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No cold war here... nor hot... nor even lukewarm

*Country women of the world meet as
friends to know and help one another*

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THE FARMER'S WIFE

The woman from India and the woman from Pakistan visited comfortably over tea in my Dublin hotel room this afternoon. They knew from the morning's headlines that their armies were busy killing each other. But their conversation was friendly—not just polite. They were hatching an idea that required working together . . . a workshop on cooperatives for the farm and village women of Asia.

During the week I had heard 823 women of a divided country (the Republic and Northern Ireland) sing with real feeling “. . . a song of peace for lands afar and mine.” You'd never have guessed their husbands and fathers may have bashed each other up a bit not too long ago.

What brought about these evidences of genuine good will? The eleventh triennial conference of the Associated Country Women of the World. I am one of 1,304 women here from around the globe, plus several hundred hostesses from the Irish Countrywomen's Association. ACWW is a federation of 181 self-governing organizations of rural women from 51 nations (Australia to Zambia). The aggregate membership is 6 million; almost half the membership is from the U.S.—women who belong through their Farm Bureau and Extension Homemakers groups. U.S. attendance at this international meeting is just under 300.

We are meeting in appropriate surroundings . . . the great hall of the Royal Dublin Society, not far from livestock pens and paddocks; a hall our Irish hostesses made homey with treasured old patchwork quilts and colorful with truckloads of flowers from their gardens.

What was decided

With deep concern about war on the Asian sub-continent, the conference has cabled the Secretary General of the United Nations expressing “wholehearted support of his efforts to maintain peace among all nations.”

The organization, which works by consensus of its members, agreed during the next 3 years to:

- 1 Help to improve the living conditions and nutrition of people in Latin America by setting up and backing a pilot training center for rural leaders in Colombia.
- 2 Build up its scholarship fund, now over \$80,000, to send women to study outside their countries and return to their people with new knowledge—of nutrition, for instance.
- 3 Endorse more coordinated research on chemicals essential to modern farming and become better informed on measures preventing pollution of air, water and land.
- 4 The organization decided to pass the hat for contributions to buy a headquarters building in London. ACWW, once a shoe-string operation in a member's living room, now has a budget of almost \$100,000 a year. The money comes from penny per member contributions (Pennies for Friendship). The U.S. delegation presented a check for \$18,000, collected since January 1.

Americans in the limelight

Mrs. Raymond Sayre, Iowa, former world president, was recognized as chief architect of an organizational pattern which has made ACWW more international and more democratic in the past three years. . . . Mrs. Haven Smith, re-elected deputy president, has piloted the delegates through rough parliamentary seas with clarity and fairness. . . . Mrs. R. P. Matchett, Kentucky, has been re-elected for another three years as area vice president (U.S.). . . . Mrs. Guy Gross, Indiana, chairman of the U.S. Country Women's Council has invited ACWW to hold its next conference in Michigan in 1968. . . . U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Raymond R. Guest gave a reception for American delegates and conference notables (guests admired the Embassy's fine cattle),



Photos: Dick Deegan

Historic Moment—For the first time, a capable brown hand wields ACWW's gavel. Mrs. Aroti Dutt of India, first non-Caucasian world president, receives the symbol of office from the retiring president, Mrs. Geerda Van Beekhoff of The Netherlands. This was a great moment in the organization's existence of more than three decades.