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Kenneth Little

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AN ASPECT OF AFRICA'S
SOCIAL REVOLUTION

KENNETH LITTLE

Professor of African Urban Studies

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'In a revolutionary Africa we women must become aware of our responsibilities both with the family and socially. For this, we ask the evaluation of our position and our participation in the life and progress of our people in a free united and happy Africa.'

Senegalese delegate at the First Congress of West African Women held in 1959

'For a long time, men have advocated equality; they loathed discrimination in any form in human society. But when it comes to practising what they profess, because of their own self-centred motives, they contradict themselves . . . But time and again many of our leaders have expressed favour for the women – although when it comes to give [*sic*] a woman something they have always dialled O . . . I am aware of the difficulties which men face when they consider the possibilities of women gaining positions of influence. They harbour the inevitable fear that men being superior to women, if women reached the same level, they would fall from the exalted stature they have exploited for so long.'

Mrs Ruth Habwe, Executive Secretary of 'Maendeleo ya Wanawake' – 'Women's Progress' – in Kenya; quoted by Audrey Wipper (1971b, p. 463).

'Women want to become true partners in marriage; they hope for more equal companionship with their husbands; they hope to share in making plans for the family.'

A member of The Uganda Council of Women

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As indicated in the text, my approach to the legal side of African women's position is cautious and I might indeed have gone badly astray there had I not been forewarned and provided with some invaluable and down-to-earth advice by Mr J. S. Read of the School of Oriental and African Languages, University of

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K. L. L.

Edinburgh, December 1972

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