

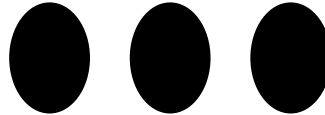


Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on November 22, 2010

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## Dangerous United Nations Womens Treaty Looms on Horizon

While Americans are thinking about turkey and the TSA (and turkeys in the TSA), as is often the case, the most destructive governmental shenanigans are occurring behind the scenes. On Thursday, November 18, the Senate held hearings on the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a treaty that could be used to justify sweeping social engineering across the nation.



While the CEDAW was adopted way back in 1979, the Senate has thus far refused to ratify it. But with the Obama administration at the helm, and some lame-duck Democrats in office, plus the fashionable promise of eliminating all forms of discrimination and the fact that virtually all other nations have already ratified the treaty, it may be an easier sell this time around. As always, however, being discriminating as a buyer is a good thing, and what lies beneath CEDAWs packaging isnt so attractive.

The problem with the treaty, [writes](#) Christina Hoff Sommers at *National Review*, is that its key provisions are 1970s egalitarian feminism preserved in diplomatic amber. Most alarming is how it defines discrimination: as any distinction based on sex. This reflects the 1970s gender-neutrality misconception that the sexes are the same except for superficial physical differences, an always laughable notion. Yet today the treaty is out of step not just with common sense but even the psychological establishment, as 1990s research into brain structure and intrauterine development showed conclusively that the sexes are inherently different, from the womb to the tomb.

But reality and legality are often more different than men and women, and this treaty could be used to justify bizarre policies. For example, if we truly eliminated every distinction based on sex, how could we reserve military drafts or combat duty to men or have separate (and protected) leagues, teams, and tours in sports for women? Of course, in reality, its likely the treaty would be used to advance only politically correct social engineering. Sommers presents one such possibility in her article:

Under CEDAW, even private behavior such as how couples divide household and child-care chores is subject to government oversight and modification. The U.N. monitoring committee routinely censures countries like Denmark, Norway, and Iceland for failing to prevent women from taking primary care of children, a practice it deems discriminatory.



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The U.N. monitoring committee.” Why does this conjure up an image of pecking hens in jack boots? And don't think this idea is isolated to the U.N. In 2005, Spain enacted a law that obliged men to share domestic responsibilities and the care and attention of children and elderly family members, [wrote](#) *The Guardian*. And similar legislation [was proposed](#) in Germany years before.

Sommers also outlines other problems with the treaty, such as:

It seeks to achieve not equality of opportunity but equality of outcome.

To groups such as NOW, the Feminist Majority Foundation, and the National Womens Law Center the treaty is a license to sue, re-educate, and re-socialize their fellow citizens opportunities that have eluded them under the U.S. Constitution, writes Sommers.

The treaty may threaten U.S. sovereignty since the nation may be obliged to abide by it.

Given that CEDAW contains the worst of secular Western ideas, many may wonder why virtually every developing nation has signed it. In fact, many use this as leverage, saying its shameful that the United States hasn't ratified the treaty when even Saudi Arabia has. But some important points must be made here. First, its easy for a Muslim or Third World country to sign such a treaty because, in most cases, I suspect, they have little intention of actually abiding by it. Understand that many nations have signed the treaty *with reservations*. For instance, Saudi Arabia [states](#), In case of contradiction between any term of the Convention and the norms of Islamic law, the Kingdom is not under obligation to observe the contradictory terms of the Convention. Okay, but then what is the point? If Sharia law takes precedence, is Saudi Arabias signature to a treaty promising to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women worth even the ink it was signed with?

The truth is that, for developing nations, signing the treaty is often a win-win scenario: They can stay in the good graces of their rich and powerful Western benefactors simply by, with a wink and a nod, putting their Jaun or Juan Hancock on a piece of paper. They can cheaply buy geo-political street cred. The sap nations of the West, however, will take the treaty seriously. Its much as with gun control: Only the law-abiding get controlled.

Speaking of control, the Left has for decades found mans nature an impediment to its aims. This is why it denied the reality that the sexes are inherently different: If you can convince people that the sexes are the same, they will likely conclude that they should be treated the same way. Ergo, the destruction of tradition. And while science has slain the sameness supposition, its corollary mandating identical treatment remains largely unquestioned. Yet it is this corollary of a dead theory that lends the CEDAW whatever credibility it has; thus, the idea bears closer scrutiny.

Far from it being the truth that the sexes behavior is different because they're treated differently, the reverse is the truth: The sexes have always been treated differently because they are inherently different. Nonetheless, the sophisticates among us cling to the view that equal treatment should be maximized so behavior differences may be minimized. This view which, I might add, is a modern phenomenon and contrary to the beliefs of 99 percent of people who have ever lived holds that women, and to a lesser extent men, are unable to exploit many of their strengths because they have to don a sex-stereotype straitjacket. But then there is the historical consensus view, which never seems to get its day in court in the famously open modern mind. It states that what critics call sex stereotyping is simply specialized training tailor-made to augment the characteristic strengths of each sex. Its as with other strengths: If its found that one child has a gift for music and another for baseball, they may be treated very differently in terms of opportunity and expectation; the specialized training necessary to help them



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exploit their talents demands it.

This is where a critic may say, But, wait, whats all this talk about male and female strengths and weaknesses? Its not as if women cant do what men do and vice versa. Yes, and the musical child can play baseball just as the baseball player can and vice versa just not as well. And what of the point that were not talking about groups here but individuals? Well, it is true that there is variation within groups just as among them. Yet does the fact that some 14-year-olds have the capacity to handle driving, cigarettes, and alcohol better than some 21-year-olds stop us from making blanket prohibitions against them engaging in the first thing and buying the last two? Any sane civilization will understand that a groups *characteristic* qualities can have a bearing on social codes and public policy.

Of course, you'll never be able to prove the above to an ideologues satisfaction. But guess what?

You don't have to.

You don't dispense with social norms that have been mankinds default anywhere and everywhere since time immemorial in deference to some new psycho-babble theory. Such norms must be viewed as innocent until proven guilty, and the burden of proof must rest with those who would supplant enduring traditions with ephemeral trends. Unfortunately, this will not be the case as long as we subordinate that democracy extended through time called tradition, to quote G.K. Chesterton, to a social-science oligarchy upending our time.

*Photo: Hillary Clinton at UN, 2000: AP Images*



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