

21st October, 1947.

UNITED ASSOCIATIONS OF WOMEN  
61 Market Street,  
SYDNEY. MA7537.  
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In 1935 we convened a "Conference on the Status of Married" which was attended by a large number of women's organisations. The recommendation was that there should be joint ownership by husband and wife of any property acquired after marriage, other than inheritance, by either party. Since this time we have organised deputations to Premiers and Attorney Generals, asking for the enactment of this resolution.

We were pleased to read in the Press some little time ago that the Attorney General was drafting a Bill to provide that wives should be allowed to retain the savings made by them from housekeeping money. We do not suppose there is any section of the community which has more responsibilities than the wife and mother, and it is a reflection on our society that, up to the present time this large army of women should be expected to perform such responsible work without any remuneration.

We regret that it is proposed to amend the Bill to provide that women should have the right to retain only half the savings accruing from housekeeping money, on the grounds that the 50-50 principle is "enshrined in marriage" and should apply to housekeeping savings.

Now that the subject has been raised, we submit that the time is opportune for consideration to be given to passing legislation so that the savings accumulated after marriage (other than by inheritance) should be shared on a 50-50 basis by the husband and wife, thus carrying the 50-50 principle to its logical conclusion. This equitable arrangement is already incorporated in the laws of some European countries and some of the States of the U.S.A. It is a reform that has been asked for, for many years, by women's organisations in this and many other countries.

The husband benefits by the self-denial and frugality of a wife through whose co-operation he is enabled to save. In fact, it is not possible for a husband to save without the co-operation of his wife. Very often a wife bends her whole energies to promoting the success of her husband in his career, and should therefore have a share in the fruits of his success. Another reason to commend this reform is that a 50-50 share in the joint savings of the husband and wife would add an additional common interest, and no doubt act as a deterrent against separation or divorce.

We ask that the Bill to amend the Married Woman's Property Act should include the application of the 50-50 principle to all property acquired other than by inheritance after marriage. We ask for your co-operation in this matter, which is of vital importance to all women.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) Vivienne Newson

President.

United Association  
of Women Collector

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