children without the help of the children's father; many trapped from an early age in a web of abuse, discrimination, ignorance and powerlessness from which only a few are able to escape.

Of course, the Women's Conference will not solve these problems overnight, but it will call attention to them and promote remedial action. Women need access to education and health care; they need access to credit; and they need equality under the law. Releasing the productive and creative capacity of women is one key to breaking the cycle of poverty; and that will contribute, in turn, to stronger families, healthier communities and a more stable and peaceful world.

#### F. OTHER ISSUES.

Mr. Chairman, before I close, I would like to comment on a few of the more specific issues that have arisen in connection with this conference. An event like this attracts the attention of a wide range of nongovernmental organizations and individuals with strong and diverse opinions. This is healthy, and it underlines the fact that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) will play a critical role both at the conference and in its followup. That is why the United States has campaigned hard and with much success to encourage and ensure participation at the conference by NGOs.



At our instigation, and that of other nations, the accreditation process for the World Conference was reopened in April, with the result that more than 750 additional groups were accredited last month, including many from the United States.

All told, groups sending observers to the conference will hail from across the political and social spectrum. A total of more than 3500 NGO's have been approved to send observers to the conference--the highest total ever for a UN meeting.

It is true that because of longstanding UN policies, no groups specifically representing the people of Taiwan or Tibet are accredited. There are, however, many NGOs going to the conference who have raised specific concerns related to Tibetan and Taiwanese issues, and many who have expressed strong opposition to official Chinese policies. These groups will be able to express their views freely during the conference and NGO forum.

Given the wide range of issues that will be discussed at the conference, it is inevitable, despite progress towards consensus, that differences will arise.

For example, in light of current budget constraints, the United States is wary of unrealistic provisions urging developed countries to contribute more resources to foreign aid.

We are opposed to the view put forward by some that men and women have rigidly-defined roles that permit discrimination against women.

We have bracketed language designed to introduce extraneous political issues, such as the U.S. embargo against Cuba.

We are opposing statements inconsistent with our own traditions of free speech.

And we are determined that there be no stepping back from the principle ratified in the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action that "the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights."

Given the scope of the conference, it is also inevitable that, in addition to differences of view, there will be differences of understanding. The draft Platform for Action is 150 pages long. At least at this point, I would not personally call it an artistic success. It is repetitive; more detailed than it needs to be; and it often uses a half dozen words or paragraphs where one would do. It may be partly for that reason that some rather bizarre misunderstandings have

For example, some articles in the press have argued wrongly that the U.S. delegation is intent on re-defining motherhood, fatherhood, family and gender. The document's call for equal treatment for women has been trivialized by the suggestion that this would require absolute statistical parity between men and women in every field of endeavor. Most incredibly, my office has been besieged by calls criticizing my alleged belief that there are five sexes.

Just so we're clear, for more than two decades, the term "gender" has been used in UN documents when referring to the socially-ascribed roles of the two--count'em two--sexes. The contact group established to resolve this issue agreed that "gender" was understood as it has been used in the United Nations for twenty years and that it does not have another broader meaning when used in the Platform for Action. In other words, gender refers to male and female.

On another point, contrary to some of the testimony this subcommittee has received, the Administration believes, as Vice-President Gore has said, that "decisions about the extent to which abortion is acceptable should be the province of each government within the context of its own laws and national circumstances...The United States has not sought, does not seek and will not seek to establish any international right to abortion. That is a red herring."

Instead, the Administration intends to hold firm in Beijing to the commitments made at the 1994 UN Conference on Population and Development in Cairo regarding reproductive health and rights. That agreement recognizes the right of couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so free from discrimination, coercion and violence.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I must state for the record that no one should interpret our decision to participate in the Women's Conference as a sign of indifference or acquiescence in the continued detention by the Chinese Government of Mr. Harry Wu. We have called upon the Government of China to release Mr. Wu immediately and unharmed. This is a top priority of the United States. We do not, however, have any reason to believe that a decision to withdraw from the conference--or to make our participation conditional on Mr. Wu's release--would have a positive effect on China's decisions in this area.

#### G. CONCLUSION.

Mr. Chairman, since the first Women's Conference 20 years ago, opportunities for women have expanded throughout the world. It is no longer a question of whether women from all countries will have a strong voice in controlling their destinies, but only when and how that goal will be achieved.

But building inclusive societies is still a work in progress. The United States has been working on it for two centuries. For more than half our nation's history, until 75 years ago this month, American women could not even vote. Many traditional or authoritarian societies still have a very long way to go. The Fourth Women's Conference will offer guidelines and promote commitments for every state to move forward, whatever their current practices and policies may be.

We should all recognize that this conference, like the other efforts we undertake in behalf of women's rights and human rights, are part of a centuries-long process; a process of adjustment to a changing environment; and part, also, of an historic struggle to build societies based on law, decency and respect for the dignity of every human being.

We owe it to all our children--boys, as well as girls--to make the most of this opportunity and to see that American views and values are well represented in its work. Towards that end, we welcome the interest of this subcommittee and of all Members of Congress, and we solicit your counsel and support.

TESTIMONY OF AMBASSADOR VICTOR MARRERO  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES  
ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
TO THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
AUGUST 2, 1995

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Victor Marrero, and I am the United States Representative on the United Nations Economic and Social Council, which oversees the work of the Commission on the Status of Women -- the UN body that has overall jurisdiction for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women.

During the past year, I have worked actively and closely with officials from the United Nations Secretariat as well as representatives of other governments concerning preparations for this Conference. Drawing upon my experience at the United Nations, I have participated in many of the meetings of the leadership for the Conference, also known as "the Bureau," and I have offered guidance and direction to other members of the U.S. Delegation for the World Conference concerning applicable UN procedures and processes.

During these and other meetings I have helped shape the format and structure of the Conference, and have participated in the resolution of some of the knottier substantive, procedural and logistic issues that have emerged. For example, I was the U.S. delegate on the contact group established to resolve the question regarding the use and meaning of the word "gender" in the Conference's draft Platform for Action. I was also involved in many of the negotiations regarding accreditation of NGOs to the Conference, and in discussions regarding the format for negotiating sessions in Beijing.

More recently, I have been part of the negotiating team for the Draft Platform for Action. During informal negotiations held this week in New York, I am the designated head of the U.S. delegation and have been concentrating effort on offering overall guidance to the human rights contingent that is headed by Ambassador Geraldine Ferraro, U.S. Representative on the UN Human Rights Commission.

I am pleased to answer any questions that you might have.

TESTIMONY OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MELINDA L. KIMBLE  
BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
TO THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
AUGUST 2, 1995

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

My name is Melinda Kimble. I am the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Global Issues within the Bureau of International Organization Affairs.

I am one of the principal U.S. negotiators for UN Fourth World Conference's main document -- the Platform for Action. My work has focused mainly on economic issues in the Draft Platform, though I have also helped develop U.S. negotiating strategy for the document as a whole.

The Platform for Action has been produced through consensus-oriented negotiations among 185 member states of the United Nations. It has its roots in the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, the document adopted by the Third World Conference on Women held in 1985. The Platform, originally drafted by the UN Secretariat for the World Conference, now includes ideas that emerged from five regional United Nations meetings held during 1994 in Indonesia, Argentina, Austria, Senegal and Jordan.

Our top priorities are:

- o Human rights of women, including actions to end violence against women
- o A lifespan approach to health and education
- o Efforts to balance work and family responsibilities of both women and men
- o Economic security
- o The importance of NGOs as partners in building communities -- locally, nationally and internationally
- o The full participation of women in political and economic decision-making

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- o The World Conference is important to Americans because the successes and challenges women experience are similiar all over the world. Women everywhere want: strong families, economic security, basic and better education and health care, participation in decision-making, personal safety, and legal rights. This Conference is designed to explore and understand these challenges and to promote an action agenda to achieve these goals.

In March and April in New York, I took part as a negotiator in the final preparatory meeting for the World Conference. At this meeting, delegates agreed on a significant portion of the text of the Platform for Action, leaving some 30-35% remaining to be negotiated. I have been in New York much of this week and will be returning. As informal negotiations are underway to try to reach agreement on a number of Platform issues, particularly in areas where previously agreed language is being used, we are making slow but steady progress.

I would be pleased to answer any questions that you might have.

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# **amnesty international**

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## **EQUALITY BY THE YEAR 2000? Amnesty International's recommendations for the Fourth UN World Conference on Women's Platform for Action**

SEPTEMBER 1994

SUMMARY

AI INDEX: IOR 41/06/94

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The Fourth United Nations (UN) World Conference on Women will be held in Beijing, China, in September 1995. It will produce a final document, the Platform for Action, on the themes of equality, development and peace. This is being formulated at a time when the international community is becoming more aware of the need to improve women's enjoyment of their human rights. From Amnesty International's perspective, violations of women's and the girl-child's human rights are extensive and severe and occur under every aspect of the organization's mandate.

It might seem that the themes of the Conference concern different human rights from those on which Amnesty International campaigns. However, human rights are universal and indivisible and the specific rights which are the focus of Amnesty International's mandate are inextricably linked to other human rights. Any woman who is the victim, or is a risk, of imprisonment, torture, summary or arbitrary execution or "disappearance" stands no chance of exercising her rights to equality, development or peace.

Amnesty International believes that, above all, the Platform for Action should focus on practical steps which governments will implement to ensure a real and measurable advance in the situation of women in every region of the world. This document includes recommendations on the following key points affecting women's human rights:

1. The universality and indivisibility of women's human rights
2. Ratification of human rights instruments
3. Implementation of international human rights standards
4. Women activists

5. Violence against women
6. Women and armed conflict
7. Refugee and internally displaced women
8. Human rights education
9. Development assistance
10. Integration across the UN system

In addition, Amnesty International believes that it is of paramount importance that the contributions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are taken into full account. This should include NGOs who are entitled to attend the preparatory meetings and the Conference because they have consultative status with the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as well as NGOs, often working at the national level, who do not have consultative status but offer expertise and a genuine commitment to human rights and who bear witness to the reality of women's human rights.

**KEYWORDS: WOMEN / UN / INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS / WOMEN'S RIGHTS  
ACTIVISTS / REFUGEES / DISPLACED PEOPLE / ARMED CONFLICT / HUMAN RIGHTS  
EDUCATION / NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS / HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS**

This report summarizes a 12-page document (4,525 words), *Equality by the year 2000?: Amnesty International's recommendations for the Fourth UN World Conference on Women's Platform for Action* (AI Index: IOR 41/06/94), issued by Amnesty International in September 1994. Anyone wanting further details or to take action on this issue should consult the full document.

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## EQUALITY BY THE YEAR 2000?

# Amnesty International's recommendations for the Fourth UN World Conference on Women's Platform for Action

### *Introduction*

The Fourth United Nations (UN) World Conference on Women will be held in Beijing, China, in September 1995<sup>1</sup>. The first such conference was held in Mexico City in 1976 and marked the beginning of the UN Decade of Women. The second conference, in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1980, adopted a Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade. The third, hosted by Kenya in 1985, at the end of the Decade, produced the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000.<sup>2</sup>

The Fourth UN World Conference on Women will produce a Platform for Action, on the themes of equality, development and peace, which is being drafted under the auspices of the UN Commission on the Status of Women<sup>3</sup>, as the preparatory body for the conference. Contributions to the final document will come from regional preparatory meetings<sup>4</sup> and other meetings of governments and intergovernmental organizations. Many of these meetings, and the conference itself, will have parallel activities for non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

### *The contribution of non-governmental organizations*

Amnesty International believes that it is of paramount importance that the contributions of NGOs are taken into full account in the preparatory process and the conference. It urges the world's governments to seize this opportunity to work more closely with NGOs: women's groups, human rights bodies, indigenous organizations and many others. This should include NGOs who are entitled to attend the preparatory meetings and the conference because they have consultative status with the UN's Economic and Social Council as well as NGOs, often working at the national level, who do not have consultative status but offer expertise and a genuine commitment to human rights and who bear witness to the reality of women's human rights. The contribution made by

NGOs to the UN World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in June 1993, including its preparatory process, was of crucial importance. If the Fourth UN World Conference on Women is to improve significantly the situation of women around the world, NGOs must have full access to the conference and its preparatory process.

### *Violations of human rights against women*

Violations of women's and the girl-child's human rights are extensive and severe and occur under every aspect of Amnesty International's mandate<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, certain violations, such as rape, are primarily directed at women. Many women are targeted because they are leaders in the struggle for freedom and justice. Others are victimized because they are seen as vulnerable, because they can be used to put pressure on male relatives, or because of the inferior status of women in their societies. Some are imprisoned, tortured or killed because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Most women whose human rights are violated during wars have taken no active part in the conflict. They are often from the most marginalized and vulnerable sectors of society: indigenous and peasant women living in rural zones of conflict, refugee and displaced women fleeing from war, the urban dispossessed. The growth of conflict around the world has seen governments unable or unwilling to prevent - or actively engaged in - abuses to which women are most vulnerable. Rape by soldiers is widespread, either because women are seen as second-class citizens or because soldiers are allowed to regard the rape of women as part of the legitimate spoils of war. Rape is also used systematically as a deliberate tactic to intimidate and undermine the "enemy".

It might seem that the themes of the Fourth UN World Conference on Women - equality, development and peace - concern different human rights from those on which Amnesty International campaigns. However, human rights are universal and indivisible and the specific rights which are the focus of Amnesty International's mandate are inextricably linked to other human rights. Any woman who is the victim, or who is at risk, of imprisonment, torture, summary or arbitrary execution, or "disappearance" stands no chance of exercising her rights to equality, development or peace. Women who are working to promote development, equality and peace must not be at risk of imprisonment, torture or other human rights violations. In many contexts, equality means giving women the same access to resources and decision-making as men, but from Amnesty International's perspective it also means that no woman, child or man is subjected to the human rights violations within its mandate.

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*Recent developments in the UN relevant to women's human rights*

The Platform for Action is being formulated at a time when the international community is becoming increasingly aware of the need to improve women's enjoyment of their human rights. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the final document of the UN World Conference on Human Rights made important commitments. These included urging governments and the UN to make the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights a priority and proposing that "the equal status and the human rights of women should be integrated into the mainstream of UN system-wide activity".

In December 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women<sup>7</sup> which states that violence against women is a violation of human rights and is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations which have led to the domination over, and discrimination against, women and the prevention of their full advancement. Violence against women is stated to include physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, the community and perpetrated or condoned by the state.

In March 1994, the UN Commission on Human Rights appointed a Special Rapporteur on violence against women to seek and receive information on violence against women, its causes and consequences; recommend measures at the national, regional and international levels to eliminate violence against women; work with other mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Commission on the Status of Women; and to report to the next session of the Commission on Human Rights<sup>8</sup>.

This resolution of the Commission on Human Rights also addressed the integration of the rights of women into the human rights mechanisms of the UN and called for increased cooperation and coordination between UN bodies concerned with women. The Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution on mainstreaming the human rights of women<sup>9</sup> which stressed the importance of cooperation and coordination between the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights and, among other provisions, requested the UN Secretary-General to prepare an annual joint work plan for the secretariats to the Commissions, respectively the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Centre for Human Rights, on women's human rights.

*The Platform for Action*

The Platform for Action, which will be the final document of the Fourth UN World Conference on Women will set the agenda for the international community's work for

women's human rights until the next world conference. The draft Platform for Action is divided into six sections<sup>10</sup>. The *critical areas of concern*, which are described in section III, cover the following topics:

- A. The persistent and growing burden of poverty on women
- B. Inequality in access to education, health and related services and means of maximizing the use of women's capacities
- C. Violence against women
- D. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women
- E. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself
- F. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels
- G. Inefficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women
- H. Lack of awareness of, and commitment to, internationally and nationally recognized women's rights
- I. Insufficient use of mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society
- J. Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment.

Section IV of the draft contains the *strategic objectives derived from the critical areas of concern and action to be taken*. In the current draft these overlap with, but do not directly correspond to, *the critical areas of concern*.

At the last session of the Commission on the Status of Women it was decided that the Secretary-General of the conference, in consultation with the officers of the Commission, would convene informal open-ended consultations to exchange views on the draft prior to the next session of the Commission<sup>11</sup>.

#### *Amnesty International's recommendations*

The Platform for Action should include a clear statement of the current impediments to women's enjoyment of their human rights but, above all, focus on practical steps which governments will implement to ensure a real and measurable advance in the situation of women in every region of the world. The following are essential points which Amnesty International believes must be included in the text.

### 1. The universality and indivisibility of women's human rights

The Platform for Action must reflect throughout the text the commitment made by governments in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that "[t]he human rights of women and the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights"<sup>12</sup>. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action confirmed the universality of all human rights; the Platform for Action is the place to spell out what this means for women and how governments will improve women's enjoyment of all human rights.

### 2. Ratification of human rights instruments

There is a need for a clear articulation in the Platform for Action of the urgency of governments ratifying, without reservations, all international (and, where appropriate, regional) human rights treaties which affect the lives of women and the girl-child. As a minimum this should include the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>13</sup>. Regional standards should include the Inter-American Convention on the Forced Disappearance of Persons and the Organization of African Unity Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action recommended that the UN should encourage the universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the year 1995 and of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by the year 2000. The Platform for Action should confirm this commitment and, in particular, remind any government that has not ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child that they should do so by the end of that year. It should also include dates for the universal ratification of other human rights instruments that affect the lives of women.

The Platform for Action should encourage governments who have already ratified human rights instruments to examine any reservations that were made at the time of ratification with a view to their withdrawal. This is particularly important in the case of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, where the commitment of many State Parties is seriously undermined by the extent of their reservations.

The Platform for Action should also encourage the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in their

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efforts to prepare an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women allowing for the right of individual petition, as recommended in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

The Platform for Action should call on governments to establish programs to inform officials and the public about the content and practical implications of international treaties which they have ratified.

### 3. Implementation of international human rights standards

The Platform for Action should urge governments to implement fully all international human rights standards through measures that ensure the elimination of gender bias in law and in practice.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action recommended that the treaty monitoring bodies should disseminate information to enable women to make more effective use of their procedures. The Platform for Action should propose practical measures for governments to help disseminate this information and call on governments to ensure that their reports to the treaty monitoring bodies include detailed information on the situation of women and the girl-child.

Programs for implementation of international human rights standards should be widely disseminated and take due account of non-treaty instruments, particularly the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. This should be reflected in the Platform for Action.

### 4. Women activists

The Platform for Action should give full recognition to women's role in the forefront of the struggle for human rights and to the fact that many women become victims of human rights violations as a result of these activities, whether they act in a personal capacity or represent an organization. The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies stated that "[t]o promote their interests effectively, women must be able to enjoy their right to take part in national and international decision-making processes, including the right to dissent publicly and peacefully from their Government's policies, and to mobilize to increase their participation in the process of peace within and between nations"<sup>14</sup>.

The Platform for Action should explicitly guarantee the full enjoyment of all rights, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, by women activists and non-governmental

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organizations working peacefully for the promotion and protection of women's human rights.

#### 5. Violence against women

The Platform for Action should fully reflect the international community's growing awareness of and concern about violence against women. In particular, the Platform for Action must address the question of government responsibility for violence against women. In many countries of the world, governments and their agents are responsible for the torture, including rape, "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution of women. Amnesty International also views the death penalty as another form of violence inflicted on women by the state. Governmental responsibility for these violations must be reflected in the text and governments should be urged in the strongest terms to take immediate action to condemn such violations and halt their occurrence.

At the international level, the Platform for Action should urge governments to observe the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and fully cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women as well as the other mechanisms of the UN Commission on Human Rights which are relevant to the human rights of women. These include the Special Rapporteurs on torture, extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, religious intolerance, racism and the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on the internally displaced; the Working Groups on "disappearances" and arbitrary detention; and the special rapporteurs appointed on particular countries. Governments should include full information on the situation of women and the girl-child in response to inquiries from any of these mechanisms.

#### 6. Women and armed conflict

The human rights of women and the girl-child in situations of armed conflict needs careful attention in the Platform for Action. Governments should be urged to uphold standards set out in international humanitarian and human rights law and designed to prevent rape and other forms of torture, hostage-taking, extrajudicial execution and "disappearance". The situation of women, both as subjects of these violations and as survivors when their family or community are the victims of such violations, should be taken into full account.

The gender dimension in UN peace-keeping and other field operations should not be overlooked in the Platform for Action. UN personnel should receive information on local cultural traditions and should observe the highest standards of humanitarian and human rights law. They should respect the rights and dignity of women at all times, both on and off duty. Human rights components of UN field operations should include experts

in the area of violence against women, including rape and sexual abuse, to ensure that prisons and places of detention where women are held are located and properly investigated and that victims of rape and other violence have suitable and confidential facilities to meet investigators who are specially trained and experienced in this area.<sup>15</sup>

#### **7. Refugee and internally displaced women**

Human rights violations are a major cause of women becoming refugees or internally displaced. Women and girl-children in such situations are particularly vulnerable. Not only is the physical integrity of women, particularly unaccompanied women, frequently at risk in refugee camps, where rape and other forms of torture or ill-treatment by other refugees as well as officials can be widespread, but as well, their vulnerable position is often exploited so that they will not get basic commodities, such as food rations, except in exchange for sexual favours. The Platform for Action should urge governments to take effective preventive measures and hold impartial and thorough investigations of all such incidents within their territory and bring those responsible to justice.

The Platform for Action should also urge governments to take into account the special protection needs of women and girl-children, and train officials to be aware of and sensitive to these needs, both as regards the physical safety of women within the camps and the processing of their asylum claims. The conclusions endorsed by the Executive Committee of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees's Programme on the protection of refugee women<sup>16</sup> should be supported and reiterated in the text.

The Platform for Action should state that women will be given the opportunity to present their individual asylum claims on an equal footing with men and specially trained officials, including female officials, should be available as needed to interview women about experiences that can be particularly painful for them to recount, such as sexual assaults. The experience of gender-specific violations has not always been met with sufficient understanding in asylum procedures. Women fleeing state-tolerated violence, women persecuted for violating dress codes or other social mores, and women persecuted solely for family or other connections to political opponents of regimes, are all groups that have not enjoyed adequate protection in the past.

#### **8. Human rights education**

Governments should not just refrain from violating women's human rights but should work actively to promote and protect their rights. To this end, the Platform for Action should encourage governments to make information widely available about women's human rights and mechanisms for seeking redress when they are violated. Education in,



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and public information on, human rights play an important role in the promotion and respect of human rights for all.

The Platform for Action should call on governments to give particular emphasis to gender education, to make women aware of their rights and to make society at large conscious of their duty to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all, including women. Information on human rights should be integrated in all educational and training policies, including the training of officials and educators responsible for the formulation and implementation of these policies. Specialized programs in human rights education with particular attention to the rights of women and the girl-child should be developed for groups such as the military, law enforcement personnel, police, legal and health professions to ensure their understanding and application of international human rights standards.

#### 9. Development assistance

The Platform for Action should encourage donor agencies and governments to give high priority in development assistance projects to the implementation of human rights particularly as they affect women and the girl-child, both as individuals and as a social group. The Commission on Human Rights and its secretariat, the Centre for Human Rights, should also be encouraged to ensure that the human rights of women are always given full attention in projects carried out under the Advisory Services and Technical Assistance program. The Centre for Human Rights should be able to respond fully and promptly to requests for assistance in establishing educational programs to combat gender discrimination.

#### 10. Integration across the UN system

The call in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action for "the equal status and human rights of women to be integrated into the mainstream of UN system-wide activity" has been taken up by the Commissions on Human Rights and on the Status of Women<sup>17</sup> but the Platform for Action should encourage further development in this area particularly by making practical recommendations to maximize resources and expertise in implementing the recommendations above and taking other steps to promote and protect the human rights of women and the girl-child. The work plan which the Commission on the Status of Women has requested the UN Secretary-General to draw up will be an important step towards ensuring that both Commissions and their secretariats work together to ensure that the relevant provisions of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action are fully implemented.

In addition, Amnesty International hopes that the role of the recently-appointed High Commissioner for Human Rights in advancing women's human rights and achieving their full integration across the UN system will be fully articulated and supported in the Platform for Action, particularly as he stated at a press conference in the UN in February 1994 that strengthening the human rights of women would be a "central concern" in his work.

### Notes

1. The NGO Forum will be held from 30 August to 8 September and the Fourth World Conference on Women from 4 to 15 September 1995.

2. This 89-page document, which was adopted by consensus by the 157 countries attending the Conference and by the 1985 regular session of the UN General Assembly, set out "concrete measures to overcome the obstacles to the Decade's goals and objectives for the advancement of women. Building on the principles of equality also espoused in the Charter of the United Nations, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation, the Forward-looking Strategies reaffirm the international concern regarding the status of women and provide a framework for renewed commitment by the international community to the advancement of women and the elimination of gender-based discrimination". (Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, paragraph 6)

3. Established in 1946 by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Commission now comprises 45 members and meets annually in New York. Representatives of many other governments attend the meetings as observers, as do representatives of UN specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. The Commission's original mandate was to "prepare recommendations and reports to the Council on promoting women's human rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields" and "make recommendations to the Council on urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights with the object of implementing the principle that men and women shall have equal rights, and to develop proposals to give effect to such recommendations" (ECOSOC resolution 11 (II) of 21 June 1946). This was later expanded to include the functions of promoting the objectives of development, equality and peace, monitoring the implementation of measures for the advancement of women, and reviewing and appraising the progress made at the national, subregional, regional, sectoral and global levels (ECOSOC resolution 1987/22 of 26 May 1987). Most governments send delegations to meetings of the Commission; the members of the Commission itself until the end of 1994 are Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Finland, France, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Namibia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Slovakia, Spain, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, USA, Venezuela, Zaire, Zambia. The membership of the Commission from 1 January 1995 will be Algeria (1996\*), Angola (1998), Australia (1996), Austria (1996), Belgium (1998), Belarus (1996), Bolivia (1997), Bulgaria (1998), Chile (1995), China (1995), Colombia (1996), Congo (1998), Costa Rica (1997), Cuba (1996), Cyprus (1997), Ecuador (1997), Guinea (1997), Guinea Bissau (1996), Finland (1995), France (1996), Greece (1998), India (1997), Indonesia (1998), Iran (1997), Japan (1996), Kenya (1997), Korea (Republic of) (1997), Libya (1997), Madagascar (1995), Malaysia (1997), Mexico (1998), Namibia (1997), Pakistan (1995), Peru (1995), Philippines (1998), Portugal (1998), Russian Federation (1998), Slovak Republic (1995), Spain (1995), Sudan

(1996), Thailand (1996), Togo (1998), Tunisia (1997), Venezuela (1995), Zambia (1995) (\* expiry of membership)

4. The first such regional preparatory meeting, for Asia and the Pacific, was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, in June 1994. The other regional preparatory meetings will be held in Mar del Plato, Argentina, for Latin America and the Caribbean in September 1994; Vienna, Austria for Europe and North America in October 1994; Amman, Jordan for Western Asia; and in Dakar, Senegal for Africa, both in November 1994

5. The main focus of Amnesty International's action is to work for the release of all prisoners of conscience - those people detained anywhere for their beliefs or because of their ethnic origin, gender, colour or language who have not used or advocated violence; fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners; the abolition of the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners; and an end to extrajudicial executions and "disappearances". The organization opposes abuses committed by opposition groups which are contrary to minimum international standards, such as hostage-taking, torture and killings of prisoners and other deliberate and arbitrary killings. A worldwide voluntary movement, Amnesty International is independent of any government, political persuasion or religious creed. It does not support or oppose any government or political system, or the views of victims whose rights it seeks to protect. It is concerned solely with the protection of human rights.

6. Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action Section IIB3, paragraph 37

7. UN General Assembly resolution 48/104, 20 December 1993

8. Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/45, 4 March 1994.

9. Commission on the Status of Women, resolution 38/2, 18 March 1994.

10. I. Statement of Mission; II. Global Framework; III Critical Areas of Concern IV. Strategic Objectives Derived from the Critical Areas of Concern and Action to be Taken; V. Financial Arrangements; VI Institutional Arrangements for Implementation and Monitoring of the Plan of Action.

11. Commission on the Status of Women resolution 38/10, 18 March 1994

12. Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, Section I, paragraph 18

13. In this respect, the Plan of Action produced by the Asia and Pacific regional preparatory meeting established an important precedent by stating:

"(i) Governments are urged to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and withdraw substantive reservations to the Convention.

(ii) Governments are urged to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child and related conventions relevant to women's lives and to implement these through legal, administrative and other forms.

(iii) Governments should promote International Conventions through community education, legal literacy programs, legal aid and counselling." (Section IV.D)

14. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, paragraph 32

15. See Peace-keeping and human rights, AI Index: IOR 40/01/94, January 1994

16. Conclusions of the Executive Committee of UNHCR no 39 on refugee women and international protection; no 54 on refugee women; no 60 on refugee women; no 64 on refugee women and international protection; and no 73 on refugee protection and sexual violence.

17. See *Recent developments in the UN relevant to women's human rights*, above.

[From the Sunday Morning Post Magazine, June 25, 1995]

## "THE DYING ROOMS"

(By Tom Hilditch)

Two years ago, the *Sunday Morning Post* reported on the outrage of healthy baby girls left to die in China's orphanages, victims of the one-child policy. Now, as a British documentary team has discovered, the problem is getting worse:

Mei-ming has lain this way for 10 days now; tied up in urine-soaked blankets, scabs of dried mucus growing across her eyes, her face shrinking to a skull, malnutrition slowly shrivelling her two-year-old body.

Each morning a fellow inmate at her Guangdong orphanage goes into the dark fetid room where she lies alone to see if she is dead. The orphanage staff, paid to look after her, do not visit. They call her room the "dying room" as they have abandoned her there for the same reasons here parents abandoned her shortly after she was born. Her problems is simple and tragic: she has a condition which in modern China makes her next to useless, a burden on the state with an almost zero chance of adoption. She is a girl.

When she dies in four days later it will not be of some terminal, incurable illness. It will be of sheer neglect. Afterwards the orphanage will dispose of her desiccated corpse and deny she ever existed. She will be just another invisible victim of the collision between China's one-child policy and its traditional preference for male heirs. The name the orphanage gave her articulates precisely the futility of struggle to survive in a society that holds no value for her. In Putonghua, Mei-ming means "no name".

She is one of perhaps 15 million female babies who have gone missing from China's demographics since the one child per family policy was introduced in 1979. Another tiny bag of bones in what some sinologists claim is the 20th century's hidden holocaust.

Yet her brief and miserable life may not have been in vain. Before she died she was discovered by a British documentary team who entered her orphanage posing as American charity fund-raisers. The footage they shot, through a concealed camera, would provide the first video evidence of the existence of dying rooms. And when their documentary was shown 13 days ago, against the protestations of China's London embassy, little Mei-ming's dying cries for help were heard around the world.

The aim of the documentary team, funded by Britain's Channel Four, was to explore persistent reports that some state-run Chinese orphanages leave baby girls to die of starvation and neglect. Their starting point was the *Sunday Morning Post's* award-winning investigation of two years ago which gave the world the first eyewitness and photographic evidence of dying rooms at Nanning orphanage, in Guangxi province. Then the dying room was spoken of openly by staff and regular visitors. It was freely admitted that 90 per cent of the 50 to 60 baby girls who arrived at the orphanage each month would end their lives there. Since the outrage provoked by our report, however, Nanning orphanage has been overhauled. Money raised by Hong Kong celebrities has upgraded facilities and the quality of care. The dying rooms there have ceased to exist.

Sadly, after touring and filming in orphanages in four provinces, the British documentary team's harrowing report suggests that the attitudes towards baby girls so prevalent at Nanning two years ago are rife elsewhere.

The birth of a baby girl has never been a cause for celebration in China. In general, an infant boy will be greeted with firework displays and parties; a girl with silence. According to records there are currently six million women in China christened Lai Di. The name means "a son follows quickly".

Tradition dictates that when a daughter marries she will join her husband's family, her children will take his family name and she must support his parents in their old age. In rural areas, female infants are simply a drain on resources. They are referred to as "maggots in the rice". Stories of peasant farmers drowning new-born girls in a bucket of water have been commonplace for centuries. Now, however, as a direct result of the one-child policy there are growing reports of infanticide all across China, including its towns and cities. The numbers of baby girls being abandoned, aborted or dumped on orphanage steps is unprecedented.

It is impossible to understate both how crucial the one-child policy is to China's stability and how rigidly it is enforced. Everyone—the World Bank, the United Nations, China's own statisticians—agrees that if the population, already at 1.2 billion, is allowed to grow, China will be unable to support itself, let alone, develop. The result would be economic collapse, environmental ruin, famine.

But while most Chinese can accept the mathematics of the problem, many cannot accept the draconian mechanics of the solution. The population continues to rise. A child is born every 1.5 seconds, 2,400 every hour, 21 million a year. In March 1995 President Jiang Zemin was forced to set new, tougher population controls and tougher punishments for those who ignore them. Couples who attempt to have more than one child will be dealt with brutally.

According to Steven Mosher, the author of *A Mother's Ordeal*, coerced abortions, sometimes just days before the baby is due, are now commonplace. As are reports of enforced sterilisation and of hospitals fatally injecting second babies shortly after their birth. "It means tremendous coercion," he says, "on women to submit to abortion and sterilisation. It also means that however overcrowded China's orphanages are now with baby girls, the problem is going to get worse. Very much worse."

For Kate Blewett, producer of the Channel Four documentary *The Dying Rooms*, the investigation was a journey into the heart of darkness. "I did not know that human beings could treat children with such contempt, such cruelty. It is not so much a problem of the orphanages being underfunded as it is a problem of attitude towards unwanted babies. Some of the orphanages we visited were little more than death camps. We filmed treatment that amounted to torture, conscious neglect that amounted to murder."

Travelling in China with hidden cameras and under false pretences meant Blewett and her team were in danger of being arrested every step of the way. The risk for local Chinese who helped them gain access to orphanages and those she interviewed, unwittingly or otherwise, was even greater. For that reason the documentary does not name any of the orphanages or identify mainland interviewees. Nonetheless, the harrowing squalor of conditions is there for all to see.

In one orphanage a dozen or so baby girls are supervised by an adolescent girl in a white coat. As the team walk in she ignores them and goes out of the room, leaving a mentally handicapped child to show them around. The infant inmates sit in bamboo benches in the middle of a courtyard. Their wrists and ankles are tied to the armrests and legs of the bench. They have been there all day unable to move. A row of plastic buckets is lined up beneath holes in their seats to catch their urine and excrement. The children will not be moved again until night when their benches will be carried back into their cot room and they will be lifted out and tied to their beds.

"It was heart-breaking," said Blewett. "They had no stimulation, nothing to play with, no one to touch them. They have never known affection. In one scene shown in the documentary one of the handicapped older boys walks up to one of the girls tied to a bench and begins head-butting her. He butts her relentlessly. It goes on and on. But the girl doesn't move or make a sound. Such is the lack of stimulation for the children that the one thing they all have in common is an endless rocking. They sit tied to their potty chairs rocking backwards and forwards and screaming. Few of them will ever learn to speak and the rocking is the only exercise, the only stimulation, the only pleasure in their lives."

Presently the teenager in the white coat returns with an official of the orphanage. He buys Blewett's cover story and, seduced by the suggestion of foreign funds, he agrees to be interviewed. His monologue is chilling. Last year, he says, the orphanage had some 400 inmates. They were all kept five to a bed in one airless room. The summer temperatures soared above 37 degrees Celsius. Disease swept through the room. In a couple of weeks 20 per cent of the babies died.

Later, Blewett trains her camera on another of the assistants. "If 80 children died last summer, there should be 320 left," Blewett says, "but there don't appear to be more than a couple of dozen children here. Where are the others?"

"They disappear," the girl replies. "If I ask where they go, I am just told they die. That's all. I am afraid to ask any more."

Brutal neglect is the common theme of many of the orphanage scenes. In one sequence a lame child sits on a bench near the orphanage pharmacy. It is stocked full of medicines but none of the staff can be bothered to administer them. The child rocks listlessly back and forth as staff wander. The camera focuses on her vacant face, trails down her skinny body and settles on her leg . . . it is swollen with gangrene.

Such institutionalised cruelty and neglect was in no way limited to rural areas. The worse orphanage, the brief home of Mei-ming, was in Guangdong, one of the richest provinces in China. When they arrived the documentary makers wondered at first whether they had made a mistake. There were no children to be seen or heard. Then from under one of the blankets laid over a cot, as if left to dry out, there was the sound of crying. Lifting the blanket and unwrapping a tied bundle of cloth, Blewett found a baby girl. The last layer of her swaddling was a plastic bag filled with urine and feces. The next cot was the same, and the next and the

next. Many of the children had deep lesions where the string they were tied with had cut into their bodies. One child, described by staff as "normal", was suffering from vitamin B and C deficiency, acute liver failure and severe impetigo on her scalp. As always, Blewett made a point of checking the babies' gender. As always, all the non-han-capped children were girls.

The Chinese Government was approached several times both in Beijing and at its London embassy to provide comment on an interview for inclusion in the film. The Government was given a three-month deadline but remained silent. Then it was given a 10-day extension. On the ninth day Channel Four received a two-page letter from the London embassy. It became the final sequence of the film.

"The so-called 'dying rooms' do not exist in China at all," read the statement's penultimate paragraph. "Our investigations confirm that those reports are vicious fabrications made out of ulterior motives. The contemptible lie about China's welfare work in orphanages cannot but arouse the indignation of the Chinese people, especially the great numbers of social workers who are working hard for children's welfare."

The statement was followed by diplomatic representations to have the station drop the documentary. Channel Four refused. The programme which was transmitted on June 12 and dedicated to Mei-ming created enormous publicity.

The following day questions were raised in the House of Commons about China's one-child policy and its dying rooms. Efforts are now being made by, among others, MP Anne Winterton, to bring about diplomatic pressure to halt China's one-child policy. Predictably, however, no one has raised the subject of providing massive aid for a collapsed and famine-ridden China in the event of its population rising to, say, 2.4 billion if this generation is allowed to have two children per family.

More practically, however, Blewett and her team have set up a fund, The Dying Rooms Trust, to make contributions to international charities working with Chinese orphanages, to help purchase and distribute milk powder, play-pens and basic medicines to the orphanages featured in the documentary and establish sponsorship systems for their inmates.

"We don't want to criticise the one-child policy," says Blewett. "But we do want to focus on the problem it is causing which can be solved." The documentary features a tour of a privately-run, locally funded orphanage where the children are happy, healthy and loved. "We were very keen to show what can be done with the right attitude," said Blewett. "No child should suffer the kind of neglect we filmed. Maybe we can help that happen. Maybe then, Mei-ming's life might have had some purpose."

*(The programme is unlikely to be shown in Hong Kong. For more information contact: The Dying Room Trust, 68 Thames Road, London W4 3RE. Cheques should be made payable to The Dying Rooms.)*

POPE JOHN PAUL II'S MESSAGE TO WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

# Letter to Women

## 'Your womanhood enriches the world'

CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

In a letter addressed to the women of the world, Pope John Paul II praised women's historic contributions as mothers, wives and social leaders, and said they need greater protection against persistent forms of violence and exploitation.

The letter, made public Tuesday, endorsed women's liberation as a substantially positive process that must go forward. At the same time, the pope said men and women rightly have a "diversity of roles" — in society and in the Church — that reflect their complementary natures.

Here is the Vatican text of Pope John Paul II's letter to women, dated June 29 and released July 10 at the Vatican.

I greet you all most cordially, women throughout the world!

I am writing this letter to each one of you as a sign of solidarity and gratitude on the eve of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing this coming September.

Before all else, I wish to express my deep appreciation to the United Nations for having sponsored this very significant event. The Church desires for her part to contribute to upholding the dignity, role and rights of women not only by the specific work of the Holy See's official delegation in the conference in Beijing, but also by speaking directly to the heart and mind of every woman. Recently, when Mrs Gertrude Moagella, the secretary-general of the conference, visited me in connection with the Beijing meeting, I gave her a written message which stated some basic points of the Church's teaching with regard to women's issues. That message, apart from the specific circumstances of its origin, was concerned with a broader vision of the situation and problems of women in general in an attempt to promote the cause of women in the Church and in today's world. For this reason I arranged to have it forwarded to every conference of bishops, so that it could be circulated as widely as possible.

Taking up the themes I addressed in that document, I would now like to speak directly to every woman, to reflect with her on the problems and the prospects of



GUATEMALAN WOMAN/PHOTO

'You are present and active in every area of life — social, economic, cultural, artistic and political. In this way you make an indispensable contribution to the growth of a culture...'

what it means to be a woman in our time. In particular I wish to consider the essential issue of the dignity and rights of women as seen in the light of the word of God.

This "dialogue" really needs to begin with a word of thanks. As I wrote in my apostolic letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*, the Church "desires to give thanks to the

most Holy Trinity for the 'mystery of woman' and for every woman — for all that constitutes the eternal measure of her feminine dignity, for the 'great works of God,' which throughout human history have been accomplished in and through her" (No. 31).

2. This word of thanks to the Lord for his mysterious plan regarding the vocation and mission of women in the world is at the same time a concrete and direct word of thanks to women, to every woman, for all that they represent in the life of humanity.

Thank you, women who are mothers! You have sheltered human beings within yourselves in a unique experience of joy and travail. This experience makes you become God's own smile upon the newborn child, the one who guides your child's first steps, who helps it to grow and who is the anchor as the child makes its way along the journey of life.

Thank you, women who are wives! You irrevocably join your future to that of your husbands in a relationship of mutual giving at the service of love and life.

Thank you, women who are daughters and women who are sisters! Into the heart of the family, and then of all society, you bring the richness of your sensitivity, your intuitiveness, your generosity and fidelity.

Thank you, women who work! You are present and active in every area of life — social, economic, cultural, artistic and political. In this way you make an indispensable contribution to the growth of a culture which unites reason and feeling, to a model of life ever open to the sense of "mystery," to the establishment of economic and political structures ever more worthy of humanity.

Thank you, consecrated women! Following the example of the greatest of women, the mother of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, you open yourselves with obedience and fidelity to the gift of God's love. You help the Church and all mankind to experience a "spousal" relationship to God, one which magnificently expresses the fellowship which God wishes to establish with his creatures.

Thank you, every woman, for the simple fact of being a woman! Through the insight which is so much a part of your womanhood you enrich the world's understanding and help to make human relations more honest and authentic.

3. I know of course that simply saying thank you is



## Pope's Letter to Women

not enough. Unfortunately, we are heirs to a history which has conditioned us to a remarkable extent. In every time and place this conditioning has been an obstacle to the progress of women. Women's dignity has often been unacknowledged and their prerogatives misrepresented; they have often been relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude. This has prevented women from truly being themselves, and it has resulted in a spiritual impoverishment of humanity. Certainly it is no easy task to assign the blame for this, considering the many kinds of cultural conditioning which down the centuries have shaped ways of thinking and acting. And if objective blame, especially in particular historical contexts, has belonged to not just a few members of the Church, for this I am truly sorry. May this regret be transformed, on the part of the whole Church, into a renewed commitment of fidelity to the Gospel vision. When it comes to setting women free from every kind of exploitation and domination, the Gospel contains an ever relevant message which goes back to the attitude of Jesus Christ himself. Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way he honored the dignity which women have always possessed according to God's plan and in his love. As we look to Christ at the end of this second millennium, it is natural to ask ourselves how much of his message has been heard and acted upon.

Yet, it is time to examine the past with courage, to assign responsibility where it is due in a review of the long history of humanity. Women have contributed to that history as much as men and, more often than not, they did so in much more difficult conditions. I think particularly of those women who loved culture and art, and devoted their lives to them in spite of the fact that they were frequently at a disadvantage from the start, excluded from equal educational opportunities, underestimated, ignored and not given credit for their intellectual contributions. Sadly, very little of women's achievements in history can be registered by the science of history. But even though time may have buried the documentary evidence of these achievements, their beneficent influence can be felt as a force which has shaped the lives of successive generations, right up to our own. To this great, immense feminine "tradition" humanity owes a debt which can never be repaid. Yet how many women have been and continue to be valued more for their physical appearance than for their skill, their professionalism, their intellectual abilities, their deep sensitivity, in a word, the very dignity of their being!

4 And what shall we say of the obstacles which in so many parts of the world still keep women from being fully integrated into social, political and economic life? We need only think of how the gift of motherhood is often penalized rather than rewarded, even though humanity owes its very survival to this gift. Certainly, much remains to be done to prevent discrimination against those who have chosen to be wives and mothers. As far as personal rights are concerned, there is an urgent need to achieve real equality in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with regard to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic state.

This is a matter of justice but also of necessity. Women will increasingly play a part in the solution of the serious problems of the future: leisure time, the

quality of life, migration, social services, euthanasia, drugs, health care, the ecology, etc. In all these areas a greater presence of women in society will prove most valuable, for it will help to manifest the contradictions present when society is organized solely according to the criteria of efficiency and productivity, and it will force systems to be redesigned in a way which favors the processes of humanization which mark the "civilization of love".

5. Then too, when we look at one of the most sensitive aspects of the situation of women in the world, how can we not mention the long and degrading history, albeit often an "underground" history, of violence against women in the area of sexuality? At the threshold of the third millennium we cannot remain indifferent and resigned before this phenomenon. The time has come to condemn vigorously the types of sexual violence which frequently have women for their object and to pass laws which effectively defend them from such violence. Nor can we fail, in the name of the respect due to the human person, to condemn the widespread hedonistic and commercial culture which encourages the systematic exploitation of sexuality and corrupts even very young girls into letting their bodies be used for profit.

In contrast to these sorts of perversion, what great appreciation must be shown to those women who, with a heroic love for the child they have conceived, proceed with a pregnancy resulting from the injustice of rape. Here we are thinking of atrocities perpetrated

*"Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way he honored the dignity which women have always possessed according to God's plan and in his love. As we look to Christ at the end of this second millennium, it is natural to ask ourselves how much of his message has been heard and acted upon."*

not only in situations of war, still so common in the world, but also in societies which are blessed by prosperity and peace and yet are often corrupted by a culture of hedonistic permissiveness which aggravates tendencies to aggressive male behavior. In these cases the choice to have an abortion always remains a grave sin. But before being something to blame on the woman, it is a crime for which guilt needs to be attributed to men and to the complicity of the general social environment.

6. My word of thanks to women thus becomes a heartfelt appeal that everyone, and in a special way states and international institutions, should make every effort to ensure that women regain full respect for their dignity and role. Here I cannot fail to express my admiration for those women of good will who have devoted their lives to defending the dignity of womanhood by fighting for their basic social, economic and political rights, demonstrating courageous initiative at a time when this was considered extremely inappropriate, the sign of a lack of femininity, a manifestation of exhibitionism and even a sin!

In this year's World Day of Peace message, I noted that when one looks at the great process of women's liberation, "the journey has been a difficult and complicated one and, at times, not without its share of mistakes. But it has been substantially a positive one,

even if it is still unfinished, due to the many obstacles which in various parts of the world still prevent women from being acknowledged, respected and appreciated in their own special dignity" (No. 4).

This journey must go on! But I am convinced that the secret of making speedy progress in achieving full respect for women and their identity involves more than simply the condemnation of discrimination and injustices, necessary though this may be. Such respect must first and foremost be won through an effective and intelligent campaign for the promotion of women, concentrating on all areas of women's life and beginning with a universal recognition of the dignity of women. Our ability to recognize this dignity, in spite of historical conditioning, comes from the use of reason itself, which is able to understand the law of God written in the heart of every human being. More than anything else, the word of God enables us to grasp clearly the ultimate anthropological basis of the dignity of women, making it evident as a part of God's plan for humanity.

7. Dear sisters, together let us reflect anew on the magnificent passage in Scripture which describes the creation of the human race and which has so much to say about your dignity and mission in the world.

The Book of Genesis speaks of creation in summary fashion, in language which is poetic and symbolic, yet profoundly true: "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them" (Gn 1:27). The creative act of God takes place according to a precise plan. First of all, we are told that the human being is created "in the image and likeness of God" (cf. Gn 1:26). This expression immediately makes clear what is distinct about the human being with regard to the rest of creation.

We are then told that, from the very beginning, man has been created "male and female" (Gn 1:27). Scripture itself provides the interpretation of this fact. Even though man is surrounded by the innumerable creatures of the created world, he realizes that he is alone (cf. Gn 2:20). God intervenes in order to help him escape from this state of solitude: "It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him a helper fit for him" (Gn 2:18). The creation of woman is thus marked from the outset by the principle of help: a help which is not one-sided but mutual. Woman complements man, just as man complements woman. Man and woman are complementary. Womanhood expresses the "human" as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary way.

When the Book of Genesis speaks of "help," it is not referring merely to acting but also to being. Womanhood and manhood are complementary not only from the physical and psychological points of view, but also from the ontological. It is only through the duality of the "masculine" and the "feminine" that the "human" finds full realization.

8. After creating man male and female, God says to both: "Fill the earth and subdue it" (Gn 1:28). Not only does He give them the power to procreate as a means of perpetuating the human species throughout time, He also gives them the earth, charging them with the responsible use of its resources. As a rational and free being, man is called to transform the face of the earth. In this task, which is essentially that of culture, man and woman alike share equal responsibility from the start. In their fruitful relationship as husband and

## Pope's Letter to Women

wife, in their common task of exercising dominion over the earth, woman and man are marked neither by a static and undifferentiated equality nor by an irreconcilable and unceasingly conflictual difference. Their most natural relationship, which corresponds to the plan of God, is the "unity of the two," a relational "uni-duality," which enables each to experience their interpersonal and reciprocal relationship as a gift which enriches and which confers responsibility.

To this "unity of the two" God has entrusted not only the work of procreation and family life, but the creation of history itself. While the 1994 International Year of the Family focused attention on women as mothers, the Beijing conference, which has as its theme "Action for Equality, Development and Peace," provides an auspicious occasion for heightening awareness of the many contributions made by women to the life of whole societies and nations. This contribution is primarily spiritual and cultural in nature, but sociopolitical and economic as well. The various sectors of society, nations and states, and the progress of all humanity, are certainly deeply indebted to the contribution of women!

Progress usually tends to be measured according to the criteria of science and technology. Nor from this point of view has the contribution of women been negligible. Even so, this is not the only measure of progress, nor in fact is it the principal one. Much more important is the social and ethical dimension, which deals with human relations and spiritual values. In this area, which often develops in an inconspicuous way beginning with the daily relationships between people, especially within the family, society certainly owes much to the "genius of women."

Here I would like to express particular appreciation to those women who are involved in the various areas of education extending well beyond the family: nurses, schools, universities, social service agencies, parishes, associations and movements. Wherever the work of education is called for, we can note that women are ever ready and willing to give themselves generously to others, especially in serving the weakest and most defenseless. In this work they exhibit a kind of affective, cultural and spiritual motherhood which has inestimable value for the development of individuals and the future of society. At this point how can I fail to mention the witness of so many Catholic women and religious congregations of women from every continent who have made education, particularly the education of boys and girls, their principal apostolate? How can I not think with gratitude of all the women who have worked and continue to work in the area of health care, not only in highly organized institutions, but also in very precarious circumstances in the poorest countries of the world, thus demonstrating a spirit of service which not infrequently borders on martyrdom?

10 It is thus my hope, dear sisters, that you will reflect carefully on what it means to speak of the



NIGERIAN WOMAN AND CHILD (C) PHOTO BY MICHAEL ALLEN/AGENCE

'Necessary emphasis should be placed on the "genius of women," not only by considering great and famous women of the past or present, but also those ordinary women who reveal the gift of their womanhood by placing themselves at the service of others in their everyday lives. For in giving themselves to others each day, women fulfill their deepest vocation.'

"genius of women," not only in order to be able to see in this phrase a specific part of God's plan which needs to be accepted and appreciated, but also in order to let this genius be more fully expressed in the life of society as a whole as well as in the life of the Church. This subject came up frequently during the Marian year, and I myself dwell on it at length in my apostolic letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988). In addition, this year in the letter which I customarily send to priests for Holy Thursday, I invited them to reread *Mulieris Dignitatem* and reflect on the important roles which women have played in their lives as mothers, sisters and co-workers in the apostolate. This is another aspect — different from the conjugal aspect, but also important — of that "help" which

women, according to the Book of Genesis, are called to give to men.

The Church sees in Mary the highest expression of the "feminine genius," and she finds in her a source of constant inspiration. Mary called herself the "handmaid of the Lord" (Lk 1:38). Through obedience to the word of God she accepted her lofty yet not easy vocation as wife and mother in the family of Nazareth. Putting herself at God's service, she also put herself at the service of others: a service of love. Precisely through this service Mary was able to experience in her life a mysterious, but authentic, "reign." It is not by chance that she is invoked as "Queen of heaven and earth." The entire community of believers thus invokes her; many nations and peoples call upon her as their "Queen." For her, "to reign" is to serve! Her service is "to reign!"

This is the way in which authority needs to be understood both in the family and in society and the Church. Each person's fundamental vocation is revealed in this "reigning," for each person has been created in the "image" of the one who is Lord of heaven and earth and called to be his adopted son or daughter in Christ. Man is the only creature on earth "which God willed for his own sake," as the Second Vatican Council teaches; it significantly adds that man "cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of self" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 24).

The maternal "reign" of Mary consists in this. She who was, in all her being, a gift for her Son has also become a gift for the sons and daughters of the whole human race, awakening profound trust in those who seek her guidance along the difficult paths of life on the way to their definitive and transcendent destiny. Each one reaches this final goal by fidelity to his or her own vocation; this goal provides meaning and direction for the earthly labors of men and women alike.

11 In this perspective of "service" — which, when it is carried out with freedom, reciprocity and love, expresses the truly "royal" nature of mankind — one can also appreciate that the presence of a woman, provided that this diversity is not the result of an arbitrary imposition, but is rather an expression of what is specific to being male and female. This issue also has a particular application within the Church. If Christ — by His free and sovereign choice, clearly attested to by the Gospel and by the Church's constant tradition — entrusted only to men the task of being an "icon" of His countenance as "shepherd" and "bridegroom" of the Church through the exercise of the ministerial priesthood, this in no way detracts from the role of women or for that matter, from the role of the other members of the Church who are not ordained to the sacred ministry, since all share equally in the dignity proper to the "common priesthood"

## Pope's Letter to Women

based on baptism. These role distinctions should not be viewed in accordance with the criteria of functionality typical in human societies. Rather they must be understood according to the particular criteria of the sacramental economy, i.e., the economy of "signs" which God freely chooses in order to become present in the midst of humanity.

Furthermore, precisely in line with this economy of signs, even if apart from the sacramental sphere, there is great significance to that "womanhood" which was lived in such a sublime way by Mary. In fact, there is present in the "womanhood" of a woman who believes, and especially in a woman who is "consecrated," a kind of inherent "prophecy" (cf. *Multitudo Dignitatum*, 29), a powerfully evocative symbolism, a highly significant "iconic character," which finds its full realization in Mary and which also aptly expresses the very essence of the Church as a community consecrated with the integrity of a "virgin" heart to become the "bride" of Christ and "mother" of believers. When we consider the "iconic" complementary of male and female roles, two of the Church's essential dimensions are seen in a clearer light: the "Marian" principle and the apostolic Petrine principle (cf. *ibid.*, 27).

On the other hand — as I wrote to priests in this year's Holy Thursday letter — the ministerial priesthood, according to Christ's plan, "is an expression not of domination but of service" (No. 7). The Church

urgently needs, in her daily self-renewal in the light of the word of God, to emphasize this fact ever more clearly both by developing the spirit of communion and by carefully fostering all those means of participation which are properly hers, and also by showing respect for and promoting the diverse personal and communal charisms which the Spirit of God bestows for the building up of the Christian community and the service of humanity.

In this vast domain of service, the Church's 2,000-year history, for all its historical conditioning, has truly experienced the "genius of woman," from the heart of the Church there have emerged women of the highest caliber who have left an impressive and beneficial mark in history. I think of the great line of woman martyrs, saints and famous mystics. In a particular way I think of St. Catherine of Siena and of St. Teresa of Avila, whom Pope Paul VI of happy memory granted the title of doctors of the Church. And how can we overlook the many women, inspired by faith, who were responsible for initiatives of extraordinary social importance, especially in serving the poorest of the poor? The life of the Church in the third millennium will certainly not be lacking in new and surprising manifestations of "the feminine genius."

12 You can see then, dear sisters, that the Church has many reasons for hoping that the forthcoming U.N. conference in Beijing will bring out the full truth about women. Necessary emphasis should be placed

on the "genius of women," not only by considering great and famous women of the past or present, but also those ordinary women who reveal the gift of their womanhood by placing themselves at the service of others in their everyday lives. For in giving themselves to others each day, women fulfill their deepest vocation. Perhaps more than men, women acknowledge the person, because they see persons with their hearts. They see them independently of various ideological or political systems. They see others in their greatness and limitations, they try to go out to them and help them. In this way the basic plan of the Creator takes flesh in the history of humanity, and there is constantly revealed in the variety of vocations that beauty — not merely physical, but above all spiritual — which God bestows from the very beginning on all and in a particular way on women.

While I commend to the Lord in prayer the success of the important meeting in Beijing, I invite ecclesial communities to make this year an occasion of heartfelt thanksgiving to the creator and redeemer of the world for the gift of this great treasure which is womanhood. In all its expressions, womanhood is part of the essential heritage of mankind and of the Church herself.

May Mary, queen of love, watch over women and their mission in service of humanity, of peace, of the spread of God's kingdom!  
With my blessing

## Pope's letter said to affirm women, adjust Beijing agenda

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Pope John Paul II's new letter to women should help set the agenda of the upcoming Beijing conference to focus "more on what matters to the great majority of women, rather than on what matters to a few," according to the U.S. bishops' pro-life spokeswoman.

Helen Alvord, director of information and planning in the bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, said the papal letter released July 10 "affirms women in a huge variety of roles" and would probably be welcomed by all but those who see motherhood as "nothing but enslavement."

The pope recognizes the error of those who "desire to reduce all questions about women to whether they have access to abortion," she said.

Pope John Paul said his unprecedented letter was an attempt to speak "directly to the heart and mind of every woman" before the start of the Fourth World Conference on Women, sponsored by the United Nations and scheduled for Sept. 4-15 in Beijing.

The letter praised women's historic contributions as mothers, wives and social leaders and said they needed greater protection against persistent forms of violence and exploitation. It also apologized for times when the Church has failed to recognize the contributions of women.

Rita Greenwald of Springfield, Ill., president of the National Council of Catholic Women, said the letter confirmed her long-held view that Pope John Paul is "especially sensitive to the very complex world in

which women have to live today."

She said that her organization was pleased to see the pope emphasize many of the issues that the NCCW has made its own — such as equal pay for equal work, an issue raised by the group in the 1960s, and domestic violence, which the NCCW has been fighting as part of its "New Directions" program.

Mrs. Greenwald said the NCCW also felt affirmed by the pope's use of the phrase, "the genius of women," which she said was the same idea used by the U.S. bishops when they founded the Catholic women's group 75 years ago to "help the government address the tremendous needs that faced the world after World War I."

Bishop John J. Snyder of St. Augustine, Fla., chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church, said the papal letter expresses the pope's "deep appreciation and esteem for all that women have contributed to the world through the centuries" and could open "a much needed dialogue about 'a new feminism.'"

Pope John Paul's apology "for whatever role members of the Church may have played in the oppression of women is an example to all of us of the kind of humility necessary if we are to grow into the full stature of Christ, mature men who can admit mistakes," he added.

Bishop Snyder said the pope shares with many U.S. women, Catholic or not, such "legitimate concerns" as "equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancement, recognition of spouses with regard to family rights, (and) recognition of the value of motherhood."

Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the contents of the letter and its tone should not surprise anyone.

But Pope John Paul's "position on women's issues has so often been misunderstood that many may indeed be surprised," he said.

The cardinal called the letter "very affirming, as have been other documents of the Holy Father on the dignity of women, of the initiatives of the NCCB in upholding the rights and dignity of women."

The new document summarizes "the broad range of issues on which the Church and society have worked and still can work in harmony to assure the dignity of women and of each and every human being," Cardinal Keeler added.

Sulpician Father Gerald L. Brown, president of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, praised the pope's letter as a "creative and constructive statement of support for the concerns of women and for their cause of liberation from all structures, situations and attitudes of oppression."

But he said the letter could also serve as "a well-earned spring-board for further reflection" on the role of men in a complex society.

"What John Paul II does for women needs to be done for men as well," Father Brown said. "Men need to be addressed as males within culture, society and Church. As he suggests for women's issues and concerns, this topic might best be discussed by men and women together. Perhaps we need opportunities to explore fully the unique gifts and functions of each and those characteristics shared by both."

## THE RUTHERFORD INSTITUTE

## JOHN W. WHITEHEAD

Founder and President

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July 17, 1995

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VIA FACSIMILE

The Honorable William J. Clinton  
 President of the United States of America  
 The White House  
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. President:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the Government of the United States secure specific guarantees from the Government of China for delegates representing Non-Governmental Organizations at the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) to be held in Beijing, China, from September 6-12. We are seeking to obtain a commitment by the Chinese government that it will allow the entry and distribution onsite, that is, on the Conference and NGO Forum grounds, of Conference-related materials which may have specific or implied references to religion or religious values. These guarantees would include the freedom to express those views whether in workshops, meetings, press conferences, discussion groups, or any other places directly related to the Conference.

As President of an international organization dedicated to the defense of religious liberty and the sanctity of human life, I am especially concerned about the security and freedom of expression of delegates who will represent a pro-life perspective based on religious doctrine and conviction.

Recent statements by Chinese authorities and the United States Department of State seem to imply that China will not allow the entry of religious materials during the celebration of the FWCW. I believe this would be a violation not only of basic human rights but also of the liberty of participants at this world event, which by its very nature requires the expression of a wide range of ideas with political, religious, cultural, and national distinctions. In fact, a substantial number of governmental and non-governmental delegates to the Conference cannot disassociate such important

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The Honorable William J. Clinton  
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issues as the empowerment of women, the family structure, humanlife issues, parental rights, and children's rights from a religious foundation.

The recent imprisonment of human rights activist and American citizen Harry Wu by Chinese authorities only adds to our concerns for the security and freedom of expression of delegates to the Conference.

We trust that your administration will be able to obtain this commitment from the Chinese authorities and that American delegates can count on the protection of the United States government.

I appreciate your concern and assistance in this matter.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

John W. Whitehead

JWW:vc

cc: Warren Christopher, Esq.  
Secretary of State

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RUTHERFORD INSTITUTE ASKS CLINTON TO ENSURE RELIGIOUS  
EXPRESSION IN CHINA

Charlottesville, Va., July 17--Due to recent statements which imply that China may censor religious materials at the upcoming Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), John W. Whitehead, President of The Rutherford Institute, wrote President Clinton today and asked him to secure specific guarantees from the government of China.

The Rutherford Institute is seeking to obtain a commitment by the Chinese government to allow the entry and distribution of materials related to the Conference issues and which may have specific or implied references to religion or religious values. Statements issued by both the Chinese government and the U.S. Department of State have threatened religious expression, and the threat of censorship looms even larger in light of the recent capture and imprisonment of human rights activist and American citizen Harry Wu.

"I believe that censorship of religious materials would be a violation of basic human rights," said Whitehead. "And I am especially concerned about the security and freedom of expression of delegates that will represent a pro-life perspective based on religious doctrine and conviction."

The Rutherford Institute is an international, nonprofit civil liberties organization specializing in the defense of religious liberty. **For more information, please contact Pedro Moreno at (804) 978-3888.**

## National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA



To: The House Sub-Committee on International Affairs  
The Honorable Chris Smith, Chair

From: US Ecumenical Women's Network: Beijing and Beyond,  
Coordinated by the National Council of Churches

Contact: Ann Smith and Karen Hessel, Convenors  
212-870-2421 Fax: 212-870-2265

July 17, 1995

The UN Fourth World Conference on Women is a once in a decade gathering of governmental delegations and NGO's to focus on crucial issues facing a majority of the planets people: Women and their families. It is essential for the US to participate fully and contribute constructively to these international discussions.

It would very inappropriate for the House of Representatives to attempt to short circuit US plans to participate in this event and hold the UN Women's Conference hostage to current tensions over US - China relations. Major issues of concern regarding human rights in China can and should be raised, but should not be used as an excuse to boycott the Conference to the detriment of advancing the well-being of the world's women and their families..

We anticipate our US delegates will have a significant platform to raise important concerns in the context of this major world gathering focusing on women. US concerns about China should be a matter of bi-lateral communication rather than viewing the Conference as a surrogate symbol of disapproval of actions of the Chinese government.

This statement is communicated on behalf of hundreds of women from major Protestant denominations and women of faith groups who will be in Beijing for the NGO Forum and Fourth World Conference. We have strong commitments to human rights with four decades of experience in UN Conferences.

General Board of  
**Global Ministries**

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

100 Maryland Ave., N.E., Box 56  
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WOMEN'S DIVISION  
 Offices of Public Policy and Women's Concerns  
 (202) 488-5660

**PRESS STATEMENT**

**For immediate publication**

**from: Office of UN/International Affairs, Mia Adjali 212-682-3633**  
**Office of Public Policy, Anna Rhee 202-488-5660**  
**Office of Development Education & Action, Pamela Sparr 202-488-5660**

We call upon Congress to support the active participation of the U.S. Government in the United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing, China.

The official policy of the United Methodist Church strongly supports the United Nations; international activities to improve the status of women, teens, and girls; and positive diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. The Women's Division is the national policy-making body for United Methodist Women, one of the largest women's organizations in the U.S. with more than 1 million members. The Division is preparing to attend the official and NGO conferences.

This conference offers women and men from around the world a rare and timely opportunity to educate themselves and act upon the critical issues facing women today. Nearly 40,000 are expected to take part. Political, economic, social and environmental trends have contributed to deterioration in the status of many women around the world since the last women's conference 10 years ago. International organizations and governments now realize that women have the right and responsibility to be involved in decision-making at all levels. Moreover, they now recognize that women's involvement and the improvement of their status is key to making national and international progress on many fronts -- economic development, environmental sustainability, health and nutrition for children and families, and literacy levels, among others. The United States must continue to play a major role in the political process of this conference. This is a conference on women. Withdrawing official US support for the conference only hurts U.S. women -- not China -- because it denies U.S. women the vehicle for helping shape international policy and their own destiny.

# # #





## Church Positions on Abortion in the United States of America

The following analysis describes in general terms the denominational positions of Christian church denominations in the United States that represent more than 248,000 members (0.1 % of the general population).

This analysis is based on available policy statements, letters, and published material from each denomination. In some cases, the policies are vague and some intuitive evaluation was made based on available information. In many cases, denominational statements are only guidelines, and individual congregations and pastors can chart their own course on the abortion issue. For example, within all four denominations with pro-abortion positions or leaning, the organizations of clergy and lay people supporting a pro-life position are working to see changes in their respective denominations (Categories III and IV).

Virtually all denominations believe that life begins at conception and that life is a gift from God. The explanations used by pro-abortion denominations to justify their abortion policies challenge basic logic more often than not.

### I. **Pro-Life:** Permit no abortions, allow abortion only to save the life of the mother, or oppose abortion on demand.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u># of Members (millions)</u>	<u>Percent of General Population</u>
Assemblies of God	1.28	.9
Catholic	53.38	21.5
Church of God (Cleveland, TN)	.69	.3
Church of the Nazarene	.89	.4
Free Will Baptists	.29	.1
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod	2.60	1.4
Southern Baptist Convention	18.94	7.6
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod	.42	.1
Wesleyan	<u>.26</u>	<u>.2</u>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>78.75</b>	<b>32.8*</b>

### II. **Pro-Life With Exceptions:** Permit abortions to save the life of the mother, in cases of rape or incest or fetal deformity; but oppose abortion as a means of birth control.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u># of Members (millions)</u>	<u>Percent of General Population</u>
Ch. of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	3.54	1.4
Int. Ch. of the Foursquare Gospel	.25	.1
Reformed Church in America	<u>.36</u>	<u>.1</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>1.6*</b>

\*Sums may vary due to rounding off of individual percentages.

III. Morally Oppose Abortion on Demand: Generally affirm sanctity of life but maintain exceptions which permit abortion under a broader range of circumstances. Most also oppose legislation to regulate abortion.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u># of Members (millions)</u>	<u>Percent of General Population</u>
Episcopal <sup>1</sup>	2.44	1.0
United Methodist <sup>2</sup>	11.09	4.5
American Baptist Church USA <sup>3</sup>	<u>1.87</u>	<u>.8</u>
	15.40	6.3*

IV. Pro-Abortion: Permit abortion as a means of birth control, oppose laws against abortion or support abortion on demand.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u># of Members (millions)</u>	<u>Percent of General Population</u>
Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ)	1.03	.4
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America <sup>4</sup>	5.22	2.1
Presbyterian Church USA	3.55	1.4
United Church of Christ	<u>1.99</u>	<u>.8</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.79</b>	<b>4.7*</b>

V. Position Not Defined: Consists of autonomous congregations who do not have a denominational structure which determines positions on public policy issues. The vast majority of these congregations have a biblically based theology and oppose abortion on demand and permit exceptions only in the most tragic hard cases.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u># of Members (millions)</u>	<u>Percent of General Population</u>
African Methodist Epis. Zion Ch.	1.14	.5
Black Baptist	8.74	3.5
Christian Chs. & Chs. of Christ <sup>5</sup>	1.04	.4
Churches of Christ	1.68	.7
Independent Charismatic Chs.	.79	.3
Independent Non-Charismatic Chs.	<u>1.21</u>	<u>.5</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.60</b>	<b>5.9*</b>

#### VI. Summary:

- Fifty-five percent of the general population of the United States claim a religious affiliation.
- Thirteen major denominations in the United States with memberships over 248,000 (0.1%) either oppose all abortions or allow for them only in the "hard cases" -- life of mother, rape or incest and fetal deformity. These denominations represent a total of 82.9 million members which is 33% of the general population (60% of those claiming religious affiliation).
- Only four denominations with memberships over 0.1% percent have policies that are clearly pro-abortion. They have a total membership of 11.75 million which is 4.7% of the general population.
- An additional number of smaller denominations (membership less than 248,000) were surveyed by CARENET but were not included in this analysis. The vast majority were either pro-life or pro-life with hard case exceptions (Categories I & II).

## Reference & Footnotes

### References

The information for this analysis was obtained primarily from two sources:

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### Footnotes:

1. The 1988 statement of the general convention significantly changed the pro-abortion resolutions of 1976, 1979 and 1982. For the first time a church resolution stated that abortion used as a means of birth control, family planning, sex selection, or "reason of mere convenience" is "emphatically" opposed.

2. The United Methodist Church, which previously held a strong pro-abortion stance, adopted a revised position on abortion in 1988 which is somewhat more pro-life (with exceptions), but is clearly ambiguous. Relevant statements from the Book of Discipline state:

The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence....Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity with past Christian teaching, we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection.

The United Methodists still provide office space to Reproductive Choice (Formerly Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights). This policy has been seriously challenged by pro-life leaders within the denomination at the General Conferences.

3. In a 1988 resolution, the general board of American Baptist Churches acknowledged that life is a "sacred and gracious gift of God." Abortion is opposed outright as a "means of avoiding responsibility for conception, as a primary means of birth control without regard to the far-reaching consequences of the act."

4. In an eleven page statement in 1991, the ELCA stated that,

"Human beings, created in God's image as male and female (Genesis 1:27-28) are persons of intrinsic value and dignity." The document also states that, "Abortion ought to be an option only of last resort." It continues, "The position of the church is that, in cases where the life of the mother is threatened, where the pregnancy results from rape or incest, or where the embryo or fetus has lethal abnormalities incompatible with life, abortion prior to viability should not be prohibited by law...On the other hand this church supports legislation that prohibits abortion that is performed after the fetus is determined to be viable, except when the mother's life is threatened or when lethal abnormalities indicate the prospective newborn will die very soon."

5. In a recent survey of approximately 5,000 ministers, 94% opposed the following statement:  
"A women should be allowed to have an abortion for whatever reasons she may have."



*Please note: portions of this letter are not suitable for children.*

August 1995

Dear Friends,

I want to talk to you this month about what could be the most important topic I've addressed in many years. This matter has profound implications for the institution of the family and for what we have called "the defense of righteousness," yet it will not be covered adequately by the secular press. Thus, I'm asking that you give particular attention to the words that follow, even if you don't often read my written comments. The events about to unfold on the world scene are almost beyond comprehension.

From Aug. 30 to Sept. 15, 1995, delegates from more than 170 sovereign nations will attend the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. It will represent the most radical, atheistic and anti-family crusade in the history of the world, and your own government is pulling the strings and supporting a disproportionate share of the costs. The extremists who are preparing for and promoting this conference are a million miles outside the American mainstream, and yet they will be speaking in Beijing with the authority of the United States government. The more I learn about what these radical feminists want to impose on the human family, the more appalled I am that so few churches, Christian magazines and religious radio stations have chosen to alert our citizens to the implicit danger. It is a mystery, in fact, how such enormous threats to our spiritual and cultural heritage could have slithered into our midst without due notice or alarm.

Make no mistake about it: most of what Christianity stands for will be challenged during this atheistic conference. Every good and perfect gift from the hand of the Creator will be mocked and vilified by many of its delegates. That is their agenda. That is their program. And if they have their way, the family as it has been known since antiquity will cease to exist. Let me try to spell out what is about to occur on the other side of the globe.

First, consider where this international event will be held. No country on earth has abused and oppressed more women than China, with its forced abortion policy and its "one child per family" law. This is a nation that monitors menstrual cycles so it can identify young women with unapproved pregnancies and drag them into medical clinics to have their babies killed. It is also a country that has murdered tens of millions of female infants. So effective has been its bias against the feminine gender that the sex-ratio in large regions of China favors males by 64 percent.<sup>1</sup> What irony, then, that the people who have annihilated their little girls will host a conference on the betterment of women. What breathtaking wickedness! And to their shame, President Bill Clinton and his First Lady, Hillary, have committed the resources of the United States government to this travesty. Indeed, at the time of this writing, Hillary was the likely chairperson to lead the American delegation to China.<sup>2</sup>

Sending a delegation to China should be unthinkable for two other reasons. First, Sen. Jesse Helms, chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, held hearings in May to investigate a deeply disturbing practice occurring inside China. A half-dozen witnesses testified that the Chinese government is satisfying its need for hard cash by executing young prisoners and then "harvesting" their organs while their bodies are still warm. Sue Lloyd-Roberts, a BBC reporter, and Harry Wu, who spent 19 years in China's forced labor camps, showed the senators a shocking videotape of the actual

*Colorado Springs, CO 80995*

executions. (I also saw a similar videotape while in Scotland three years ago.) Standing nearby were surgical vans and medical teams waiting to cannibalize the bodies just moments after death. The organs thus extracted are sold at black-market prices to Westerners desperate for kidneys, hearts, livers, corneas, etc. Who knows how this lucrative market for body parts has influenced China's inclination to kill young men and women accused of various minor offenses? Even without this financial incentive, prisoners have been executed historically for simply disagreeing with their government. Mr. Wu reported that he witnessed such an execution of a fellow inmate in 1970 who had merely written "Down with Chairman Mao" on a cigarette pack.<sup>1</sup> (Late information: In early May, Wu was arrested in Northern China and charged with espionage and high treason. If convicted, he will be sentenced to death.)<sup>2</sup>

If that isn't enough to turn one's stomach, consider this: According to *World* (which also reported the practice described above), human fetuses have begun to appear on menus of Chinese restaurants as a delicacy and health tonic. This account was cited:

"To investigate widespread rumors that unborn human beings were being sought and eaten to improve complexions and promote general well-being, an *Eastern Express* reporter on March 1 entered the state-run Shenzhen Health Center for Women and Children and requested a fetus for a feigned illness. A female doctor told the reporter the department had run out of fetuses, but to come back.

"The next day, according to the paper, the reporter returned at lunch time. The doctor eventually emerged from the operating theater holding a fist-sized glass bottle stuffed with thumb-sized fetuses. She said, 'There are 10 fetuses here, all aborted this morning. You can take them. We are a state hospital and don't charge anything. Normally we doctors take them home to eat—all free. Since you don't look well, you can take them.'"<sup>3</sup>

It is incredible that the Clinton administration has not only approved U.S. support for a conference on women's rights in such a country, but it has also granted "most favored nation" trade status to it as well. According to the President, there is no connection between China's abuse of human rights and our economic policies. All that matters, apparently, is that we profit financially from the relationship.

Since the issue of whether or not to go to China is no longer debatable, we must ask what the conference organizers hope to accomplish while they are there? What is their agenda? What can we anticipate during those 17 fateful days? To answer these questions, we should look first at who is representing us. The official U.N. document which will be promoted in Beijing was written by a virtual who's who of radical feminists. Chief among them is that veteran sexist warrior, Bella Abzug. Abzug headed the infamous International Women's Conference in Houston which was designed to destroy the family back in 1977. We can thank President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalyn, for turning that government-sponsored event over to the likes of Abzug, Gloria Steinem, Jane Fonda and Betty Friedan. Watching them on television as they ripped into everything I believed actually motivated me to join the pro-family movement. When President Carter announced his follow-up White House Conferences on the Family two years later, I said to myself, "Not this time, sir. Not this time!" So what a surprise, 18 years later, to see many of the same revolutionaries making even more outrageous plans for the family.

Abzug is a strange choice to be in charge of anything these days. The *Washington Times* referred to her as "a fixture in old left activism."<sup>4</sup> She was an avid supporter of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin during her days at Hunter College, and she led rallies for the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War.<sup>5</sup> Referring to the election of Bill Clinton in 1992, she said, "God forbid, or Goddess forbid, [that] he should lose."<sup>6</sup> She resigned as a congresswoman to run for the U.S. Senate, and lost.<sup>7</sup> She ran for mayor of New York City and finished third in a primary race.<sup>8</sup> Then she ran again for Congress and lost.<sup>9</sup> Her views are so far off base even the liberal media often ignore them. Nevertheless, this woman, a radical to the core who represents only her leftist cohorts, has become our official spokesperson on morals and the family. She has told us what kind of person she is. Writing in her book, *Bella*, she said, "I've been described as a tough and noisy person, a prize fighter, a

man hater, you name it. There are those who say I'm impatient, impetuous, uppity, rude, profane, brash and overbearing. Whether I'm any of these things, or all of them, you can decide for yourself."<sup>12</sup> I have decided for myself, but it makes no difference. Abzug will soon be off to China to wreck the family and reconstruct human relationships throughout the world.

Let me share a portion of what Abzug and her cronies at the United Nations hope to sell to—or impose on—other countries. (Note: Most of the concepts that follow are also taught in university "women's study programs," which would shock the parents who are struggling to give their sons and daughters "a good education.")

1. At the heart of the draft document is enormous hostility to the institution of the family. Marriage is seen as the root of all evil for women, and hence, it will be largely ignored in the deliberations. Everything related to traditional male and female relationships is despised. Men are seen as oppressors and exploiters whom women should regard as lifelong enemies. The family is also blamed for most of the violence suffered by women and girls. Nowhere is it acknowledged that men and women should be partners in the procreation, care and nurturing of children. Clearly, the age-old institution of the family is in for hard times in China.<sup>13</sup>
2. Of great significance to the framers of the conference is a concept known as "gender feminism." *Please read carefully, now, because this is the basis for the Beijing conference.* What is being proposed is a new way of looking at human sexuality. The notion that babies come into the world as male or female based on the size and shape of their genitalia is anathema. Sexual identification, they say, is something society imposes on children and then expects them to play out in their behavior ever after. One feminist writer expressed it like this, "Although many people think that men and women are the natural expression of a genetic blueprint, gender is a product of human thought and culture, a social construction that creates the 'true nature' of all individuals."<sup>14</sup>

In other words, the only biological differences between men and women are relatively insignificant, external features. Therefore, if we protect children from social and religious conditioning, people will be free to move into and out of existing genders and gender roles according to their preferences. Taking that concept to its illogical conclusion, the radicals want to dissolve the traditional roles of mothers and fathers. They also hope to eliminate such terms as *wife, husband, son, daughter, sister, brother, manhood, womanhood, masculine* and *feminine*. These references to sexual identity are being replaced with gender-neutral terms, such as *parent, spouse, child* and *sibling*. The ultimate goal of those who drafted the document, although they tried to hide it, is a plan to get rid of traditional sexuality in order to destroy patriarchy. Men can't have male privileges if we deny the existence of males and females.<sup>15</sup> This political objective is called "the deconstruction of gender."

After maleness and femaleness have been disenfranchised, everything related to sex will change. All household responsibilities will be divided 50/50 by governmental decree. Every business will be governed by strict 50/50 quotas. The military will also be apportioned equally between men and women, including ground combat assignments and any future selection of draftees. There will be absolutely no differences tolerated between the sexes. In short, the distinction between masculinity and femininity will utterly disappear from the cultures of the world.<sup>16</sup>

There is a thorny little problem with this unisexual view of mankind, of course. It contradicts Genesis 1:27, which reads: "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." It also ignores the words of Jesus, who said, "Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female. . . ." Then He said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh" (Matthew 19:4-5).

In this instance and so many others, the draft document to be promoted in Beijing is utterly disdainful of the King of kings and Lord of lords. But before casting Him aside as irrelevant, our delegates should take a look at the Scripture that warns, "Do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked" (Galatians 6:7).

3. The primary objective in Beijing will be the same as a similar event held last year in Cairo, Egypt. That conference was designed to promote safe-sex ideology, condom usage and "reproductive rights," (i.e., free and unrestricted access to abortion) in every nation of the world. That was another scary time for the family. It looked as though the Clinton administration and the radical feminists would spread their revolutionary ideas around the world. Indeed, there was very little opposition to them. Leaders of most evangelical denominations sat on the sidelines, 6,000 miles away, and ignored the storm clouds gathering in Cairo. Thanks almost entirely to the opposition of Pope John Paul II and many other Roman Catholic leaders, the goals of the radicals were not achieved. Rather than giving up, however, they simply regrouped and began preparing for a final putsch in Beijing.

In coercing reluctant countries to adopt feminist ideas about abortion and safe-sex ideology, a carrot-and-stick approach will be used. United States aid programs for underdeveloped nations will be linked to the willingness of foreign governments to implement these "population control" measures. Those that balk, including predominately Islamic and Catholic nations, will be threatened with reduced foreign aid. This coercion is deeply resented in many areas of the world where people perceive the United States as the 800-pound gorilla throwing its weight around. They also complain that they can't get help in developing clean water supplies and medical support, but they can get condoms by the millions—whether they want them or not.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, President Clinton has requested \$635 million in the 1996 budget for international population control and another \$400 million at home!<sup>18</sup> And that's your tax money they're using to kill babies and give condoms to kids.

By the way, President Clinton recently repeated his campaign statement that "abortion should be safe, legal and rare." How can he utter those farcical words at the very moment he is involved to his eyeteeth in the promotion of abortion in every nation on earth?

4. Homosexual and lesbian rights are central to the philosophy driving the conference. The Lesbian Caucus played a prominent role during meetings of the "preparation committee" at the United Nations. The Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission also issued a declaration which reads, in part, "We, the undersigned, call upon the Member States to recognize the right to determine one's sexual identity; the right to control one's own body, particularly in establishing intimate relationships; and the right to choose if, when, and with whom to bear or raise children as fundamental components of all human rights of all women regardless of sexual orientation."<sup>19</sup>

Relating again to "the deconstruction of gender" described above, the goal is to give members of the human family five genders from which to choose instead of two. When freed from traditional biases, a person can decide whether to be male, female, homosexual, lesbian, or transgendered. Some may want to try all five in time. Homosexuality is considered the moral equivalent of heterosexuality.<sup>20</sup> For women, however, the preferred love relationship is lesbian in nature. In that way male oppressiveness can be negated. Artificial insemination is the ideal method of producing a pregnancy, and a lesbian partner should have the same parenting rights accorded historically to biological fathers.<sup>21</sup>

5. Finally (and there is much more I can't cover in this letter), the official draft document is extremely hostile to religion—especially that which gender feminists have demonized as "fundamentalists." By fundamentalists, they refer to Catholics, Evangelicals, Orthodox Christians, Orthodox Jews, Muslims, and any other persons whose religious views contradict feminist dogma. Nothing, they say, has done more to oppress women or limit their aspirations than these patriarchal religious beliefs and teachings. Unbelievably, the people who are representing our great nation in Beijing are openly antagonistic to what most of you and I believe with all our hearts.<sup>22</sup>

Now, some of my readers might ask, "So what? Why does it matter if a group of radical feminists assemble in faraway China to discuss their kooky ideas? What harm can they do?" The danger associated with the conference is linked to the unprecedented influence of the United States in world politics. Remember that 170 nations will

be represented there. Imagine the damage that can be done around the globe if the credibility of this wonderful country, with all its resources and power, is used to undermine the family, promote abortion, teach immoral behavior to teenagers, incite anger and competition between men and women, advocate lesbian and homosexual behavior, and vilify those with sincere religious faith. This is Satan's trump card if I have ever seen it.

Remember, too, that people from underdeveloped nations don't understand that the Clinton administration does not represent the majority of the American people on these radical positions. They will see Madeline Albright, our representative to the United Nations, Timothy Wirth, our assistant secretary of state, Vice President Al Gore, and perhaps the First Lady herself leading the parade to Beijing. What is the international community to assume but that the most powerful and respected nation on earth has endorsed a new understanding of human relationships. Furthermore, they will quickly recognize that foreign aid is dependent upon going along with the politically correct program.

Knowledgeable conservative writers are beginning to recognize the scope of the threat at our door. One of them, Dale O'Leary, has studied gender feminist ideology extensively. She wrote the following:

To the average person the Gender Feminist agenda appears as pure nonsense. How could anyone sincerely believe that society could do away with family, impose 50/50 quotas on all activities, eliminate motherhood, and institute polymorphous perversity? Five years ago people laughed at the suggestion, but those who have been exposed to the influence of the Gender Feminist agenda aren't laughing anymore.

Many mothers, who sent their lovely daughters off to college to prepare for careers, are weeping, because their daughters have come home with lesbian lovers. An April 26, 1995, article entitled 'Dating Game Today Breaks Traditional Gender Roles,' which appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* reported on a growing number of young women coming out of U.S. universities where they have been indoctrinated in women's studies programs who are engaging in sexual relations with women and men. Included is a report on Ms. Anji Dickson who can't decide whether to marry her boyfriend or grow old with a woman.

... in Ms. Dickson's generation young women openly enter into intimate relationships with both genders that are more than just experiments. They resist being described as straight or gay—or even bisexual, which some think suggests promiscuity and one-night stands. Instead, they use words like 'fluid' and 'omnisexual.'

The deconstruction of gender is mainstream America. Many U.S. television series have included episodes promoting the Gender Feminist agenda, homosexuality and choosing one's own sexual identity. These include the popular 'Roseanne,' 'Northern Exposure,' 'Star Trek: the Next Generation' and 'Star Trek: Deep Space Nine.' The message that sexual identity can be deconstructed and the vocations of manhood and womanhood are nothing but socially constructed gender roles can be found in children's books and on the popular children's television series 'Sesame Street.'

Unfortunately, there has been no effective voice to challenge the gender feminists within academia or within the mainstream media. The power of the U.S. entertainment industry and the U.S. universities, not only at home but around the world, means that the nonsense of Gender Feminism may soon become an international tragedy.<sup>21</sup>

Well, the obvious question to ask is, "What can we do to derail this gender feminism juggernaut?" I would make four suggestions which I sincerely hope my readers will implement.

First, pray diligently about this conference. Pray especially for our staff members who will be on the front lines in Beijing. By great effort and patience, Focus on the Family has obtained approval from the United Nations to



attend the conference as what they call a “Non-Governmental Organization”—an NGO. That permits us to send five colleagues (two men and three women) as our representatives. They will not be voting delegates, of course. That honor is reserved for people who will support the outrageous party line, such as the Ms. Foundation, which is sponsoring 120 delegates.<sup>24</sup> But our team will be able to get the inside story and file reports which we will air on our broadcast and on “Family News in Focus.” We know from the Cairo Conference that the few conservatives who are in Beijing will be under considerable pressure and harassment. They need your prayerful support as they attempt to function in such a hostile atmosphere.

Second, I implore you to contact your representatives in Congress. Call or write your two senators and your district congressman. Tell them you are extremely displeased with the use of federal money to support such a radical, anti-family agenda. Ask them to help defund the programs that ensue from it. Especially, tell them to stop giving nearly one billion dollars per year to Planned Parenthood and similar organizations for use at home and abroad. Killing babies and promoting the lie of “safe-sex” is no business for Americans to be supporting!

Third, I hope you will use the alternative media aggressively in coming days. Call local talk shows. Call national talk shows. Call your Christian radio station. Write letters to the editors of your hometown newspaper. Write to secular and Christian magazines. Inform your pastor and ask him to mobilize your church. Post messages on computer bulletin boards. Let your voices be heard. Turn out in force at rallies sponsored by those who are seeking the presidency. Ask the candidates where they stand on the moral issues—abortion, homosexuality, safe-sex ideology, radical feminism and the family. Press them to give you straight answers about what they will do with the moral concerns if elected (or re-elected) in 1996.

Fourth, remember that this assault on traditional values originated with Bill and Hillary Clinton, who adopted and promoted the feminist and homosexual agendas from the third day of the Clinton administration. The President forced the military to accept homosexuals and lesbians; he appointed the most radical people—such as Joycelyn Elders and Roberta Achtenberg—to key government positions; he permitted abortion in military hospitals; he authorized fetal tissue experimentation, and so on. These executive decisions have been widely reported.

Let me tell you about a less publicized outrage which also concerns another abuse of women’s rights. In May 1993, 180 Chinese women boarded a ship, the *Golden Venture*, which was secretly bound for the United States. It arrived and ran aground in New York Harbor on June 6, 1993.<sup>25</sup> These women had made the long and perilous journey to our shores to escape forced abortion in their homeland. They requested asylum as permitted by an existing U.S. immigration policy which granted shelter to those who had fled from forced abortions, forced sterilization, or other forms of persecution associated with coercive population-control programs. These 180 frightened women clearly met the provisions of this long-standing policy, but the Clinton administration was unsympathetic to their plight. After all, the President favors population control efforts around the world, and he had no intention of harboring refugees from its oppression. Thus, he reversed our immigration policy in August 1994 and placed the women in various prisons and jails around the country.<sup>26</sup> They remain there to this day, except for 15, who were scheduled on June 23, 1995, to be granted temporary asylum in Quito, Ecuador. Presumably, the remaining women will soon be returned to China where they will face an angry and embarrassed government. (A late development: Our State Department has denied, at least temporarily, permission for the 15 Chinese women to be sent to Ecuador!<sup>27</sup> And . . . the Immigration and Naturalization Service has just torpedoed Rep. Chris Smith’s (R-N.J.) efforts to invite the Chinese women to testify at Congressional hearings.<sup>28</sup> How do you spell C-O-V-E-R U-P?)

The civil rights organization Voice for Life recently issued the following statement about the immigrants: “While all the Chinese refugees had hoped to live in freedom in the United States, they are all exhausted from their extended period of incarceration, and they are tired of being treated like criminals.”<sup>29</sup>

Let me see, now—what are the words engraved on the Statue of Liberty standing a short distance from where the *Golden Venture* ran aground? Don't they say, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free . . .?"

This travesty reminds me of the large contingent of desperate Jews who sailed away from Nazi Germany in 1939, only to be denied immigration in the United States. No country would accept them, and they were eventually shipped back to Germany to face Hitler's gas chambers.<sup>26</sup> It was one of the most shameful acts in U.S. history. The rejection and incarceration of 180 Chinese women today is almost as reprehensible. But . . . support for world population control is the official policy of this administration, and it has no sympathy for those who flee from it! So onward to Beijing we go!

A footnote to the sordid story related above: Can we forget that in 1993, just before the immigration policy was changed to exclude those fleeing forced abortion, the Clinton administration fought hard for HIV-infected patients to be granted admittance to this country. Congress overruled the President by an overwhelming vote. I guess it comes down to this: Contagious HIV patients: "Yes." Oppressed Chinese mothers: "No way!"

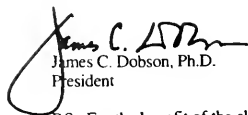
Despite the distressing news I have shared, I hope you won't get discouraged. This band of left-wing radicals that is heading up our delegation to Beijing does not represent the great American people. The insanity of their agenda is not on the ascent—it's on its way out. Our country is becoming increasingly conservative, not more liberal. Indeed, the conference in China may represent the twilight of an outrageous idea that has run its course at home. If we can just keep the ultra-liberals from exporting their failed policies around the world, there may be light at the end of the tunnel.

Before resorting to panic, therefore, we must remember Whom we are working for! I was reminded of that good news after a church service Shirley and I attended last Sunday. A man I didn't know came up and shook my hand. Without even introducing himself he said, "I just attended a reunion of my family, and so many of my relatives said they were praying for you." With that, he began to cry and walked away. I was overwhelmed to realize that this man and his family had been on their knees, asking the Lord to bless and protect me and this ministry. I know there are thousands of other wonderful folks who are holding us up in prayer day after day. That is what keeps us going in these times.

In conclusion, let me remind you that it is expensive to send a delegation to China and to support all that Focus on the Family is committed to doing. We need your help to get the job done. And we'd like to hear from you when time permits.

God's richest blessings to you all.

Sincerely,



James C. Dobson, Ph.D.  
President

P.S. For the benefit of the skeptical, let me assure you that every word in this letter has been carefully documented. Nothing has been exaggerated or overstated. A quick examination of the official U.N. draft document will confirm the mess our government has created.

## ENDNOTES

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Dr. Beverly LaHave, President

## POSITION REPORT

### THE ROAD TO BEIJING: THE U.N. FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

The United Nations will hold the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, September 4-15, 1995. This conference is designed to build upon the work of previous conferences, and is coordinated by the U.S. State Department Office of the Global Secretariat, created by Tim Wirth.

The goals of the Fourth World Conference on Women are "Equality, Development, and Peace." The framework is the *Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women*. This is the platform document from the last world conference on women, which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1985.

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

##### National Delegations

Two groups of people will attend the Fourth World Conference on Women. The first group consists of official national delegates – individuals who have the authority to draft and vote on language for the platform document. The second group consists of non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives. The Secretariat of the United Nations grants accreditation to NGOs, allowing them to observe the proceedings. Although NGOs cannot vote, NGOs have a great influence upon the platform process, often writing major sections of the platform document.

##### Platform Document

Each United Nations conference produces a "platform document" that outlines the goals of the conference, lists actions that should be taken by the United Nations, national governments and private organizations, and describes ways to implement these goals into

the public and private lives of all citizens. The final platform document is a **statement**, which declares that every nation in attendance agrees that the contents of the platform reflect the desires and views of the people in their country.

For that reason, any and all words that appear in each platform document are extremely important. It will form the basis for future documents. Language may always be added in the future, but rarely is it taken out. Once incorporated into one document, words and phrases attain a new level of prominence and permanence.

For example, the platform document for the Population Conference (held in Cairo, Egypt in September, 1994) originally affirmed a **right** to abortion as part of reproductive services. That language was moderated during the conference. This move caused a furor among abortion proponents because they knew that once such language appeared in one document, it would forever remain in future documents.

### The U.S. Delegation

Hillary Rodham Clinton will serve as honorary chair of the United States delegation, and Ambassador Madeleine Albright, U.S. representative to the U.N., will act as the working chairman. Three types of official voting delegates will attend. The first group includes agency employees from the Departments of State, Labor and Education, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The second group will consist of four to five NGO representatives, called "Public Member Delegates," **who will be paid for by our tax dollars**. Finally, a number of "Private Sector Advisors" will attend who are actually NGO representatives who pay their own way. The White House and the State Department will subjectively choose the NGOs who are to serve as official U.S. delegates. **These delegates will represent the United States and have the authority to draft language and vote on the platform document.**

### NGO Attendees

Fourteen hundred NGOs from around the world were granted accreditation to attend the Fourth World Conference on Women. Unfortunately, 490 NGOs were turned down. **Concerned Women for America, for example, was initially denied accreditation, despite that fact that it is the largest politically active women's organization in the United States and represents over 600,000 men and women in the U.S. and abroad. Strangely enough, the United Nations charged that it excluded CWA because we "lacked relevance to women's issues."**

It certainly appears that the United Nations sifted out applicants for NGO accreditation to eliminate those who do not support specific feminist aims, such as the ratification of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*

(CEDAW).<sup>1</sup>

## CONTENT OF THE PLATFORM<sup>2</sup>

### Terms of the Debate

"Equality, Development and Peace" are the three themes of the Fourth World Conference on Women. Since the platform's mission statement defined the platform as an "Agenda for Equality," it is important to understand the definitions of key words that appear in the platform.

National delegates have already drafted most of the language for the Fourth World Conference on Women at three PrepComs (preparatory committees), the most recent of which was held in New York City in March, 1995. PrepComs are the meetings where platform documents are actually hammered out and written. They always proceed a U.N. conference, so that the document will be almost final when it reaches the official conference. Each nation has one vote, and any nation can, regardless of their size, "bracket" a word in the platform document. Any bracketed word or sentence is not final, and so may be discussed and voted on at a later time.

There was a great deal of confusion at the March PrepCom regarding the definition of certain terms. For example, the delegate from Honduras was dissatisfied with the lack of definition given to the word "gender," so she asked that it be bracketed. The feminists were furious because this posed a threat to their gender agenda.

Just what is the gender agenda of the United Nations? A statement issued by the U.N. Secretary General, during the March PrepCom, gives some insight. "Gender," said the statement, "is...a relative concept. These roles can vary with time and circumstance. There are societies where the roles are reversed. The roles played by women and men can change over time, in response to wider changes...because the roles change, gender is relative." In fact, in PrepCom workshops there had been discussion about the five genders. "Gender feminists" consider male and female as the "radical extremes," with homosexuals, bisexuals and transsexuals in the "moderate middle." It is these same gender feminists who dominate the delegations from the large developed nations.

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<sup>1</sup> CEDAW (*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*) is the U.N. Women's treaty. It was signed for the United States by President Carter in 1980, and resided in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee until October, 1994. At that time the treaty was passed out of committee with only four senators opposed, but it was not brought to the Senate floor for a vote and so returned to committee. CEDAW is the legal instrument used to implement the goals of the platform documents developed by United Nations women's conferences.

<sup>2</sup> All references are to the April 17, 1995 draft of the platform for action.

Regarding the definition of "equality," the Secretariat's statement said: "What is certain is that equity is a relative concept. It can change according to circumstances, criterion, or application." This is important because it demonstrates that the entire platform document is built upon the idea that justice is a relative concept and cannot be absolute.

### Mission Statement

The April 17, 1995 draft of the platform document begins with a **Mission Statement** (pp. 2-3) that describes the platform as an "agenda for women's empowerment." It "requires immediate action," and says that "the success of this Platform for Action will require...the establishment or strengthening of mechanisms at all levels for accountability to the world's women." (Part I, sec. 5)

### Global Framework

Next there is a section called the **Global Framework** (pp. 3-11) which candidly asserts the economic, cultural, developmental and social goals of the platform. "The Fourth World Conference on Women should accelerate the process that formally began in 1975...[the] International Women's Year..." Since then, "Many governments have enacted legislation to promote equality between women and men and have established national machineries to ensure the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all spheres of society." (Part II, sec. 26)

### Critical Areas of Concern

Part III of the section entitled **Critical Areas of Concern** (pp. 12-15) states that: "Empowerment of women and equality [and equity] between women and men are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all peoples (section 34)." "All actors should focus action and resources on the strategic objectives relating to the critical areas of concern," says Part III, section 36, "...and implement mechanisms of accountability for all these areas of concern."

### Strategic Objectives and Actions

The next section, **Strategic Objectives and Actions** (pp. 15-134), details the strategic objectives of the platform, and what actions should be taken by governments, international institutions, private organizations, and individuals to reach those objectives.

For example, the document demands "gender sensitivity training" at all levels of education, and would force such training upon all government workers, individuals in legal

and police professions, businesses and corporations. Of course, the content of "gender sensitivity training" is uncertain, since the United Nations has defined "gender" so vaguely. At best, it is inflammatory rhetoric that flies in the face of the traditional concepts of family and marriage. At worst, it would open the door for courts to interpret homosexual behavior as a valid basis for civil rights classification. Thus homosexuality, bisexuality or transsexuality would be considered "valid lifestyles," immune from religious objections in school curriculum, business training or hiring.

That is only the beginning. At the most recent PrepCom, one nation asked that the word "mother" in the platform be changed to "caretaker," so "mother" was bracketed. Another nation asked that "family" be changed to "household." In fact, most references to "family" in the platform are in a negative context. For example, section 89 says: "**In many cases, violence against women and girls occurs in the family or within the home, where violence is often tolerated.**" Such references and suggestions certainly reflect the view of many national delegations, that family should not be considered a traditional societal structure headed by a married man and woman. The platform's solution is for teachers and educators to raise awareness about women's role in family and society, and for all governments to ratify CEDAW.

The Strategic Objectives and Actions section of the platform document, coupled with CEDAW, also lead nations down the road to changes in their own constitutions. If the United States ratified CEDAW, a document like the Equal Rights Amendment would become mandatory. Further "equality" would be reached through the "goal of parity" (sec. 134.c.). That means that the composition of political parties and government boards and entities would have to be 50 percent women.<sup>3</sup>

Like "gender" and "equality," many other terms in this section are very vaguely defined. For example, regarding the concept of women's "human rights," it seems that any aim the authors hope to attain – abortion, gender-sensitive education, global condom distribution, etc. – is suddenly classified as a **human right**. That flies in the face of the laws that nations like the United States have already established to govern their people. We are a **sovereign** nation. The United Nations does not, and never should have the authority to demand that American citizens conform to any system of "human rights" that is clearly out of line with established U.S. law.

#### Institutional and Financial Arrangements for Implementation

The final two sections of the draft platform for action are the **Institutional Arrangements for Implementation** (pp. 134-147), which outlines the steps the world must

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<sup>3</sup> This is not as far-fetched as it might sound. The state of Iowa is the only state that currently has such a law. It has been the source of much tension and frustration in that state.



take at all levels to implement the platform objectives, and the **Financial Arrangements for Implementation** (pp. 147-150). This section discusses the provision of money to implement the platform.

## CONCLUSION

Why is the United States a party to something that does not represent of the views of most Americans? While the Executive Branch would argue that sending a delegation to Beijing is part of its authority to make treaties, the Senate is granted the authority to ratify treaties. The United States' presence at Beijing and sanction of the conference will increase pressure on the U.S. Senate to ratify CEDAW.

As for the platform document of the Fourth World Conference on Women, it advocates the goals of radical feminism on a global scale. This was illustrated at the recent New York City PrepCom in March, 1995, when former Congresswoman Bella Abzug spoke as a representative of NGOs from the United States. She said, "We will not be forced back into the 'biology is destiny' concept that seeks to define, confine and reduce women and girls to their physical sexual characteristics."

It is not surprising that bizarre and radical solutions have risen from a document that is built upon a foundation of faulty ideas. Gender-sensitivity training and the "empowerment of women" are not solutions to the problems that plague our society. There is no reason why the United States should become a party to "solutions" – like condom distribution, abortion rights and the abolition of traditional views of the family – that will further, not stem, the tide of irresponsible behavior.

Concerned Women for America will be present at the Fourth Conference on Women to represent the millions of women whose traditional beliefs have been ignored thus far. CWA's worldview starts with the framework of the traditional family, and our over 600,000 members here and abroad will not be silenced by the U.S. State Department or the United Nations. We stand with families across the nation, and around the world, as advocates of the values and beliefs that they hold dear.

June, 1995

25 July 1995

**STATEMENT BY HUMAN RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS CALLING ON  
THE US TO WORK AT THE BEIJING CONFERENCE TO PROTECT WOMEN'S HUMAN  
RIGHTS**

SUBMITTED BY ALICE M. MILLER, WOMEN IN THE LAW PROJECT/ INTERNATIONAL  
HUMAN RIGHTS LAW GROUP AND CHARLOTTE BUNCH, CENTER FOR WOMEN'S  
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

**HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

We, the undersigned organizations working for the human rights of all persons, have been centrally involved in ensuring attention to the human rights of women in preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. In response to the hearings held today by Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), chair of the House Sub-Committee on International Operations and Human Rights, we wish to emphasize the following:

As human rights and women's organizations, we are working toward a Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing that contributes to the ability of all women around the world to enjoy all their human rights -- civil, political, economic, cultural and social as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We believe that it is critical at this time to keep the focus of international attention to the human rights concerns of women around the world.

At the same time, we condemn the laws and practices of any government, including the People's Republic of China, that violate basic human rights. We therefore call on the United Nations and all participating governments to resist any attempts by the host government to undermine essential freedoms and rights in the name of national security or sovereignty before, during and after the Fourth World Conference.

Furthermore, we call attention to the fact that this conference in Beijing is the only time in the last ten years that the international community has committed its undivided attention to the obstacles facing women around the world as they struggle for equality and a full role in the development of their societies. The United States must send a delegation to the Fourth World Conference on Women that is well equipped to play an essential role in advancing protections for women's human rights.

This September, the international community -- including many groups and governments with proven concerns for human rights in China -- will be in Beijing. We call on the Clinton Administration and all members of the US Congress to commit the United States to take up the challenge of upholding and moving forward the promises of prior world conferences for all people. The United States should not be on the side of those who would use the Fourth World Conference as the opportunity to undercut recent gains made by women, but should be firmly on the side of supporting women in their worldwide struggle toward equality.

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International Human Rights Law Group

Charlotte Bunch  
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Center for Women's Global Leadership

James Silk  
Director  
RFK Memorial Center for Human Rights

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Dr. Marjorie Lightman  
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John Ackerly  
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Tibet

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**Written Testimony presented by Jill Sheffield and María José Alcalá  
of Family Care International to the House International Human Rights Subcommittee**

**In reference to the Content of the Draft Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference on Women, July 31, 1995.**

**Introductory Statement:**

Family Care International is dedicated to improving women's health care, and works nationally and globally to help raise awareness, produce educational materials, and help develop collaborative programs tailored towards enhancing women's health and rights with a special focus on reproductive health. Family Care International is submitting this written testimony in an effort to clarify some of the issues that have recently been examined regarding the draft Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing this September, 1995.

It is through FCI's experience as an international NGO, and first-hand observer during the preparatory sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held this past March and April 1995, that the attempts by a minority group of delegations to undermine existing international commitments to women's empowerment and rights at the FWCW negotiations call for a strong leadership role by the US delegation at the Beijing Conference. The following are some examples of how the content of the Draft Platform for Action is being misinterpreted or amended to erode gains in women's empowerment and rights. Any additional references, comments or assistance in analyzing text in brackets in the FWCW Draft is available upon request.

**1. The Human Rights of Women.**

Throughout the Platform for Action, terms such as 'universal', 'universally recognized', and 'universally accepted' are being used to qualify 'human rights' by a small number of delegations in an attempt to undermine the human rights of women. Given that these delegations are opposing terms such as 'all human rights' (or simply 'human rights'), these clauses have raised alarm among delegates and non-governmental legal experts alike on the intent and usage of these terms. In the context of the Beijing negotiations, usage of the term 'universal human rights' could imply receding international commitment to the rights of women. In addition, as there is no consensus in international law on the definition of what rights are considered 'universal', use of this term would exclude rights specific to women recently reaffirmed in major international conferences - such as reproductive rights agreed to in the International Conference on Population and Development, or women's rights as human rights, as affirmed in the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights. The insistence of a very small number of delegations on using these terms raises concerns about their interpretation and intent in usage of the term 'universal' as a qualifier of human rights.

## 2. The Concept of Gender.

Gender refers to the socially-constructed roles ascribed to males and females. Contrary to the attempts of some groups, which are not recognized scholars on gender analysis, to undermine this widely used concept, gender is an invaluable conceptual tool in developing and evaluating policies and programmes aimed at improving women's status. The attached flyer (*Understanding 'Gender'*) was developed based on the expert writings of scholars on the issue, from both North and South, as well as on UN gender training materials. The examples of how the term 'gender' is commonly used reflect the multiple references found in existing international agreements, including in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit on Social Development held in March and endorsed by participating Heads of State. Statements asserting that there are 'five genders' are misguided, and there is no existing technically-sound or technically credible literature available that would support these claims.

## 3. Motherhood.

The issue of motherhood is addressed in the Platform for Action, in the context in which it is appropriate to emphasize women's role as mothers and to meet their special needs. For example, 'motherhood' is addressed in the education section to ensure mothers' continued education; in the health section, to ensure breastfeeding support and maternal health care; and in the girl section, to protect the rights and meet the special support needs of teenage mothers. All of these are priority areas for action, both domestically and internationally, based on an *objective* viewpoint of what governments should do to protect and support mothers. However, the term 'mothers' has been introduced inappropriately, in an overt attempt to challenge women's multiple and other roles in society, where the term would be out of context and impose a biased, *subjective* and limiting definition of women's roles and identities (see Para. 108.h. for example). In addition, women's multiple roles, beyond motherhood, have been recognized by the international community in existing agreements, including the World Summit on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (see the Copenhagen and ICPD Programmes of Action, para. 38(j) and paras. 4.4(g) and 12.24, respectively, for examples).

## 4. Adolescent Needs in the Areas of Sexual and Reproductive Health.

A minority group of delegations, and primarily the Holy See delegation, introduced the clause on 'parental rights' 23 times in the Platform for Action in an attempt to maximize bargaining leverage at the Beijing Conference. The clause limits the rights of adolescents and young people to information and services to protect their health. Adolescents' rights in this area is a high-priority issue that was already agreed in the ICPD Programme of Action. The key issue is the effort to deny young people basic rights to life-saving information and services, especially in light of the AIDS pandemic, the fact that 1 in 20 adolescents contracts a sexually transmitted disease, and the alarming rates of death and illness in this age group resulting from unwanted and unplanned pregnancies. Contrary to claims by those opposed that providing sexual and reproductive health information and services to adolescents encourages 'promiscuity' and 'premature and irresponsible sexual relations', the actions are aimed to protecting adolescents' rights to health and well-being, and to helping them make informed and *responsible* decisions. This, again, is a priority area recognized by the international community and negotiated at length at the Cairo Conference, as stated clearly in the ICPD Programme of Action, Para. 7.46: "Countries, with the support of the international community, should protect and promote the rights of adolescents to reproductive health education, information and care and greatly reduce the number of adolescent pregnancies." (See also paras. 7.44-7.48, among others.)

### 5. Abortion.

While a minority group of observers and participants are claiming that the Conference is 'promoting abortion', this is a misleading and inaccurate portrayal of the Draft Platform for Action. Para. 107.k. is limited to encouraging governments to "*consider review of laws containing punitive measures against women who have undergone illegal abortions*", in an attempt to make laws more humane and ethical, based on an understanding of the traumatic and life-threatening conditions faced by women who have unsafe abortions. There is no reference in the document to providing abortion on request, nor to the right to abortion services. The ICPD Programme of Action, para. 8.25, recognized abortion as a major public health concern and urges governments to increase their commitment to women's health. Unsafe abortion is a public health issue, threatening and taking the lives of as many as 150,000 women a year (WHO, 1993), the majority of which are estimated to be young women. Severe laws that punish women with little regard for the socio-cultural, economic and psychological hardships endured in seeking a clandestine and unsafe abortion lack an ethical and humane basis, and do not reflect a commitment to women's health. In addition, as stipulated in the Draft Platform for Action and in ICPD para. 8.25, any changes in law and policy are the sovereign right of each country and follow national processes of review. Para. 107.k. makes a suggestion to Governments, the implementation of which will be subject to national political, cultural, and religious factors, to review laws that may be contributing to maternal mortality by keeping women who have incomplete abortions from seeking timely and appropriate care.

## UNDERSTANDING 'GENDER'

### The Concept of Gender

Gender refers to the socially-constructed roles ascribed to males and females. These roles, which are learned, change over time and vary widely within and between cultures.

Gender refers to the male and female roles that are socially constructed based on biological differences of sex and reproduction between men and women. While men and women are different biologically – only women can give birth, for example – the differences in their roles are generated by society, based on those biological sex differences.

Each society develops gender roles, identified as masculine or feminine behaviour patterns, related to the sex difference between men and women. While these characteristics are often interpreted as being 'natural', they are in fact socially constructed, and are learned from an early age.

In many cultures, ideal roles exist for men and women. Nevertheless, women are or can be as capable as men of doing a particular job, and men can take as good care of children as women. These are examples of how men and women are socialized from childhood, taught the roles that their culture and society define as male and female. These are **gender roles**, developed and ascribed based on one's sex, not on one's choices or capabilities.

### Achieving Gender Equality and Equity

While differences in sex exist by biological determination, gender refers to the range of psychological and socio-cultural attitudes, practices and norms that result in discrimination based on sex. Gender systems are dynamic, subject to the changing norms of society and changing historical conditions. This is especially important in the context of the Fourth World Conference on Women, in order to understand and address the factors underlying and contributing to discrimination against girls and women. Existing gender systems establish hierarchy, placing women in lower status than men, as manifested in unequal access to economic resources and political power, which limit women's opportunities in public and private life.

### Acceptance of Gender in International Agreements

The concept of gender appears in the recent inter-governmental documents negotiated in all the major UN conferences, including the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), and the World Summit on Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), as well as in regional documents prepared for the Beijing Conference, in multiple references and contexts. The Fourth World Conference on Women should support mainstreaming a gender perspective in all levels across all sectors of policy-making and implementation.

<sup>1</sup> Based on a compilation of existing literature by authors and agencies experts in the field of gender analysis, including recognized scholars from developed and developing countries, UN gender training programmes, and technical definitions available.

## Common Uses of Gender

**Gender analysis** is fundamental to understanding how policies and programmes will impact differently on men and women, just as factors of class or ethnicity do. Gender analysis is important to assess how existing institutions may be reinforcing inequalities through their procedures, practices and policies, and how these inequalities can be avoided and remedied. Gender analysis also takes into account how factors of class, race, ethnicity or other factors interact with gender to produce discriminatory results.

**Gender perspective** implies analyzing the socio-economic, political, legal, cultural and psychological levels of an issue to understand how the differences between the sexes affect and are affected by policies and practices. It analyzes how these factors relate to discrimination based on sex, and how they may impose obstacles to a person's opportunities and self-development.

**Gender-based discrimination** results from laws, policies or practices based on biased social attitudes towards 'man' or 'woman'. A person may be discriminated against if he or she seeks particular types of jobs because people expect to see a person of a different sex in that employment. Discrimination results because society expects a person of a particular sex, male or female, to hold a job it defines as a 'man's' or a 'woman's'. Examples vary in each society according to the different gender roles ascribed.

**Gender-sensitivity** calls for understanding and consideration of the socio-cultural factors underlying discrimination based on sex, whether against women or men. Gender-sensitive school curricula recognize that girls may need additional encouragement to engage in sport activities, or in the math and science fields, as a result of the way they are socialized; or that text books may hold subjective messages or interpretations that portray women with a gender-biased perspective (as weaker, less rational or intelligent than men, etc.). Similarly, gender-sensitivity and gender-bias applies to attitudes that affect men's behaviour and development, such as teaching boys they should not demonstrate emotion, or limiting young men's options to selected traditional careers. Gender-sensitive policies and training of police and criminal justice personnel are critical, for example, to providing battered women effective access to protection and justice. Gender-sensitive economic policies are necessary to buffer the disproportionate burden that falls on women from structural adjustment programmes.

## Common Misuses of Gender

Sex and gender are different. Sex is a biological characteristic. Gender is socially determined. 'Sex', 'man', or 'woman' are not interchangeable with 'gender'. Substitution of these terms with 'gender' in the Draft Platform for Action would render the text incomprehensible.

GENDER ≠ MAN

SEX ≠ GENDER

GENDER ≠ WOMAN

**GENDER = EVOLVING SOCIALLY-CONSTRUCTED ATTITUDES AND ROLES**

*Prepared by Family Care International (FCI)*





## Distortion of the Draft Platform for Action

It is no secret that the Vatican view of women's nature and roles, and of sexual and reproductive rights, differs sharply from the views of most women and most nations -- as even the pope acknowledges in his recent encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*.

These differences came into sharp focus in Cairo last year at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The Roman Catholic hierarchy interpreted the ICPD agenda for comprehensive reproductive and sexual health as an assault on motherhood and the family. Delegates for the pope attempted to curtail ICPD commitments to safe motherhood -- including family planning services and nonpunitive care following illegal abortions -- and many believe they obstructed the meeting with their concentration on abortion.

As at Cairo, so too at Beijing. During preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Vatican may be the principal architect of an effort to build into the conference Platform for Action a conservative, religiously orthodox "anthropology" of women's nature -- one that would limit women's rights and full participation in society while nodding to women's "equal dignity."

A major component of the Catholic hierarchy's strategy is the misrepresentation of the draft document, in news conferences, position papers, and official statements. Suggesting that use of the term "sexual orientation" could condone pedophilia is one example of distortion, put forth by Vatican foreign minister Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran (whose official title is Secretary of the Holy See for Relations with States). Another is the Vatican insistence that the number of occurrences of certain words -- such as "mother" or "gender" -- is significant in itself, apart from what facts and ideas are communicated. Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls calls the document "extraordinarily imbalanced" because "gender" appears far more

often than "mother" -- an analysis more to be expected from accountants than ethicists. While the draft is by no means perfect, the Vatican's attacks on it go beyond advocacy and into distortion.

Below are the principle claims made by members of the hierarchy, with analysis and with relevant quotations (including bracketing) from the draft Platform for Action. Most of the hierarchy's criticisms are taken from statements made after the March-April preparatory committee meeting (PrepCom), where the document was revised, while the platform is quoted from a draft that reflects the negotiations at the March-April PrepCom. Except where otherwise noted, the sources of quotations are:

- for Navarro-Valls, the Vatican Information Service accounts of his June 20, 1995, news conference; "Vatican Will Champion Role of Mothers at a UN Conference," *New York Times*, June 21, 1995; and "Vatican Urges Focus on Mothers," *Washington Times*, June 21, 1995;
- for Tauran, "The Holy See's Position on the Draft of the Platform for Action for the Fourth World Conference on Women" (May 26, 1995);
- for Gail Quinn, her article "Beijing: Round Two?" in *The Pilot*, June 23, 1995; and
- for the Platform for Action, the May 15, 1995, draft; quotes are in italics within quotation marks.

### *On Motherhood ...*

#### CHARGE:

VATICAN OFFICIALS SAY THE DRAFT PLATFORM PAYS TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO MOTHERHOOD.

Navarro-Valls asserts that the words "mother" and "motherhood" appear fewer than 10 times in the draft Platform for Action. Because the Vatican makes this claim, others repeat and exaggerate it: At a US congressional hearing, one witness testified that "the words mother, father, wife and husband do not appear anywhere in the Platform."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, “mother,” “motherhood,” and “maternal” appear 19 times (five times in brackets), while “parent,” “parenthood,” and “parental” appear 36 times (25 times in brackets, mainly assertions of parental rights to control minors’ access to sexual and reproductive health information and services).

Further, the Vatican ignores the many other words and phrases that indicate mothers -- for example, references to women with children.

Fundamentally and comprehensively, the document focuses on empowering and improving the well-being of all women, mothers included, by addressing economics, employment, education, health, family and political decision making, human rights, the environment, and other issues.

Goals directly relevant to mothers include “*establishing the principle of shared power and responsibility between women and men at home*” (§1; also, e.g., §§28, 52, 85i, 91, 155); correcting the discrimination, occupational segregation, and other factors that keep female-maintained households in poverty and addressing factors, such as war, that increase the number of mothers supporting children alone (§§24, 33); facilitating reentry into the labor market and crafting social welfare systems to accommodate interruptions in participation in paid labor (§54); promoting job training for single mothers and those reentering the labor force (§175f); affording young mothers equal educational opportunities (§§2g, 277a); providing informational and legal support for breast-feeding (§107r); supporting shelters for abused women with children (§126f); advocating postponement of motherhood until adulthood, for the physical and economic well-being of mothers and children (§268); orienting health education and services to meet the needs of expectant mothers (§281c); and improving maternal health care (§107e).

Finally, Navarro-Valls claims that laws “on the family should guarantee to women ... the fundamental right to be mothers,” but the hierarchy has declared that there is *no* right to be a mother or father. Even “marriage does not confer upon the spouses the right to have a child,” says a major Vatican document opposing almost all methods of assisted reproduction.<sup>2</sup>

#### **CHARGE:**

**VATICAN OFFICIALS SAY THE BEIJING DOCUMENT OVERLOOKS THE VALUE OF THE WORK THAT WOMEN DO AT HOME.**

Navarro-Valls states that “the work of women, today not remunerated, should be recognized adequately -- work that nevertheless holds a particular social value. None of this,” he says, “is mentioned in the Beijing document.” Adds Tauran, “the importance and difficulty of household work should be even more fully recognized and esteemed [by the platform] in view of its value for the family and the community.”

The document does recognize the importance and value of women’s unremunerated work. It calls on governments to study and measure the “*type, extent, and distribution of unremunerated work, particularly work in caring for dependents and unremunerated work done for family farms or businesses,*” and to devise ways of “*assessing its value in quantitative terms, for possible reflection in accounts*” (§167g). It suggests the restructuring of social security systems so that women are not penalized for interruptions in their participation in the labor force (§§54, 60, 70b).

The platform also recognizes the burden placed on women by the assumption that domestic labor is women’s work. It seeks to “*encourage men to share equally in child care and household work*” (§108c and similar points at §§192i, 223, 224) and notes that “*inadequate sharing of family responsibilities*” -- by men and by society -- contributes to discrimination and diminished opportunities for women in many areas of life (e.g., §§154, 160, 167n).

This seems to be a case in which the Vatican advocates policies that could be equitable and beneficial to women -- but for the wrong reason: The Vatican goal is not to empower women, but to reinforce their economic dependency on marriage.

#### ***On Marriage & Divorce ...***

#### **CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN ARGUES THAT THE DRAFT PLATFORM DOES NOT ATTEMPT TO STRENGTHEN MARRIAGE.**

Vatican delegate Quinn says that, in the document, “no attention is given to strengthening the

institution of marriage.” She also alleges that the draft platform does not “even allude to the devastating poverty which grips millions of women and children following divorce, much less propose solutions to alleviate the problem.”

The Platform for Action seeks to strengthen marriage by addressing problems that can undermine marriages, such as power imbalances between men and women, especially in family decision making (e.g., ¶¶1, 49, 94, 183, 187), and inadequate sharing family work (e.g., ¶108c). Because of the problems associated with early marriages, such as the loss or postponement of educational and employment opportunities (¶¶41, 73, 95, 259, 263, 268, 277d), the document proposes legal barriers to forced marriages (¶¶131b, 274e); a “*minimum legal age of consent*”; and the establishment by governments of a “*minimum age at marriage*” (¶¶274, 275.8/b). The draft also opposes marital rape (¶114a) and asserts women’s economic rights in marriage (¶62f).

As for divorce, the draft notes at the start that “*family disintegration*” is among the “*factors contributing to the rise of female-headed households*” (¶24), and it addresses the problems facing such households. The draft also addresses the discrimination and other societal roots of the poverty that often blights female-headed households. It calls for “*measures to ensure equal access of women to ongoing training in the workplace, including unemployed women, single parents, women re-entering the labour market after an extended temporary exit from employment owing to family responsibilities and other causes...*” (¶175f).

For the Vatican, these measures constitute the wrong approach because, to the Catholic hierarchy, support for marriage entails opposition to the legalization of divorce, as in Ireland and Latin America, and advocacy of procedural and legal barriers to divorce, as in Poland.

#### ***On Family ...***

##### **CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN CLAIMS THAT THE FAMILY IS MENTIONED ONLY FIVE TIMES IN THE DRAFT PLATFORM, AND USUALLY NEGATIVELY.**

Navarro-Valls asserts that “the family is mentioned only five times, and three times in a

negative sense.” He says that “not to have the family recognized on an international level seems to me to be too much. From this point of view, the document is unbalanced.”

In reality, the words “family” and “families” appear 78 times in the draft Platform for Action (27 times in brackets). The document also recognizes the positive aspects of families, and seeks to “*formulate policies and programmes to help [the] family[ies] in [its]/[their] supporting, educating and nurturing roles*” (¶285a). The document calls for “*an environment conducive [for]/[to] strengthening of [the] family[ies]*” (¶285b).

At the same time, it is appropriate that the document recognizes negative patterns that can emerge in the lives of families, such as violence or the failure of many men to “*share equally in child care and household work, and to provide their share of [adequate] financial support for their families*” (¶108c).

Perhaps the strangest criticism is Tauran’s, that “the family is ... even [presumed] as an environment where discrimination is learned.” Certainly, the document points out that gender discriminatory conditioning often occurs at home. This is no rejection of families; honest appraisal and correction are a step toward making a family stronger and more beneficial to all its members. The question is, do Vatican officials really think that families play no role in transmitting gender discriminatory conditioning from one generation to the next?

##### **CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN SAYS VIOLENCE IS DISPROPORTIONATELY BLAMED ON THE FAMILY.**

Quinn objects that “when family is the focus, it is to assert that ‘most of the violence against women and girls occurs in the family, where violence is often tolerated and encouraged.’”

Writing after the March-April PrepCom, in an article published June 23, Quinn is quoting the pre-PrepCom draft. The passage she cites was revised at the PrepCom to read, “*In many cases, violence against women and girls occurs in the family or within the home, where violence is often tolerated*” (¶118, emphasis added; “encouraged” was dropped).

The draft recognizes and attempts to address all violence against women and girls, whether within or outside the family, without denying either aspect of the problem. The platform addresses the varied forms of *“physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family,”* because there is ample statistical and other evidence documenting this worldwide problem (§§114a, 118-20, 126f-h, 136). At the same time, the document recognizes the broader context of societal violence (§118).

The Vatican, on the other hand, suggests that the institution of marriage is more important than escape from violence. In 1994, the pope beatified a woman for placing her marriage vows over her own well-being by staying in a physically and emotionally abusive marriage. Her “total fidelity,” the pope said, made her a “model of Christian perfection.”

**CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN IMPLIES THAT THE DRAFT FAVORS “WESTERN”-STYLE, CHILDLESS, “DEVIANT” FAMILIES.**

“Without idealizing relationships within the family,” Tauran says, “one cannot reasonably propose as the only model, today and for the future, a western type of household, which is often characterised by an absence of children and not infrequently by deviations which cause psychological imbalances and weakness in its most vulnerable members.”

Tauran is wrong to suggest that western families tend to be childless: Among US women who have ever been married (the vast majority of women), 90 percent have at least one child by the time they near the end of their child-bearing years.<sup>3</sup>

The document itself never proposes a single model of family. What it acknowledges are sociological realities: changes in family structures (§38), discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (§232h), and the fact that marriage is not the only site of sexual relations (in that references to family planning and sexual relations do not specify the marital status of those involved -- e.g., §96, bracketed). This limited expression of acceptance of

diversity is what the Vatican will not tolerate. But diversity is no threat to healthy institutions.

The Vatican attempts to polarize by disparaging the West and romanticizing the poor -- even while the Vatican and its delegations to international conferences are heavily dominated by Europeans and North Americans.

Pope John Paul II demonstrates the tactic of polarization, which aims to coopt non-Westerners, in his pre-Beijing letter to all women in the world. Referring to women who become pregnant by rape, the pope clarifies that he does not mean rape in war zones only, “but also in societies which are blessed by prosperity and peace and yet are often corrupted by a culture of hedonistic permissiveness which aggravates tendencies to aggressive male behavior.”<sup>4</sup>

There is no mention of the huge portions of the world that are neither rich nor war-ravaged -- nor spared the frequent occurrence of rape. But, as is noted in the UN report on progress since the Third World Conference on Women, studies show that rape occurs in the absence of wealth as regularly as in its presence, because it is not a function of wealth.

*On Women's Employment ...*

**CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN CLAIMS THAT THE DOCUMENT'S VISION OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT DEPENDS ON ABORTION.**

Quinn asserts that the draft's “assumption is that participation of women in the labor market is the necessary condition” for development and, therefore, “abortion becomes a keystone in this platform because full participation in the labor force is only possible by convincing women to subordinate child-bearing and child-rearing to the demands of employment.”

The necessary conditions for development listed in the document are “*equality between women and men*” and “*a transformed partnership*” based on this equality (§1), “*access for all women to resources, opportunities and public services*” (§49), and “*the release of women's productive potential*” (§57), improving women's “*economic, social, political,*

legal and cultural status” (§58) -- not the subordination of motherhood, but the creation of access to opportunity.

Abortion is barely mentioned in the draft text. Most proposed (and bracketed) reproductive health language simply restates the moderate agreements of the ICPD. Quinn’s discovery of abortion where the document only proposes equality and opportunity shows how far the Vatican must reach in order to demonize the draft. So does Quinn’s glide from simple “participation” in employment to “full participation” necessitating abortion. It is the Vatican that always returns to abortion -- and even equates women’s empowerment with abortion.

The question is, do Vatican representatives -- including Quinn, herself a woman in the labor force -- really believe that women’s employment requires abortion?

#### *On Reproductive Health ...*

##### CHARGE:

**THE VATICAN SAYS THAT THE DRAFT PLATFORM IGNORES FORCED CONTRACEPTION, STERILIZATION, AND ABORTION AS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.**

Tauran says that “mandatory birth control, forced sterilization, the forced use of contraceptives or pressure to have abortions” are a “kind of violence [which] has not found its way into the document.” Writing in *L’Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican’s newspaper, Cardinal John O’Connor of New York predicts that Beijing will be a repeat of Cairo, where he says calls for reproductive rights were “thinly disguised code words for abortion on demand, or even forced abortion; contraception on demand or even forced contraception.”<sup>5</sup>

The document lists “forced abortion” among the “grave violations of human rights of women” (§13). The one reference to contraception that is not bracketed is a rejection of employment practices that coerce women to use contraception or abortion (§167c). The document clearly and on principle rejects coercion. In a bracketed quotation of the ICPD language, for example, it asserts the right of couples and individuals to have the information and means to decide “freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children ... free of

discrimination, coercion and violence” (§96, quoting ICPD 7.2). In short, what the Cairo document and the Beijing draft advocate -- in bracketed text -- is not forced contraception, but education and access to family planning information and services, condoms as a barrier against STDs, and assurances that where abortion is legal, it is safe, and that follow-up care is available everywhere (§§98, 107, 109I-m, 110h, 126f, 209i, 281e).

The Vatican would prefer the document to declare that every abortion is an act of violence: Navarro-Valls says that “the Holy See Delegation would like to have added to the list of attacks against young girls [¶40] ... also the denial of the very access to life.” The Vatican opposes virtually all abortions, including certain abortions performed to save the life of the pregnant woman, and all contraceptive methods except periodic abstinence, or natural family planning (NFP). In a letter from Pope John Paul II to all the women in the world, released July 10, the pope condemns the “grave sin” of aborting a pregnancy caused by rape. In the Beijing draft, the Vatican refuses to recognize the violence of forced pregnancy. The list of human rights violations cited above includes “forced pregnancy,” but the words are bracketed (§13).

Attacking abortion “on demand” masks the totality of the Vatican’s opposition while portraying women who seek abortions as “demanding,” that is, selfish and unreasonable. O’Connor’s new term, “contraception on demand” similarly attempts to marginalize contraception as something selfish and extraordinary. Only the intolerant could fail to distinguish between access and imposition.

##### CHARGE:

**THE VATICAN ARGUES THAT THE DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION OVEREMPHASIZES SEXUALLY-TRANSMITTED DISEASES AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH.**

Tauran and Vatican delegate Quinn argue that the draft Platform for Action talks too much about preventing and treating sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs), including AIDS, while ignoring more common health problems. According to the World Health Organization, Tauran says, “the number of cases of tropical diseases is estimated at between 650 and 850 million per year. On the other hand,

according to the same organization the estimated number of AIDS cases for 1994 was four million.”

The draft platform does address general health problems, focusing on gender disparities in access to the full range of health care services, including “*the prevention and treatment of childhood diseases, malnutrition, anemia, diarrheal diseases, communicable diseases, malaria and other tropical diseases and tuberculosis, among others*” (§92).

At the same time, the draft notes that STDs are a widespread problem deserving of serious attention, regardless of the comparative size of other public health problems: “*about 250 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are estimated to occur every year*” (§39). The platform establishes the rationale for addressing STDs, including AIDS, in a conference on women, stating that their transmission is “*sometimes a consequence of sexual violence*” and that these illnesses “*are having a devastating effect on women’s health*” (§99).

The Vatican’s focus on tropical diseases may mask a goal of minimizing STDs and, again, pit North against South. But in developing nations, as the draft notes, AIDS and other STDs devastate the health and lives of millions of women. It is expected that by the end of the century, the death toll from AIDS will equal that of malaria.<sup>6</sup>

#### ***On Gender ...***

##### **CHARGE:**

**CHURCH OFFICIALS OBJECT TO THE WORD “GENDER” AND SAY IT MIGHT ENDORSE HOMOSEXUALITY AND TRANSEXUALITY.**

Navarro-Valls asserts that the number of uses of the word “gender,” relative to occurrences of “mother,” reflects an “ideological imbalance.”

Oscar Rodriguez, archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and president of the Latin American Episcopal Conference (comprising the region’s bishops), claims that the draft platform and Beijing process are promoting “unnatural genders” that would “destroy family and moral values.” Rodriguez asserts that the conference aims to force society to accept five types of gender: masculine, feminine, lesbian, homosexual, and transsexual.<sup>7</sup> This distortion has spread like wildfire through the

religious right wing. Those asserting it include Protestant activist James Dobson<sup>8</sup> and -- in testimony before the US Congress -- Mary Ellen Bork of the Catholic Campaign for America, and Mercedes Wilson, president of Family of the Americas Foundation and a Guatemalan delegate to the PrepCom.<sup>9</sup>

In reality, “gender” is used throughout the draft Platform for Action simply to refer to awareness of the sex of individuals (male or female) as distinct from the act of sex and not as a euphemism for “sexual orientation.”

For instance, the document seeks the elimination of “*gender discrimination in the labor market*” (§180c) and notes that “*gender segregation*” in employment fosters gaps between female and male wages (§153). It says that, often, “*the differences between women’s and men’s achievements and activities are still not recognized as the consequences of socially constructed gender roles rather than immutable biological differences*” (§28). The document advocates awareness of “*gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men within the family*” (§182b) and refers to “*gender-biased teaching and educational materials*” (§73); “*gender-based violence*” (§114); “*the lack of gender sensitivity in the media*” (§235); and the need for “*gender specific*,” rather than male-centered, medical research (§105). Because of the disparate impacts that policies may have on females as a result of discrimination, the draft calls on governments to “*integrate gender perspectives in [all] legislation, public policies, programs and projects*” (Strategic Objective H.2) and to “*support gender balance in the composition of delegations to the United Nations and other international forums*” (§194i).

It is hard -- if not impossible -- to reconcile the assertion that such use of the word “gender” is “ideologically imbalanced” with the Vatican’s stated support for women’s equality.

#### ***On Sexual Orientation ...***

##### **CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN CLAIMS THAT THE DOCUMENT “AFFIRMS” HOMOSEXUALITY.**

Archbishop Rodriguez reads an endorsement of homosexuality in the word “gender” (above). Quinn

says that, as in Cairo, "there is a continuing effort to broaden the concept of family to include affirmation of a homosexual lifestyle."

In text now bracketed, the platform would ask governments to "[consider what legal safeguards may be required to prevent discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or lifestyle]" (§232h). The three other references to sexual orientation, also bracketed, are also generalized nondiscrimination proposals (§§48, 180, 226/alternative).

But the Vatican favors discrimination against homosexuals, whom it considers "objectively disordered." To the Vatican, "there are areas in which it is not unjust discrimination to take sexual orientation into account, for example, in the placement of children for adoption and foster care, in employment of teachers or athletic coaches, and in military recruitment."<sup>10</sup>

**CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN CLAIMS THAT THE DOCUMENT MAY BE USED SOMEDAY TO ENDORSE PEDOPHILIA.**

According to Tauran, "sexual orientation" and "lifestyle" are ambiguous and it is therefore "very risky" to include them in the document. "It could for example happen in the future that pedophilia might be considered a 'sexual orientation.'" Navarro-Valls echoes Tauran and objects, too, because the words have not been the subject of "judicial recognition" in prior international documents.

The platform itself clearly opposes the sexual exploitation of youth (§108q; because Beijing concerns women, most references specify abuse of "girls," but the draft's pervasive concern reflects a condemnation of all exploitation on principle).

It is odd that the Vatican raises the specter of pedophilia. Sexual orientation commonly refers to homosexuality or heterosexuality -- as the Vatican knows. As the Vatican also has reason to know, pedophiles include both heterosexuals and homosexuals; responsible people do not confuse pedophilia with sexual orientation. As it often does, the Vatican is proposing an unlikely interpretation -- and perhaps attempting to slander homosexuals -- rather than having its top spokesmen candidly state Vatican opposition to homosexuality.

**On Culture ...**

**CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN CLAIMS THAT THE DRAFT REFLECTS ONLY WESTERN VALUES.**

Navarro-Valls contends that the draft Platform for Action "seems to want to impose a Western model of femininity that does not take due account of the value [sic] of women in the large majority of the world's countries."

The document condemns "denials of ... cultural rights" (§§132-33). It calls for "universal respect for and protection of" cultural rights (§§231a, 232a) and says health programs should take into account "cultural differences" among women (§107c). The document repeatedly acknowledges and promotes indigenous cultures (e.g., §34).

In addition, the platform was drafted by a global array of women, under the management of conference Secretary-General Gertrude Mongella, a Tanzanian, and under the leadership of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), led by Patricia Licuanan, a Filipino. Other national members of the CSW include Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela; Congo, Kenya, Namibia, Togo, Zambia; India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Pakistan. The Vatican insults non-Westerners by disregarding their involvement.

**CHARGE:**

**THE VATICAN CLAIMS THAT THE DRAFT PLATFORM WAS WRITTEN BY RADICAL FEMINISTS.**

Quinn says the document reflects a "relentless effort ... to mainstream worldwide acceptance of a radical feminist agenda." Her explanation of this claim is that the stated goals of the platform are "gender equality" and the "empowerment" of women and that it calls for "a radical transformation of the relationship between women and men to one of full partnership."

The document does call for equality, empowerment, but equality and empowerment are hardly "radical" ideas, in the polemical sense of the word, nor is the document itself. In the area of reproductive health, for example, would simply repeat the commitments (now bracketed) adopted in Cairo last year. And calling the desired



transformation of relationships "radical" is another way of saying fundamental or profound, just as the pope writes favorably of "radical justice" in his March 1995 encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*.

The Vatican attempts to marginalize mainstream feminist thought by calling it "radical." At the same time, it attempts to coopt the territory of feminism by claiming to support what Pope John Paul II called in his recent encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* "new feminism." The Vatican's only "feminism" is a traditional concept in which the primary role and value for women, inherently, is as mothers.

#### CHARGE:

THE VATICAN SAYS THE DRAFT IGNORES RELIGION.

Tauran says the document "ignores the idea of religion," and he suggests that it lacks "a clear reference to respect for ethical and religious values." Indeed, says Tauran, "religion ... is considered only in negative contexts."

The document call on governments to give priority to full human rights, without discrimination based on religion (§232a). In recognition of the importance and positive contributions of religion and culture, the draft calls for women's fair representation in decision-making and leadership in these areas (§185, 260), and it seeks the assistance of religious and cultural groups in implementing the document (e.g., §§109h, 295).

At the same time, the platform does advocate reconsideration of those aspects of religion that contribute to customs harmful to women. Thus, the draft Platform for Action asserts that women's economic rights "must be upheld, regardless of customary laws, traditions and practices related to inheritance and marriage" (§62f). It calls on governments not to "invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid" working to eliminate violence against women (§125a).

The draft perhaps could treat the positive aspects of religion more substantively, but this would be another case of the Vatican being right for the wrong reason. Here, the Vatican's aim is to establish a presumption that, where there is a conflict between

religious traditions and measures for women's equality, religious traditions are more valid.

#### *On "Universal" Human Rights ...*

#### CLAIM:

THE VATICAN SAYS THAT IT DEFENDS THE "UNIVERSAL NATURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS."

Tauran says the Vatican is among those wishing to state that "all human rights -- and therefore also those of women -- are universal."

To the extent that the Vatican truly proposes that human rights are universal, there is no problem. There is a problem, however, in Vatican support for "universal human rights" and "universally recognized human rights," because these terms limit rights to those that are *considered* universal, as opposed to asserting that all rights *are* universal. This vagueness admits the possibility that the terms are intended or might be construed to exclude women's rights, including reproductive rights. They therefore could mark a retreat from the reproductive rights recognized at the ICPD. Compounding unclarity and cause for concern, the same few delegations -- including the Vatican -- propose both "universal" and "universally recognized" and oppose "all human rights and fundamental freedoms," the formulation proposed by women's rights activists. Advocates for women's rights fear that "universal," originally intended to transcend national and cultural boundaries, may assume the same limited meaning as "universally recognized."<sup>11</sup>

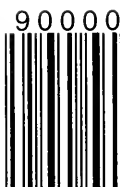
#### Notes

1. Testimony of Barbara Ledein, Independent Women's Forum, House Subcommittee on International Relations and Human Rights, July 18, 1995.
2. "Instruction on Respect for Human Life in Its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation" (*Humanae Vitae*), *Origins*, vol. 16, no. 40 (Mar. 19, 1987).
3. US Census Bureau, Fertility Statistics Branch, 1992 data on women aged 40 to 44.
4. John Paul II, "To Mrs. Gertrude Mongella," May 26, 1995, 87.
5. Cited in Cindy Wooden, "Humanity at Stake," *Catholic*, New York, May 4, 1995.
6. United Nations Population Fund, *The State of World Population 1993*, pp. 3-5.
7. Thelma Mejia, "Women-Honduras: Church, Feminists Unsheathe Swords as Beijing Looms," Inter Press Service, May 17, 1995, Programa de Apoyo a Redes de Mujeres, "Archbishop Criticizes Women's Conference," June 7, 1995.
8. Focus on the Family press release, "Pro-Family Leader Calls Upcoming U.N. Women's Conference a Traveny," July 14, 1995; see also Jean-Marie Guenou, "In Defense of Women," *National Catholic Register*, July 23, 1995.
9. Statement of Mary Ellen Bok and Mercedes Wilson, submitted to the House Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, July 18, 1995.
10. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Observations on Legislative Proposals Concerning Discrimination Against Homosexual Persons, Revised Text," 411, *Origins*, vol. 22, no. 10 (Aug. 9, 1992). Other examples include Gabriel Escobar, "Cardinal's Comment on Gays Backfires in Argentina," *Washington Post*, Sept. 24, 1994, and Aas van Herfum, "Pope blasts Europeans' call for Gay civil rights," *Washington Blade*, February 25, 1994.
11. *Fourth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 14, No. 2, March 27, 1995, consultation with Women's Linkage Caucus.





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