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# PAX INTERNATIONAL

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## NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, Luhacovice, July 25th-31st

The programme as prepared by the Congress Committee promises to be one of the most interesting we have ever had.

**Because** it shows that the W.I.L.P.F. is able to do active work for peace in spite of all the difficulties of the times.

**Because** it shows that the W.I.L.P.F. is able to bring forward questions for discussion of vital importance for the peace movement. Come to the Congress and hear about the work for peace and reconciliation across frontiers in Central Europe. Come and make plans for a new and more peaceful world.

Arrangements for the Congress of Luhacovice are well in hand. The final programme will appear in full in the June issue of *Pax*.

The Czech Section are busy with plans to make the week a useful and a delightful time, foreseeing needs of accommodation, and possible requirements in every direction. The local wireless station is to be at our disposal to announce meetings which will be arranged in the locality—the Press, interpreters, excursions—all are thought of. The district is beautiful, and those who have not seen Prague should make a point of doing so on the journey one way. It is a fine city.

The Congress Committee at Bruges this last month, gave much thought to details of the programme. In general—while the title of the whole discussion is to be "A New International Order", there is to be a division between the discussion of the immediate problems of the day, and that on the broad measures necessary for the creation of a "new order". The wider discussion will come first and is, as readers of *Pax* know, to include measures for League of Nations development, Internationalisation of Civil Aviation, colonial and economic problems and questions of State Sovereignty. On these problems it was decided, in accordance with a proposal put forward by the Dutch Section, to aim at formulating, not resolutions, but an agreed statement or statements which may serve to guide our Sections in their future work. Different Sections are being asked to arrange for one of their members to take up a particular problem, and others are asked to come ready to pick up the most important threads of any introduction and so start the discussion. Speakers are all to be drawn, it is hoped, from our own ranks.

On the immediate problems of the day, we shall have resolutions as usual.

The Executive at Bruges had before it proposals from the Swiss, U.S.A. and British Sections for changes in the Constitution. After a long discussion in which no agreement was reached, it was decided by a majority vote to ask Sections to accept a truce in the matter till the political situation was less critical. The British representatives explained that it was not possible for them to withdraw their resolution (which all will receive with the Congress resolutions) as it was sent forward on instructions from the whole Section at its Annual Meeting. The matter will, however, only occupy the last afternoon of the Congress and the discussion will not be extended.

May I, as a British member, express the hope that the question will be discussed dispassionately and calmly. Surely in a world so full of burning problems and tragic happenings we, who stand for peace, can—if we choose—show that in settling our own internal affairs we are able to achieve light without heat?

The proposals which are sent in will shortly be before all Sections, and I will not enter into details. It is to be hoped that they will receive full consideration, together with the other resolutions before the Congress.

Careful preparation of every subject to be discussed is essential for conclusions of value. The W.I.L.P.F. will have an opportunity at Luhacovice of doing pioneer work for peace, in a world almost, if not quite, as troubled as that of 1915, when it was founded.

"Aequam memento rebus in arduis  
Servare mentem."

K. E. INNES.

## INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, BRUGES, APRIL 5th—10th

The meeting of the Executive Committee held at Bruges was full of interest. Ten sections were represented and nine out of the twelve members elected by congress were present.

### Reports from Sections

The Reports from the Sections were exceptionally interesting. Gertrude Baer's journey\* of which she gave us a thrilling account and which has done so much to link up together the work of our Central European Sections, gave us a general picture into which the valuable survey given by the representatives could be fitted and the more outlying sections of Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries gave reports which, if not of conditions quite so anxious, were yet agreed in one respect—that the improvement in economic conditions was mainly due to re-armament programmes.

Norway was the only country from which no increased budget for arms was reported!

L.G.H. gave a report of economic conditions in Germany with its surprising increase of trade with Russia and it was reported that since the British restriction of markets for Danish goods trade between that country and Germany had also increased.

Both the German and the Czech representatives from Czechoslovakia agree that there is a lessening of tension since the courageous policy of their Foreign Minister was made public, promising to put into practice respect for minority rights and giving guarantees for cultural and educational development. The President of the Czech Section had visited the Hungarian Section and together a memorandum had been drawn up and signed on possibilities of neutral work across frontiers for the lessening of friction and for mutual understanding. It is hoped to be able to publish this memorandum in *Pax* before the Congress together with an account of all the ventures of this kind that have been accomplished by the Sections of the W.I.L.P.F. having boundaries where friction exists. It was reported that the Yugo-Slav and Bulgarian Sections were undertaking work in this sense and that the Polish Section was setting up a Committee to consider these questions.

The Norwegian Section had been successful in taking the initiative in organising a hold-up of a large consignment of cartridges that were being sent to Greece, and Great Britain reported great activity with regard to action taken on Spanish questions.

Written reports of other Sections will be sent round with the Minutes.

### India

At the moment when the Executive was meeting in Bruges the tension in India was at a most acute stage, and very sympathetic consideration was given to the whole subject, which was raised by the British members.

\* Report in *Pax*, January, 1937.

The India Act, framed after years of hard work was passed in 1935. This set up an All India Federation of the Provinces and Indian States (to come into force later) and for responsible self-government in the eleven British Indian Provinces to come into force on April 1st. This Act caused profound resentment in India amongst all sections of opinion. The Congress Party rejected it outright, for with the exception of the Second Round Table Conference in 1931, when Mr. Gandhi came as the sole representative of the party, Congress had no part in the deliberations; most of the leaders and many of the rank and file were in prison while these deliberations were going on.

Though the system of responsible government was said to be the basis of the constitution, the Viceroy and Provincial Governors were endowed with "special responsibilities". That is to say, while they were bound to act in accordance with the advice of their Ministries in all ordinary circumstances, they were to be entitled to refuse that advice if, when in their opinion, to accept it would either involve a grave menace to the peace and tranquility of the country; or would infringe the legitimate interests of minorities or the rights of the civil service. In the Federal Legislature, Defence and External Affairs are reserved subjects—the enormous military budget, therefore, does not come under popular control.

During the early part of this year elections for the Provincial Legislatures took place. In six out of the eleven Provinces, the Congress Party secured a majority, and formed the largest single party in another three. They sought election on the basis of a Manifesto that outlined far reaching schemes of reform, and also on the distinct understanding if returned to power they would seek to end this constitution. Their success at the polls raised at once the question of office acceptance in the provinces where they had a majority. There was sharp difference of opinion on this and Mr. Gandhi finally suggested a formula which was accepted by a majority of the Congress Party. In effect it authorised the Party to form Ministries in those Legislatures where the Leader of the Party "is satisfied and is able to state publicly that the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers in regard to their constitutional activities. Consultation between the Governors and the Congress Leaders immediately took place, but at once broke down as the assurances asked for could not be given under the Act. Later the Governors formed Ministries from among the other parties, but when the Legislatures meet these Ministries will not be able to command a majority.

It is probably impossible for those who have no direct knowledge of India and its problems to realise the acuteness of the crisis. The situation at that moment presented what appeared to be a complete deadlock.

Since the W.I.L.P.F. committee meetings various suggestions have been made, but this is only a report of the matters before it at Bruges. During that meeting Miss Agatha Harrison, who had just returned from the winter

in India, kept the Committee informed of the march of events. On April 8th statements of policy were made in both Houses of the British Parliament, and that evening Mrs. Lankester telephoned from London that the position was that "no obstacle would be put in the way of a meeting between the Viceroy of India and the Leaders of the Congress Party". Believing as it does in the method of negotiation the Committee united in pressing that such a meeting should be brought about, and the following letters were dispatched forthwith by Air Mail:—

"Dear Mr. Gandhi,

"The Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F. now meeting in Bruges, extends to the people of India, through you, their deep sympathy in the difficult crisis through which they are passing in their search for social reconstruction and for freedom.

"We appreciate at least in some small degree the pain and struggle of the last few years, and rejoice in the unity which you have achieved in pursuit of a common ideal.

"We want to express to you our deep desire and hope that, in the strength of that unity, you and other leaders of the Congress may find it possible to meet the Viceroy, for we believe that through this direct personal contact the way to understanding and peace may be found."

"Lord Linlithgow,

"Your Excellency,

"The Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F. now meeting in Bruges, representing women in 54 countries in Europe, in the United States of America, in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, is deeply concerned in following the crisis which has arisen over the inauguration of the new Constitution for India.

"We welcome the announcement in the British Parliament that no obstacle will be put in the way of a meeting between yourself and the leaders of the Congress Party.

"We beg that not only will you allow no question of procedure to intervene, but in the cause of peace we ask that you will do all in your power to bring about this meeting with a view to finding a way, which could be accepted by the Elected Representatives of the Indian People, out of the present situation, which we view with the deepest apprehension."

### Jane Addams International Peace Fund

The W.I.L.P.F. has unanimously agreed on a plan for using the Jane Addams International Peace Fund. Following a suggestion from Denmark it was agreed that each year the Executive Committee, on the advice of the J.A.I.F. Committee should award the prize to facilitate some special effort for Peace, such as a Jane Addams Peace Week or Summer School; preparation of documents, research, a propaganda journey, etc. The Section or individual applying for the prize would be required to submit a scheme. The prize would vary in amount and will be drawn partly from the income and partly by encroachment on the small capital sum. It is hoped that Sections will make collections for this Fund a normal part of their work, so that the capital expended from year to year may be as far as possible replaced. In this way the name of our Founder would be kept in remembrance among us.

### POINTS OF INTEREST

#### Secretary's Report

SPAIN. The Secretary reported great activity with regard to Spain and especially valuable was the sending of copies of the various resolutions, etc., to Latin America through our Inter-American Committee. She also sent

fraternal greetings to the Peace Conference in Buenos Ayres at the beginning of December.

BELGIUM. The Belgian Section, from whom we had not heard since 1934, made a welcome appearance at Bruges and we hope that they will in future be more closely in touch.

### Possible Section in India

It was reported that some prominent Indian women are to be in Europe this summer and it was decided to invite them as visitors to the Congress at Luhacovice with a view to discussing possibilities with them.

### Far East

A member of the United States Section, Mrs. de Haas, is visiting China and Japan and it was decided to ask her to get in touch with our members in Japan and with Chinese women on our behalf.

### Maison Internationale

Lease to be renewed for another year and the house to be opened for guests this summer from May 1st. Members and friends of the W.I.L.P.F. are cordially invited to stay at the house. (Full board and room, 6.50-7 Swiss francs—plus 10 per cent. Service.)

### Finance

The Hon. Treasurer stated that the position was about the same as last year, as although bonds had had to be sold, there was an increase in value in others. The gift of 2,000 francs from the Nobel Committee was most welcome. Miss Mohr proposed, and it was agreed, to place our needs again before the Committee who appeared to be interested and ask for £2,000, a special account of work accomplished to be prepared for presentation to the Committee.

### "Pax"

It was reported by the Treasurer that 1,600 subscribers to *Pax* were needed in order to make the paper self supporting. To date there are only 1,126 subscribers and of these only 465 have paid their subscriptions. It is urgently requested that those who have not paid their subscriptions should do so at the earliest possible moment. Sections are asked to do all they can to increase the circulation of *Pax*. The next issue will contain the complete programme for the Congress at Luhacovice.

### Refugees

E. M. Pye reported that with regard to refugees from Germany a new draft convention was being submitted to governments with a view to a conference. This convention combines the provisional arrangements with the provisions of the 1933 Convention drawn up by the Hansen Office, and if ratified and put into action would provide a more hopeful outlook for the future. The Sections were urged to approach their Governments (see page 4) and the International Executive decided to write to the International Trade Union and ask them not to oppose the labour clauses since the number involved was too small to affect the question of unemployment.

**Rassemblement Universel pour la Paix (I.P.C.)**

Report of continued co-operation was made and Sections were asked to contribute to the Peace Exhibition to be held in Paris if it materialises.

A most interesting discussion took place on this subject. It was realised that the question was many sided and that its importance had been neglected. It was decided that it must be discussed at the Executive before the Congress and that three different points of view should be put at that meeting in the hope of getting an agreed statement to lay before the Congress.

**International Membership** numbered 999! and members were urgently asked to try to obtain new International members.

**RESOLUTIONS**

Adopted by the Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F. meeting in Bruges, April 5th to 10th, 1937.

**I. Spain**

The Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F. in its meeting from April 5th to 10th at Bruges, feeling acutely the danger created for World Peace by the presence of foreign troops on Spanish soil,

Affirms the flagrant violation of Article 10 of the League of Nations Covenant.

Regrets that the League of Nations Council has not yet taken any measures to put an end to an aggression from outside, "threatening the integrity and the political independence of a State Member of the League"

Demands the Governments of the democratic States represented on the League of Nations Council urgently to ask for an extraordinary meeting in order to take immediate measures that will ensure

1. The evacuation of the foreign troops from the Spanish soil;
2. The inauguration of an effective and impartial control.

**II.**

In view of the tendency of certain Governments to conclude bi-lateral treaties,

The W.I.L.P.F. must remind the National Sections that it considers that separate treaties concluded outside the framework of the League of Nations constitute a grave danger to the peace of the world; it asks the Sections to approach their respective Governments in this sense.

**Refugees**

The Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F., aware that according to the decision of the Assembly the Nansen International Office for Refugees is to be liquidated on December 31st, 1938, and that the mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany ends on the same date:

Asks its National Sections to point out to their Governments the need for juridical and political protection of all refugees after that date, and, since the League of Nations is the only body that can satisfactorily undertake this protection ask them to demand that the Council of

the League shall make satisfactory arrangements to this end.

In addition, a Refugee Commission should be established within the framework of the League of Nations to provide for the co-ordination of unofficial activities for the assistance of all refugees and for their definite settlement, and it is to be hoped that the name of Dr. Nansen may be retained in connection with the League's work for refugees.

With regard to the refugees coming from Germany, the Executive welcomes the draft convention for their protection which is being forwarded to all States Members for their comment. It asks National Sections to urge their Governments not only to approve the convention but to ratify and put it into effect.

**LETTERS SENT BY THE EXECUTIVE****1. To General Franco, Burgos**

The Executive Committee meeting in Bruges and representing twenty-four countries,

Has learnt with great concern that the journalist Arthur Koestler, who has been imprisoned and condemned to death after the capture of Malaga, contrary to all the international laws, has not yet been set at liberty in spite of the promise which you have made in answer to the request for his liberation made by the PEN Club and by the International Association of Journalists.

This promise having been published in the press of the whole world, we must reiterate the feelings of indignant astonishment which the delay in realization of this promise has caused.

The Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F. demands the immediate liberation of Arthur Koestler.

**2. Danzig**

To Mr. Anthony Eden, Mr. Yvon Delbos, and Mr. Richard Sandler:

The Executive Committee of the W.I.L.P.F. meeting in Bruges with representatives from its European Sections, has learnt with deep anxiety of the proposal to extend to the Free City of Danzig the racial legislation that has caused so much injustice and misery in Germany. We would ask you to use all your influence to prevent such a retrograde step from being taken in territory under the protection of the League of Nations whose inhabitants have put their trust in the ideals of justice in which it was founded.

**3. Refugees**

To Sir Neill Malcolm, High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany.

The Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, assembled in Bruges from April 5th to 10th, 1937, welcomes the steps taken by the High Commissioner for the refugees coming from Germany to call an Intergovernmental Conference in 1937 which shall lead to the adoption of an International Convention granting legal rights as well as the right to work to Refugees.