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The W.I.D.F. - its development during ten years  
- its tasks - the Tenth Anniversary.

Extracts from the  
report presented  
by Madame Eugenie Cotton,  
President of the W.I.D.F.

In the summer of 1945, exhausted and war weary, many women felt at the same time a new feeling of strength: the feeling that they had contributed to the victory of liberty over oppression. They felt they could erect a barrier against war by uniting in millions and millions in every country all over the world, and, as early as June 1945, an Initiating Committee was set up to prepare the convening of an International Women's Congress.

The Initiating Committee carried out its mission with such zeal that made it possible to hold the International Women's Congress as early as the end of November 1945.

At that time I told the Congress:-

"We are all meeting with an understanding that only great trials borne on behalf of the same ideal can arouse in minds and hearts. We cannot help recalling all the soldiers who were killed whether or not they were in uniform! All the Jews who were exterminated! All the deported people who were tortured! Let us all turn our thoughts to the countless wounded and sick people whose futures have been hampered for ever and let us take the pledge that we shall unite to work, according to their will, for the coming of a better world."

The delegates of 40 nations representing 81 million women solemnly took this pledge at the Congress itself:  
"We take a solemn oath to defend women's economic, political,

"We take a solemn oath to defend women's economic, political, legal and social rights. We take a solemn oath to fight for the creation of conditions indispensable to the harmonious and happy development of our children and future generations. We take a solemn oath to fight indefatigably so that fascism is wiped out forever in every one of its forms, and so that true democracy is established throughout the world. We take a solemn oath to fight without respite to assure the world a lasting peace, sole guarantee of happiness in our homes and of the development of our children."

From 1947 to 1954 the WIDF was to make an active contribution to the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and of the Social and Economic Council of the United Nations.

Every year the celebration on March 8th, International Women's Day, to which the WIDF has given a new meaning, has affirmed with growing strength the will for action of women all over the world and in all fields.

Women, who are traditionally most oppressed, began to become aware of this oppression, of which their peoples were the victims, and joined in their millions the movements for national liberation and created their own women's organizations. They began to take part in the struggle for the liberation of their nations, to demand the place due to them in the international movement.

The WIDF took part in the Conference of Women of Asian Countries which was held in Peking on December 10th to 15th 1949. To this Conference came the women of Asian countries to speak about their long martyrdom, denouncing those responsible for the oppression of their peoples, of their own condition of servitude and the sufferings of their children, and expressing their steadfast will to conquer a

future of freedom and happiness. The WIDF reaffirmed with force the right of nations to self-determination, and of men and women for the dignity and worth of mankind.

The united action of the women of the world was growing. It was forcefully expressed when the horrible aggression against Korea was launched.

The WIDF was the first to send a large delegation which denounced in an accusing document the sufferings of the Korean children and mothers, and the methods of extermination employed in this war. This report was addressed to the UNO, translated into 23 languages and distributed in hundreds of thousands of copies.

As early as 1949 the Council of the WIDF had founded International Children's Day in defence of the rights of children.

In the action of peoples in defence of children and for Peace (collection of signatures for the Stockholm Appeal in 1950, signatures for the Five-Power Peace Pact in 1951), in the struggle against the deterioration of living conditions, millions and millions of women in all countries began to realise their potentialities and their strength, and demanded their full rights.

It was as this situation developed that the WIDF launched the idea of calling the world Congress of Women, held in Copenhagen in June 1953.

One must consider as a great success the Copenhagen Congress not only the important Declaration of the Rights of Women, which continues to be a precious guide to women in various countries in their struggles for their rights, but also the resolution put forward by the delegation of Indian women, voted unanimously, which said:-

"We women of 70 countries, representing various women's organisations and unorganised women, many of whom are in contact with the WIDF for the first time, having taken part in the

Congress of Women have understood and approved the work done by the WIF in defence of the rights of women and children and for world peace. We deeply feel the need to continue to work in closer co-operation and harmony to unite even more in order to make our movement more and more effective in the struggle which it is waging for the winning and guaranteeing of the rights of women and children and for the defence of peace throughout the world."

Even more than for the Copenhagen Congress, the preparation of the Lausanne Congress aroused deep interest among a great number of women of quite different outlooks. This was reflected particularly in the broad composition of very many delegations.

At the World Congress of Mothers in Lausanne, one further step was made and a permanent committee was decided upon: the International Permanent Mothers' Committee for the defence of their children against war. Thus the desire indicated by associations and people not belonging to the WIDF to work with it, has taken a concrete form: the form of a committee of the WIDF open to people belonging or not to the WIDF.

The many activities of the WIDF have made possible a fruitful exchange of experiences between the women's organisations of different countries have helped with their further development. Women invited to one or other of our meetings and, interested by our work, have succeeded in creating new sections of the WIDF in additional countries.

In Asia, we know that the National Federation of Indian women is playing a more and more important part, uniting more than 40 organisations; that the Federation of Japanese women's organisations develops an activity which enabled more than 60 leaders of important organisations of Japan to get together to prepare the Mothers' Congress; that the Indonesian organisation Gerwani has brought its membership up to 111 branches, that the Union of Vietnamese women brings together 3 million women in the North and in the South; that the All-India Women's Federation is constantly increasing its influence.

In Africa, movements interesting hundreds of thousands of women exist in Nigeria and South Africa. The women are uniting in the countries of Western and Equatorial Africa and they are beginning to develop their own organisations: the Congo, Ivory Coast, French Guinea, Sierra Leone, Senegal, the Sudan. There is a women's organisation in the Cameroons.

This new growth places upon us new responsibilities and further tasks on behalf of women, and the Bureau should consider them very seriously.

We also have to examine the political consequences of the Mother's Congress. Held after the Assembly of Peace Forces in Helsinki, convened by the World Peace Movement, the world Congress of Luganville made an important contribution to this big new power of which President Jelliot-Curie spoke, this power which is called public opinion, and the women have the right to be proud of the victories won by the peoples at the Four Power Conference in Geneva.

I have just surveyed the varied achievements in the WIDF since its foundation until its 10th anniversary. In order to be fruitful, such a survey must also be the occasion for a serious examining of our consciences. I believe we can say that, in spite of its imperfections and inadequacies, the WIDF has kept to its pledges and that it has firmly worked to improve the conditions of children, to win the rights of women and to defend their peace.

It has endeavoured, in order to reach these aims, to develop solidarity and friendship among all women and I think that its Tenth Anniversary should be first of all and a all over the world a great festival of friendship.

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**RECORDS RELATING TO THE 'TREASON TRIAL' (REGINA vs F. ADAMS AND OTHERS ON CHARGE OF HIGH TREASON, ETC.), 1956 1961**

**TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961**

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