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HERE AND THERE: WHAT THE W.I.L.P.F. IS DOING

International Executive Committee, Bruges, April 5th - 10th

The following proposals for the Agenda have already been sent in:

- I. Policy of the W.I.L.P.F. and its Bearings on its Internal Organization. Referent: Clara Ragaz.
- II. Reports of National Sections on the Political and Economic Situation.
- III. Report on Preparation of W.I.L.P.F. Congress in Czechoslovakia.
- IV. Report on Trip to Central and South Eastern Europe.
- V. Report of Mandate Committee.
- VI. W.I.L.P.F. Relations with International Bodies.
- VII. Report on Copenhagen Meeting of Peace and Disarmament Committee.
- VIII. Report on L. of N. Convention on Repression of Terrorism.
- IX. Report on Jane Addams' International Peace Fund.
- X. Finance.
- XI. *Pax*.
- XII. Maison.

Sections are invited to send in further suggestions as soon as possible. Suggestions—except such recognised as Matters of Urgency—received after March 10th cannot be put on the Agenda.

Women's Deputation to President of League of Nations Council

The President of the League of Nations Council, Mr. Wellington Koo, received a deputation of representatives of the Women's International League for Peace and

SPAIN UNDER THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT

We hear a great deal these days about Spain and, of course, the war is bad enough, as all civil wars are, but we have to remember all the time (if we want to understand what is happening) that there is also a revolution going on. On account of this and of the interference of other countries, the Spanish Government is faced with a problem which bristles with difficulties.

We should like to state here a few of these difficulties.

Necessity for Educational Reform

The Spanish people were not on the whole politically

Freedom, the Comité Mondial des Femmes contre la Guerre et le Fascisme, and of the Secours International aux Femmes et aux Enfants de la République Espagnole, on January 25th, 1937. The delegates submitted to the President the proposals of these organisations regarding the situation in Spain. They asked that the control of the ports and frontiers in question be put on the Agenda of the Council Meeting, and that the recommendations of the Health Mission, sent to Spain by the League of Nations, be accepted and carried out as quickly as possible. The President encouraged the delegates to carry on the work of their respective organisations directing public opinion towards World Peace.

Great Britain

At the last meeting of the Executive the following resolution on Spain was passed:

"The Non-Intervention Committee has completely failed to give practical effect to the agreement of the countries composing it to withhold from Spain the assistance of armaments or armed forces.

Its delays and continual postponements have laid its members open to a well-founded charge of hypocrisy and of connivance in the continuation of armed assistance to the rebels.

The Executive Committee of the W.I.L., seeing in this a situation of increasing danger to the peace of Europe and of grave injustice to Spain,

Urges H.M. Government to use its utmost influence even at this late hour to bring about a genuine cessation of foreign intervention in Spain and to this end:

To make a strong protest against the sending of armed troops by outside powers, and a demand for their immediate withdrawal.

To announce that no financial or economic arrangements can be made with Germany or Italy as long as armed intervention in Spain continues."

prepared when the Republic came in in 1931. Although education was compulsory in theory in Spain as early as 1852, there were never schools enough for all the children. The ruling classes did not trouble about the education of the poor (or even their own children) and in spite of the efforts of what we should call liberals in this country, there were in Madrid in 1931, about 40,000 children without a school to go to; and I am afraid that this was not exceptional even for a great city.

Certainly there existed an "elite" that had worked very hard for many years at developing the desire for culture

in the people, and the first republican government started a very active educational policy. They planned for the creation of the necessary 28,000 schools in four years; 2,000 were built in the first year, including the Pedagogical Mission, International University of Santander, and so on. But the educational basis of democracy cannot be created in a short time. It is difficult and slow work. The country, however, expected the impossible and the Azana Government was overthrown before it had time to fulfil an important part of its programme. Disappointment followed and with the women voting for the first time and the active propaganda of the church, the centre and right wing won the election.

With the victory the agricultural and the educational reforms came to an end: children had to go on waiting for a vacancy in the schools and peasants to continue earning only two or three pesetas a day in Andalucia; co-education was suppressed in the elementary schools; the religious orders living in the country against the law (the concordat of the time of the Monarchy allowed only three) began to feel powerful again; in the factories wages went down. All these measures were against the Constitution of the Republic, which all members had sworn to uphold.

Democracy and Social Revolution

The left wing organisations felt that they were losing the Republic, that the church, the army and the aristocracy would never give in without a revolution, and they rose on 6th October, 1934. The repression in Asturias was ruthless, and for the first time since the "Catholic Kings", the Moors were brought to the Peninsula and used in this repression.

In other countries of Europe there have been revolutions as early as the 16th century. Since the religious revolution of the Reformation, the church has been kept in its true place; the political revolution followed a century later and initiated a form of modern democratic government which has progressed slowly and surely. The time for social revolution in every democratic country has come, but there is every hope that this too may be attained in them without an explosion of violence. We in Spain are having all three revolutions at the same time, plus an international war waged on our soil.

It is true that churches have been burned and people shot or robbed. This, of course, is very regrettable, but we could hardly expect anything else from an impulsive and in some respects backward population, especially when from several churches, soldiery and priests were shooting on the crowd of unarmed workers; when during the months that preceded the election nearly every church was a very active centre of political propaganda, and the repression of the Asturian revolt was fresh in the workers' memories. Notwithstanding this overexcited state of popular feeling, Durruti, the anarchist leader, succeeded in getting the Bishop of Barcelona safely on board a ship, and the leaders of all parties did their uttermost to help the Government to establish order at the earliest possible moment.

Government's Command of Situation

If you go now to Barcelona or to Valencia you will have a sense of security. You may or may not agree with the Government's ideas, but you will feel that there is a government that has command of the situation and which

is doing its best not only to win the war, but also to improve conditions in the rearguard; to save the artistic treasures of the past; to prepare a better world for the new generation.

All the left wing parties are collaborating in both the Catalan and the central government (Republicans, Socialists, anarcho-syndicalists, communists) and whatever their differences may be they have in common a basic political programme.

The Refugee Problem

The refugees are admirably looked after by different organisations which work in co-ordination with the authority. All the help is voluntary, and voluntary contributions cover also part of the expenses incurred in the maintaining of a very large number of refugees.

Some of the children are distributed among families that apply for them, but the great majority go to colonies in the country (there are also a few in Barcelona, but because of the shortage of food they are discouraged). From the 1st-7th January was "Children's Week" and everyone tried to make the little ones happy. All received toys, some for the first time in their lives, and entertainments and nice books. There is a great shortage of fuel, but the children's colonies that I visited in Barcelona were heated. The plight of the refugees has had the effect of strengthening the sense of unity between Catalonia and the rest of the country.

The fields of the eastern part of Spain are all sown, but we are already lacking in many things (potatoes, meat, milk, sugar, etc.) and we are afraid that the real shortage of food has not yet begun, because we have to send what is necessary to the front, and besides an important agricultural part of Spain is in the hands of the rebels. The rationing cards that are soon to come into use will be a great help, but if the war lasts the problem of provisioning the population will be a very difficult one.

Most of the big factories are being socialised and controlled by a committee. For the moment they seem to go on very well, but no doubt they will experience many difficulties in the process of adapting themselves to the new conditions (*i.e.*, in the importing of raw materials, of machinery from abroad because of the low rate of exchange, the finding of new markets, etc.).

Communism in Spain

I do not belong to any party and I do not know much about politics, but I would like to say a word about communism in Spain. In February last, at the time of the elections which brought in the Popular Front, there were in the whole country only 50,000 communists. Since July they have steadily increased their numbers for two main reasons: the splendid work they have done in Madrid in saving the artistic treasures, protecting intellectual workers and organising hospitals: and the help given by Russia at the moment that it was most needed. However, I do not believe that communist organisation will suit the Spanish character, and I think that a new type of government may evolve from this terrible convulsion.

The first thing now is to end the war, a task which may prove long and difficult if armed intervention by foreigners cannot be stopped.

MARGARITA CAMPS.

Senora Camps is a lecturer in Biology at Barcelona University.