

New South Wales Women's Inter-Church Council

(State Unit of Australian Church Women)

33 Macquarie Towers,
250 Jersey Road,
Woollahra, NSW 2025.

24th March, 1975.

The Secretary,
The Royal Commission on Human Relationships,
P.O. Box 58,
Kings Cross, NSW, 2011.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the New South Wales Women's Inter-Church Council I forward the enclosed Submission and request that it be placed before the Royal Commissioners.

Yours faithfully,

Miss D.M. Mitchell.
President.

PROJECTS INCLUDE - 'WYBALENA' GIRLS HOSTEL, FELLOWSHIP OF THE LEAST COIN,
WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP



ROYAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

100 WILLIAM STREET, SYDNEY

POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 59, KINGS CROSS, N.S.W. 2011

TELEPHONE 357-3322

3rd April, 1975.

Dear Miss Mitchell,

We have received your letter dated 24th March, 1975 expressing your views on various subjects.

We are pleased to have your letter and, on behalf of the Commission, I would like to thank you for taking the trouble to write to us and so contributing to our inquiry.

We would be glad if you would read the attached Memorandum, and get in touch with us again, if it is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Robert Hyslop'.

Robert Hyslop.
SECRETARY.



ROYAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

100 WILLIAM STREET, SYDNEY

POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX ⁵⁸~~59~~, KINGS CROSS, N.S.W. 2011

TELEPHONE 357-3322

MEMORANDUM:

Your letter will be studied and taken into account as the Commission moves on with its inquiry.

Your letter will be formally tendered as a submission to the Commission; after this it will be available for inspection by the public, unless you wish it to be kept confidential. If you do wish to claim confidentiality for it, please inform me as soon as possible.

If we want to obtain further information on the matters raised in your letter, we will write to you later on.

The Commission will be holding public hearings in all capital cities later in the year. If you wish to give evidence before the Commission, will you please send your request to me in the fairly near future?

I will let you know when public hearings are to commence in your capital city.

Robert Hyslop.
Secretary.

Miss D. M. Mitchell,
President,
N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council,
33 Macquarie Towers,
250 Jersey Road,
WOOLLAHRA. N.S.W. 2025

33 Macquarie Towers,
250 Jersey Road,
Woollahra, NSW 2025.

18th April, 1975.

Mr. R. Hyslop,
Secretary,
Royal Commission on Human Relationships,
P.O. Box 58,
Kings Cross, NSW 2011

Dear Mr. Hyslop,

I acknowledge with thanks your letter, dated 3rd inst., with the enclosed Memorandum. These have been brought to the notice of our Executive Committee, and I am asked to advise you that we do not wish to give evidence before the Commission nor to claim confidentiality for our submission.

We should, however, be interested to know when public hearings are to commence in Sydney.

Yours sincerely,

Doris M. Mitchell

Miss D.M. Mitchell.
President.

P.O. Box 58
Kings Cross 2011
(Sec. Mr. Robert Hyslop)

Royal Commission on Human Relationships

Terms of Reference

To inquire into and report upon the family, social, educational, legal and sexual aspects of male and female relationships, so far as those matters are relevant to the powers and functions of the Australian Parliament and Government, including powers and functions in relation to the Territories:

To give particular emphasis to the concept of responsible parenthood, to have regard to experience in other countries and to include in your inquiry the following aspects of the said matters:-

- (a) the extent of relevant existing education programs, including sex education programs, and their effectiveness in promoting responsible sexual behaviour and providing a sound basis in the fundamentals of male and female relationships in the Australian social environment;
- (b) the extent of relevant existing programs in medical schools and their adequacy to provide comprehensive medical training in contraceptive techniques in the physical, psychological and sexual problems experienced by women in adapting to marriage and before, during and after menstruation and in matters relating to pregnancy, fertility control, spontaneous and induced abortions and childbirth and to encourage acceptance by the medical profession of its respons-

ibilities in the field of contraceptive counselling;

(c) the provision, adequacy and effectiveness of existing family planning facilities, educational and activational information on family planning, and methods of evaluation of all family planning techniques;

(d) the social, economic, psychological and medical pressures on women in determining whether to proceed with unplanned or unwanted pregnancies, having regard to:-

(i) the adequacy of housing, child-minding centres, pre-school centres, domestic assistance for families and working mothers, assistance to single parent families, other forms of assistance for mothers employed in industry, and adoption procedures;

(ii) the disabilities of families with handicapped children; and

(iii) the social status of women in the community; the social, psychological and medical results of termination of, or and failure to terminate such pregnancies;

(e) the adequacy and effectiveness of existing medico-legal determinations in relation to termination of

- pregnancy, the incidence of such terminations, the factors influencing their occurrence, the adequacy of medical training in an evaluation of methods of termination, consultative rights of the family or other persons concerned and the adequacy and effectiveness of pregnancy support services; and
- (f) any other matters in relation to the family, social, educational, legal and sexual aspects of male and female relationships to which the attention of the Commission is directed by the Prime Minister in the course of the inquiry.

To make recommendations as to measures that are desirable with respect to the foregoing matters under existing or future laws of the Australian Parliament or of the Territories (including laws providing for grants to the States) and to indicate whether these measures should be implemented through existing bodies or through government instrumentalities to be created.

The Commission may present interim reports on any aspect of its terms of reference.

SUBMISSION TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

ON BEHALF OF THE WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL

(N.S.W.)

The New South Wales Women's Inter-Church Council aims:

1. To promote fellowship and co-operation between women of all Branches of the Christian Church, and
2. To provide an avenue whereby Christian women, as directed and used by God, may unitedly strive to establish His Kingdom on earth by the application of the teachings of Christ to Community, National and International relationships.

The New South Wales Women's Inter-Church Council is the State Unit of Australian Church Women and the participating Churches are:

Baptist, Church of England, Churches of Christ, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Society of Friends, The Salvation Army.

Special Groups are:

Girls' Brigade, Y.W.C.A.

Preamble: The Position of the Christian person in society.

Co-operation of men and women in church, family and society is the concern of the N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council. In a generation where the pace of social change and the growth of dehumanising influences threaten the welfare and integrity of the person and human relationships we attempt to make an assessment of the situation from a Christian standpoint. Each person has a supreme, individual value, equally individual and equally important as that of any other person. The source of that value is the fact that each person has been made in the image and likeness of God, not mass produced, a unique product of God's creative love. This creative love endows each person with the capacity to enjoy human relationships, and friendships, together with rationality, self consciousness and capacity for further development.

The effectiveness of Christian action in society depends largely on maturity in personal relationships. Growth in maturity is largely dependent on appropriately meeting the needs of persons. Many people today suffer an inhuman oppression and denial of human dignity, because of poverty, racism, prejudice, sex discrimination and other forms of injustice, which hinder persons from developing their full potential as human beings. Also, human development can be hindered by some institutional structures of power and some types of government. However, the Christian is committed to trying to establish, with others, a truly just society in which each individual can find personal fulfilment in freedom and responsibility.

As a result we are committed to establish helpful relationships in Church, family and society, by all possible means. No area of society should be excluded from our concern. We must be involved in social actions to bring Christian insight and love to bear, to humanise

institutions, structures and policies necessary for the wellbeing of mankind. Therefore, we believe that all Christian people should continue to re-examine their involvement in social action and where ever possible press for legislative reform to deal with oppression, injustice, and all forms of discrimination.

Human relationships will be at their best when they stem from loyalty, acceptance and mutual respect learned from an early stable family life. Good healthy relations are not accidental but are dependent upon early training and attitudes which begin in the home, and extend to the school, community and Australia as a whole and should ultimately affect our relationships with all people. Anything less than this background as a cradle for the people of the future carries with it the dangers of tension and instability which make people unable to relate helpfully with others.

We, as members of Women's Inter-Church Council, recognise the family as the basic unit of society. Therefore our submission will be largely directed to a consideration of those factors in today's society which affect its well being and proper development. We bear in mind also Article 23 (1) of the International Covenant of Human Rights 1966. "The Family is the Natural and fundamental group in Society and is entitled to protection by society and the state." A genuine commitment to marriage and family responsibilities must not be devalued by legislation for laws do affect moral values, and what is legal tends to be accepted as moral.

Whatever is opposed to life itself: abortion, euthanasia, violence, capital punishment; or violates the integrity or dignity of the human person: bad living and working conditions, an erosion of values in an increasingly materialistic society, a passive acceptance of violence as a norm of behaviour in films and Television; all these deserve the most careful consideration in any examination of human relationships.

With this as the background to our thinking, we make the following submissions:

1. The Mother in the Home.

- (a) Every encouragement should be given to the mother who elects to remain at home to raise her family. She should be accepted and treated as an important and integrated member of society with a valuable role to perform.
- (b) Greater tax incentives need to be forthcoming in these instances in terms of tax grants, exemptions, deductions and child endowment thus allowing the mother who remains at home to rear her children, to be at the same time a valuable member of society.

- (c) There is need, too, for occasional Child-Care centres, where young babies and children might be left while the mother visits a doctor, does major shopping, or even enjoys an occasional afternoon of recreation, so necessary to mental health.
- (d) Emergency Home Help is also a vital need; at present provision for this service exists but staffing is usually insufficient and can only be supplied when a booking for home help has been made well in advance. These services should be means tested. Commercial ventures do try to supply home help in a family emergency, but these are usually too expensive for the average family.

It should be borne in mind that many women find the bearing and up-bringing of children within a family satisfying, not oppressive, and accordingly help and encouragement to carry out this role should be a major concern of society and government.

2. The Working Mother.

Nevertheless, economic pressures force many women to re-enter the work force while their children are still of a tender age.

- (a) Hours of Work should be studied in the cases of working mother and she would be under considerably less pressure if she were able to work shorter hours (say till 3 p.m.). "Flexi-time" - as is available now within the Commonwealth Public Service - and adjusted hours should not be beyond the realms of possibility in industry and business. In this way the problems of latch-key children would be greatly alleviated.
- (b) Child-minding Centres - we are fully in agreement with the views expressed in the Report of the Queensland Commission of Inquiry into the Status of Women 1974 that "the importance of the role of full time mother" cannot be stressed too much, and again that "it is desirable that mothers of children under 3 years of age fulfil a full time mothering role." Nevertheless the fact does remain that in families where the mother is the breadwinner, - the deserted wife, the wife with an invalid husband (and this applies equally in the case of the deserted husband) - provision must be made for Child Care Centres. These should be funded and adequately staffed (i.e. by people trained in the care and development of young children). We suggest that such Government sponsored Child Care Centres for children under three years of age, be available only on a means tested basis for cases of real necessity as quoted above.

3. Matrimonial Property

- (a) At present the widow who has not entered the work force during her husband's life time is severely disadvantaged in the matter of the distribution of matrimonial property, and it would seem that the Laws regarding this need to be revised and made uniform throughout the country. The contribution of the wife who stays at home to maintain a home should be clearly recognised in any distribution of the assets of a marriage. The widow who has been in receipt of income is also disadvantaged to the extent that elaborate procedures are often necessary to prove the wife's contribution, although her income may in effect have enabled the couple to own a home.

4. Sex Education

- (a) Parents are concerned with the impact which an unevaluated, morally neutral sex education programme may have on the future sex, marital and family life of the children. Schools may teach facts, but responsible attitudes must come from the family.
- (b) Therefore it is suggested that what is needed is Parent Education in matters of sex instruction, which will emphasise the need for an understanding of the responsibilities involved in sex and parenthood. Very little is heard of "Responsible Fatherhood". So it would seem that the need is for more widely distributed and better Marriage Counselling Courses and indeed more awareness generally in our Churches and Community for the necessity of inculcating a sense of values and responsibility in any form of sex instruction, for this will vitally affect relationships.

5. Religious Education within the Schools

- (a) There is a need to maintain and uphold the right of all denominations to give religious education in the schools (including High Schools) as a preparation for good human relationships.

6. Migrants in our Community

- (a) There is a need to involve migrant groups of the community in all areas of activity generally within our community. For this purpose it is thought that attention should be given to having trained Social Workers (with language knowledge) to counsel migrants helpfully and sufficiently to enable them to avail themselves of social help and assistance which is available to them, and to become integrated within the community.

- (b) People with foreign language ability could do much to encourage migrant groups. We urge that more be done to recruit suitable workers from ethnic groups themselves to work in hospital, school, and community areas of need.

7. Women in the Community

- (a) There is a need for encouragement of women to take part in Community decision making bodies, on local boards, church boards, local councils etc; and it could well be that to encourage such a development governments and other controlling bodies may need to accept the principle (in cases where men and women are equally affected) of appointing a proportionate number of men and women to public boards.

To summarize

We believe that men and women all have their share of responsibility and participation in the life of society.

A programme of progressive equalisation of the fundamental rights of men and women and a clearer grasp of their respective duties is called for at this time.

Their being placed on an equal footing affects the social function they assume. The call for equality by women is not a call for identity with men; Men and women will retain their own identities, their own special qualities.

To ensure the woman's full participation in these functions there must be confidence in the capacity and capabilities of woman, and an education programme which will enable her to play her part fully, especially in the moral and human dimension.

As representatives of women of the major denominations of the Church we are calling for a new understanding and a new vision of the totality of human relationship based on faith, hope and love.

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL MAIL TO
BOX 33, G.P.O.,
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2001

And Quota 75/47963



BRIDGE AND LOFTUS STREETS,
SYDNEY, N.S.W.

25th November, 1975.


Miss D.M. Mitchell,
Honorary Secretary,
N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council,
33/250 Jersey Road,
WOOLLAHRA N.S.W. 2025

Dear Miss Mitchell,

I refer to your recent letter addressed
to the Committee to consider Religious Education
in Government Schools.

The views expressed have been noted and
will be passed on to the Committee for further
consideration.

Yours sincerely,


M.J. Wills
Executive Assistant

33/ 250 Jersey Road,
Woollahra, NSW, 2025.
27th October, 1975.

The Executive Officer,
Committee on Religious Education in Government Schools,
N.S.W. Department of Education,
Box 33, G.P.O.,
S Y D N E Y. 2001.

Dear Sir,

I enclose a Submission prepared on behalf of this Council for presentation
to your Committee, which we request you to bring to their attention.

Yours faithfully,

Miss D.M. Mitchell.
Honorary Secretary.

Encl.

SUBMISSION TO THE COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

ON BEHALF OF THE N.S.W. WOMEN'S INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL

The N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council aims:

1. To promote fellowship and co-operation between women of all Branches of the Christian Church, and
2. To provide an avenue whereby Christian women, as directed and used by God, may unitedly strive to establish His Kingdom on earth by the application of the teachings of Christ to Community, National and International relationships.

The N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council is the State Unit of Australian Church Women, and the participating Churches are:

Anglican, Baptist, Churches of Christ, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Society of Friends, the Salvation Army.

Special Interest Groups in membership with the Council are:

Girls' Brigade, Y.W.C.A.

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1. THE PLACE OF RELIGIOUS IN EDUCATION IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN N.S.W.

Members of the Women's Inter-Church Council believe that the teaching and practice of religion is an integral part of our way of life, helping us to understand ourselves and our relationships with our Creator and with one another, and that it should, therefore, have an important place in education in Government Schools.

The school provides for the education of our children in their understanding of themselves, the world around them, and the community in which they live. As Christians we believe that our religious faith pervades all these areas and is a necessary part of education. To separate the religious from the secular does violence to the wholeness and unity of the human person. Our society today is becoming more materialistic and this makes the place of religious teaching in our schools even more important than in the past.

Since our civilisation developed on the foundation of the Judeo-Christian ethic, with its emphasis on respect for human personality, equality and justice, our children have a right to learn of the teachings which influenced their cultural background, and which can give them guidelines for their own behaviour.

2. THE PUBLIC INSTRUCTION ACT OF 1880

The Act provides that "In all schools under this Act the teaching shall be strictly non-sectarian but the words 'secular instruction' shall be held to include general religious teaching as distinguished from dogmatical polemical theology". (Sect. 7)

In addition provision is made for "children of any one religious persuasion" to be "instructed by the clergyman or other religious teacher of such persuasion". (Sect. 17).

The N.S.W. Dept. of Education Curriculum for Primary Schools -- General Religious and Moral Education, 1964, states - "One of the School's most important responsibilities is to provide children with an opportunity of gaining an awareness of their spiritual heritage. Steadfastly and consistently the school should aim at building character by presenting the highest aspirations and hopes of mankind and by giving children opportunities to experience the satisfactions which are the outcome of right thought and action. One rich source of such inspirations may be found in Biblical literature. The scripture readings and stories should be treated in such a way that they teach children about Christianity and make clear its underlying moral and ethical principles".

It is clear then, that both by legislative prescription and departmental directive provision is made for religious and moral education in Government schools. In practice, however, it would appear that full advantage is not taken of the opportunities which exist.

3. THE PRESENT POSITION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

We have been advised that the general religious and moral education curriculum is not always being followed, nor are teachers being trained specifically to present it.

It is a general practice for representatives of the various denominations to teach the children of their persuasion during one school period per week. This system appears to work reasonably well, considering that many of the teachers are volunteers who have received little or no training: the majority of parents apparently want their children to receive this teaching. Those responsible for organising it face continuing problems in finding and training sufficient suitable people to assist them. In some large schools with a number of graded classes, pupils in the lower levels never receive religious instruction, owing to lack of teachers. Such children, often lacking instruction at home as well, have in some cases never heard of God, the meaning of Easter or the religious significance of Christmas!

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

1. Fully trained teachers, whose training has included some emphasis on religious education and who have a personal commitment to the Faith, might be engaged to take charge of religious teaching in schools, costs being met by the Department of Education or the Churches, or by both, if suitable arrangements can be made. They could either staff all classes, or, more probably would work with the help of voluntary teachers under their supervision. Such an arrangement would ensure better organisation of classes, both when voluntary teachers representing the Churches came into the schools each week, and when the general religious and moral curriculum was presented. Also, the status both of the instructors and of the subject would be raised.

2. Religious Resources Centres, available to all denominations, might be established in suburban areas, from which the work of religious instruction might be organised and voluntary teachers rostered, and where teaching aids and equipment could be stored for use by all as required. They could serve as training centres and provide display areas for teaching aids and children's work. A disused Church hall, a spare classroom, or room in the Local Council Chambers might well be utilised for this purpose.

3. Principals and staff members could give Religious Instruction teachers more status by introducing them at assemblies and in classrooms and by visiting classes at times to assess the situation.

4. Principals should ensure that the General Religious and Moral Education Curriculum is followed regularly.

5. Provision should be made in training colleges and through "in-service" training for the preparation of teachers who wish to specialise in religious education.

6. Visiting teachers of religion need specific training in the preparation and presentation of their lessons, in the handling of children at different age levels and the control of classes. While the Churches would have to be responsible for the provision of such training, perhaps the Dept. of Education could assist by encouraging members of its staff - e.g. Teachers' College Lecturers or senior teachers - to offer their help in running training courses.

Above all, those concerned with Religious Education - whether within the Department of Education or in the Churches - should do everything in their power to ensure that religious education begins as early as possible - in pre-school centres, kindergartens and infants' schools, so that the best foundations may be laid; if this aspect is overlooked, all the efforts made later will be rendered less effective.

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NEW SOUTH WALES WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD

Chairman: Hon. Vi Lloyd, M.L.C.
Exec. Officer: (Mrs) M. M. Love.
Telephone: 279135

10TH FLOOR, 139 MACQUARIE STREET, SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000

24th February, 1976

The Secretary,
N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council,
WOOLLAHRA N.S.W. 2065

Dear Secretary,

The N.S.W. Women's Advisory Board is now nearing the completion of its first term of office and I think it is appropriate at this stage that I should inform those organisations which are represented on the Board of the progress made to date.

You are no doubt aware that your organisation is represented on the Board by Mrs. Pat Bernard, State President of the National Council of Women, with whom your organisation is affiliated.

I have prepared a statement (attached) which gives a brief resume of the Board's terms of reference, its work programme and the issues it is currently examining.

I would like to express my appreciation for the important contribution which your representative, Mrs. Bernard, has made and continues to make on the Board's behalf and I acknowledge with gratitude the considerable amount of her personal time which she has devoted to this voluntary position.

If there are any matters which you would like to put before the Board, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Bernard and forward any submissions to the Board through her.

Yours sincerely,

Vi Lloyd

VI. LLOYD, M.L.C.
Chairman

*Letter to V.L.
in confidence
e. A. M. Andrews
copy to
Premier C. Forster
letter*

N.S.W. WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD

The N.S.W. Women's Advisory Board was formed with Cabinet approval during March, 1975, by the N.S.W. Government as a contribution towards International Women's Year, but with the recognition that long term results from the Board are likely to benefit women for many years to come.

The 12 members of the Board represent many prominent women's organisations or groups within the State with a combined financial membership of 106,000. The Board liaises with a wide range of organisations and members of the public in order to supplement its information and receive a cross-section of opinions.

Terms of reference given to the Board are:-

- . to identify areas of concern to women and make recommendations to the Government in relation to these areas to ensure that women have full and equal opportunity to fulfil whatever role they choose in the community;
- . to establish a list of priorities of areas of concern to women both as individuals and in the context of the family;
- . to call for submissions from other interested groups and individuals on these matters;
- . to determine areas of common agreement and isolate those which are of Government concern;
- . to submit recommendations to the Premier for consideration by relevant Cabinet committees and action by appropriate State Government Departments;
- . to act as a consultative group to the Government on any legislative or administrative proposals affecting women both as individuals and in the context of the family;
- . to liaise closely and co-operatively with authorities in other States and also with Commonwealth authorities on matters of mutual concern.

The Women's Advisory Board is able to advise the Government on many subjects from areas of possible law reform to hardship suffered by groups or individuals due to accepted and outdated practices within the State.

The Board is not restricted to purely women's matters. It is also able to accept submissions from organisations or the public and to give advice to the Government on family matters.

From the commencement of its operations the Board established a list of priorities and set up committees to work - with the advice of professional experts in given fields - on issues which warrant urgent attention.

These include:-

- . Probate
- . Superannuation
- . Status of Children
- . Child Care
- . Assault and Rape
- . Finance
- . Local Government
- . Community Centres and Information Centre
- . Education and Life Management
- . Legal
- . Discrimination (employment and other)
- . Ethnic problems
- . Alcoholism

The Board has been very encouraged by the recognition given to its work and the acceptance by the Government of a number of recommendations to date. Among the changes which have been approved already, and in which the Board was involved, are:

- . The printing and dissemination to banks, insurance companies, building societies, all solicitors and other affected parties, of a brochure setting out steps which can be taken to assist financially the dependants on the death of a person.
- . Greater intake of women into the police force.
- . Preparation of amendments to legislation dealing with intestacy.
- . Amendment of the Crown Lands Consolidation Act to provide for a uniform qualifying age for both males and females to acquire or hold Crown Land (the law was that girls must be 18 and boys must be 16 years old). It will now be amended to provide that boys and girls at 18 years of age will be eligible.
- . Repeal of the First Offenders (Women) Act 1918. (This was a disadvantage to women appearing on second or subsequent minor charges, as it resulted in the court being acquainted that a previous conviction existed).
- . The Health Commission is amending the wording of the standard form of advertisements for vacancies on Boards of Directors of Hospitals following representations from the Women's Advisory Board. (Women are not excluded but the advertisements could be interpreted otherwise and it was felt that women were discouraged from applying).
- . The Public Service Board agreed to change its leaflets which advertise the availability of apprenticeships. Apprenticeships in the Public Service are open equally to boys and girls and the newspaper advertisements state this. The leaflets which were distributed, however, used male nouns and pronouns and carried nearly all-male photographs. The P.S.B agreed to change both wording and photographs.

Negotiations are continuing on a number of other issues including:-

- . Legislation to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status.
- . Assault and rape procedures and care of victim.
- . Probate anomalies.
- . Emergency accommodation for women and children (related to domestic assault).
- . Amendment to Jury Act to provide broader representation (especially of women) on juries.
- . Conferences have been held and will continue with the N.S.W. State Superannuation Board regarding differences in benefits to women and to men.

Meetings were held throughout country centres during 1975, and a programme of public meetings in the Sydney Metropolitan area is planned in the early part of 1976.

This method of "taking the Government to the people" has been a most important means of obtaining a very wide cross-section of opinion on a wide range of matters and ensures that individuals at all levels have an opportunity to be heard.

Contact has been established with the Board for consultative purposes by a number of groups working for improved conditions for women, children and in family situations generally.

In addition, the Board negotiates with organisations where a consultative role results in greater understanding and provides the opportunity for liaison in overcoming specific problems.

I believe the position of the Women's Advisory Board is rather a unique one at this point of time in that it appears to have the confidence both of women's groups and of the Government.

It is now obvious that the Board has a lot of work before it, and that it needs to be kept informed of the activities and of the views of the various organisations to which it extends representation so that it continues to give recognition to a very wide cross-section of opinion.

As Chairman of the Board I would be grateful if your organisation could advise me through your representative if you feel that there is any issue which needs urgent attention and which has not been covered under the broad areas indicated in this report.

If you wish to make a special submission please direct this also to the Board through your representative.

February, 1976

encl. *Gina Baker*

33 Macquarie Towers,
250 Jersey Road,
Woollahra, NSW 2025.

18th March, 1976.

Hon. Vi Lloyd, M.P.C.,
Chairman,
N.S.W. Women's Advisory Board,
139 Macquarie Street,
SYDNEY.

Dear Mrs. Lloyd,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter, dated 24th February, 1976, which has been brought to the attention of our Executive Committee.

The report of your Board's activities during the past year has been read with interest. We are, however, somewhat at a loss to understand your statement that our organisation "is represented on the Board by Mrs. Pat Bernard, State President of the National Council of Women". Your letter is the first official communication we have received regarding the Women's Advisory Board - at no time have we been asked whether we wish to be represented on it, or by whom.

It should be pointed out that the Women's Inter-Church Council, like the National Council of Women, is a co-ordinating body, whose membership comprises not individuals but duly elected representatives of the women's organisations within the member Churches. Not all these organisations are affiliated with the National Council of Women and we certainly could not assume that they would wish to be regarded as having any official connection with it.

In order to clarify our thinking on this matter, we should appreciate your advice regarding the method used in appointing members to the Advisory Board - in particular whether they were appointed as individuals, and because of their personal qualifications and experience, or on the nomination of the organisations in which they hold executive office. We feel that only in the latter case could they be regarded as acting in a representative capacity.

We understand that the members of the Women's Advisory Board include women interested in a number of spheres of activity, - health, legal, rural, political, etc. We wonder whether consideration has been given to the contribution which could be made by representatives of the Churchwomen's organisations, whose

membership covers many thousands of women, keenly interested in the social and moral welfare of the community.

Yours sincerely,

Miss D. V. Mitchell.
Honorary Secretary.



NEW SOUTH WALES WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD

Chairman: Hon. Vi Lloyd, M.L.C.
Exec. Officer: (Mrs) M. M. Love.
Telephone: 279135

10TH FLOOR, 139 MACQUARIE STREET, SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000

75100: LC

12th May, 1976

Miss D. M. Mitchell,
Honorary Secretary,
N.S.W. Women's Inter-Church Council,
33 Macquarie Towers,
250 Jersey Road,
WOOLLAHRA. N.S.W. 2025

Dear Miss Mitchell,

I regret the delay in replying to your letter of 18th March, 1976, seeking information on the Board's statement in our previous letter that your organisation is represented on the N.S.W. Women's Advisory Board by Mrs. Pat Bernard, State President of the National Council of Women.

The N.S.W. Women's Advisory Board was initially established with a membership of twelve. The Premier at that time (Mr. Lewis) stated that "it is obvious that not all women's groups are represented on this Board. This would be impossible for the obvious reason that it would be too large and unwieldy and would probably be unable to come to any common agreement. It is therefore proposed that the Board liaise with women's groups and members of the public in order to supplement their information and receive a cross-section of opinions".

The twelve Board Members chosen were women who occupied senior positions in important women's organisations and who in addition, were regarded as possessing the ability to make a significant personal contribution to the Board's work.

Mrs. Pat Bernard represents the National Council of Women which as you know is a co-ordinating body of many women's organisations. She has been able to bring to the Board the views of the National Council of Women.

In stating that Mrs. Bernard gives representation to your organisation my intention was to encourage your organisation - which is I believe affiliated with the National Council of Women - to bring forward any matters you wished to submit to the N.S.W. Women's Advisory Board.

The National Council of Women includes many church organisations and the Board is anxious to hear from such organisations, whether they might wish to work through the National Council of Women or might prefer a more direct approach to the Board.

I regret any misunderstanding caused by my earlier letter; and hope to hear from you if there is any matter to which you would like to direct the Board's attention.

Yours sincerely,

Vi Lloyd

VI. LLOYD, M.L.C.,
Chairman