UN "EXPERTS" SHOW THEm HAND ABOUT TREATY ON THE CHILD

March 9, 1995 *by: Phyllis Schlafly*

It was appropriate that Hillary Rodham Clinton was the one who announced that the Clinton Administration signed the United Nations Convention (Treaty) on the Rights of the Child and is sending it to the Senate for ratification. After all, this UN Treaty has been a major goal of the Children's Defense Fund ever since that lobbying group failed in its effort to pass the 1990 ABC Child Care bill (which was designed to create a new federal entitlement: federal babysitting of preschool children).

Hillary Rodham Clinton was chair of CDF's board of directors from 1986 to 1991, CDF's CEO Marian Wright Edelman is Hillary's close friend, and her husband Peter Edelman is scheduled to be appointed by President Clinton to the second highest court in our land. The UN Treaty, the Children's Defense Fund, and Hillary Rodham Clinton all share the world view that government, not parents, should have the primary sayso over the upbringing of children.

These notions are not very popular in the United States, but 176 foreign nations have signed this UN Treaty. It creates a long list of children's rights that presumably would be enforced against parents by the government or by an international bureaucracy.

Article 43 of the treaty sets up a Committee on the Rights of the Child consisting of ten "experts" chosen by the signatory governments. Its purpose is to examine the "progress" made by the governments "in achieving the realization of the obligations undertaken" in the treaty.

Last month, the Committee released its report on the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. It demonstrates the sort of international bureaucratic busybodyism that will be in store for us if the U.S. Senate ever makes the mistake of ratifying the treaty.

In its report, the UN Committee expressed its concern about "the adequacy of measures taken to ensure the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of available resources." The Committee concluded that "insufficient expenditure is allocated to the social sector both within the United Kingdom and within the context of international development aid."

Such arrogance! This UN committee presumes to admonish the United Kingdom to spend more taxpayers' money "to the maximum extent of available resources." This UN Committee, if it ever gets the chance, will be able to censure the United States about our failure to spend enough money on liberal social programs, thereby giving liberal activist federal judges the excuse to order us to comply.

The UN Committee didn't create this spending obligation out of whole cloth.

It's right there in the text of the treaty. If we are fools enough to ratify it, we will be obligated "to the maximum extent of [our] available resources" to provide all children with "health care services" (Article 24), social security (Article 26), and an "adequate" standard of living, nutrition, clothing and housing (Article 27). Are you ready for higher taxes?

The UN Committee says it is "concerned" that "the possibility for parents in England and Wales to withdraw their children from parts of the sex education programmes in schools" means that "the right of the child to express his or her opinion is not solicited" and that "thereby the opinion of the child may not be given due weight and taken into account as required under article 12."

Article 12 purports to give children "the right to express [their] views freely in all matters." So, now we know that the UN Committee believes that a child's rights should include the right to overrule his parents' decision to withdraw him from sex education classes. It is not likely that Americans want to delegate to the UN the right to overrule parents on sex education.

The UN Committee calls for "establishing further mechanisms to facilitate the participation of children in decisions affecting them, including within the family and the local community." "Decisions affecting them"? About what they eat and wear? When they study and sleep? What school and church they attend? What rules of behavior govern their lives? Under the UN treaty, parents get lost! The kids are in the driver's seat!

The UN Committee "recommends that physical punishment of children in families be prohibited in light of the provisions laid down in the Convention." Will a UN gestapo soon start peeking through windows to see if parents are spanking their disobedient children?

The UN Committee urges "that procedures be introduced to ensure that children are provided with the opportunity to express their views on matters of concern to them in the running of the schools." Are we ready for children to run the schools?

Finally, this UN Committee of experts, legally operating under the treaty already signed by 176 foreign countries, calls for "introducing education about the Convention on the Rights of the Child into school curricula." School textbooks will soon be teaching children how to assert their rights against their parents.

Tell your Senators to vote NO on this anti-family UN treaty.