Statement prepared by Committee appointed to propagate the principle of Equal Pay for the Sexes, and Endorsed by the above Council.

A UNIFORM BASIC WAGE FOR THE SEXES.

The demand that the same Basic Wage be given to women as is given to men—that there be no longer differential rates as between the sexes—that, in short, there shall be the one uniform Basic Wage for all adult persons.

THE REASON FOR THE CLAIM.

The primary reason for the claim is that under our present methods of production we enable women in increasing numbers to enter industry, doing work of a character that, under our present methods of production, fell to males only, and if we permit the dual standard of wages to continue, we are placed in the position of allowing one-half the supply of labor to be available to the employing class for the same jobs at a lower rate of pay than the other half of the labor force. The other reason, of course, being that the more expensive labor having to compete with the less expensive, has been consigned to reduce its price to the level of the less expensive. This being so, we affirm the time-honored principle of Uniformity that the level of the lower-paid shall be raised to the level of the higher.

BUT ARE NOT WAGES FIXED ON A COST OF LIVING BASIS?

That is so, and here we come to an important point in the discussion. Is the present basic wage what the Arbitral Court claims for it—that is, a family basic wage? The Movement disputes that it is. We of the Labor Movement have persistently demanded that it be so. The 7/- a day rate fixed by Justice Higgins in 1907 was fixed after what was at best a most inadequate inquiry. And it was not an inquiry into what a family should have weekly to spend on necessi- ties. It was an inquiry into what an average family was then expending. It was more an inquiry into what standard they were living on than what standard they should live on. Now the standard they were getting was that from which they were just emerging. In consequence, if only viewed from that angle, a wage based on that standard was necessarily a low one; but their present position can be demonstrated to fall miserably short of a family wage. What the workers were able to win by collective bargaining and action was not more than that which they would have won had they been prepared to put up a fight. Now the average man's necessities form the basis round which the workers' will to fight manifests itself. If, then, we reckon up the 1907 average man's re-quirements we find that the average working man maintained not more than one child, and at this date there is only a fraction of a child per man. In consequence, how could a wage based on the average man's needs be adequate for the maintenance of a family consisting of a man, wife, and three children?