

PAX INTERNATIONAL

The W. I. L. P. F. aims at uniting women in all countries who are opposed to every kind of war, exploitation and oppression and who work for universal disarmament and for the solution of conflicts by the recognition of human solidarity, by conciliation and arbitration, by world co-operation, and by the establishment of social, political and economic justice for all, without distinction of sex, race, class or creed. The work of all the National Sections is based upon the statements adopted and the Resolutions passed by the International Congresses of the League.

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FRIDA PERLEN

by Gabrielle Duchêne

(Frida Perlen died at Stuttgart on December 21, 1933)

Frida Perlen, one of the organisers of the Hague Congress, where our League was born, was, from the outset, one of our best workers. She was often the leader in suggesting plans for common action. Frida Perlen has left us.

Even before the war took away from her the person she most loved, she had given herself, body and soul, to the defence of peace.

The life of the League was her life. During her last years her greatest joys, her deepest sorrows and her most poignant anxieties came to her from the League.

The striking success of the Frankfurt Conference, considered by many to be an event of historic interest, and which will doubtless remain as the most successful single action of our League, was a joy to her.

The reception given by the public to the International Petition for Total and Universal Disarmament, whose launching also she had suggested, was a joy to her.

But it was a cause of grief to her to see the failure of various movements, in which friends of peace had placed their

hopes, and to which they had given their efforts: the League of Nations, the Disarmament Conference and many political and economic conferences.

It was a cause of grief to her to feel powerless, even in her own country, to prevent the rebirth of the war spirit or to bar the way to Fascism.

It was a cause of anxiety to her to observe the spirit of the organization to which she had given the full measure of her devotion, grow dull with the years and lose its fearlessness and aggressiveness at a critical time which called for increased activity.

Life, for Frida Perlen, had been for a long time, a struggle between her exhausted body and her inexhaustible moral energy. Her spirit, undaunted by the pessimistic opinions of her medical advisors, was long triumphant and came victorious from so many crises called fatal, that her numerous friends in all countries hoped to keep her with them for a long time to come.

Since we do not have the details of her last hours, we must suppose that her overburdened spirit broke at last.

The French Section is deeply saddened by her death.

The lecture tour which she undertook in France two years ago brought her many friends in various parts of the country. In spite of the difficulty she found in speaking French in public, she was able, with her evident sincerity, her contagious enthusiasm and her radiant spirit, to reach many people with her appeal and arouse lasting interest in the cause so dear to her. Several of our groups were formed as a result of her warm, stimulating speeches.

Acceding to her friends' entreaties, she finally consented to leave the Hitler inferno and we thought we had saved her. We had hoped that she would come to us and try to forget, as much as she could, the outrageous sufferings which the Fascist regime had brought to the German people.

A strong feeling of moral obligation towards her family in general and her grandson in particular forced her to return to her country in the face of the danger which we felt threatened her there.

Our entreaties could not shake her firm decision. I have a powerful and very sad recollection of a beautiful twilight at a convalescent home on the shores of the Lake of Thun, where I tried to persuade her not return to Germany. We parted feeling we should never meet again.

Those who had only a superficial knowledge of her, did not appreciate her at her true worth, did not understand how precious she was to the League which she inspired to new activities, but those who knew her more intimately

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SECTION NEWS

The Secretary of the **Rosa Mayreder Group** of the *Austrian Section* was a member of a deputation from the Austrian Peace Societies to Cardinal-Archbishop Innitzer who promised to support, to the best of his ability, all efforts towards peace and who later issued an order for all Catholic priests to resign from political positions.

Frau Dr. Rauchberg sent a Christmas message to women. Frau Direktor Hanzel has drawn up an appeal which is to be sent to all educationalists.

Rosa Mayreder, the President of the Group, celebrated her 75th birthday on November 30th. The Union of Austrian Women's Societies held a meeting, in her honour, on December 2nd at which extracts from her play «*Anda Renata*» and three sonnets were read and there were speeches of greeting and congratulation.

The Secretary of the Rosa Mayreder Group says that militarism is steadily increasing in Austria, and that the gains made by feminism are all being lost.

The **British Section** is organising a Campaign for the abolition of the private manufacture and sale of armaments and hopes to rouse public opinion to express itself on this all important matter.

A petition, urging His Majesty's Government to take immediate steps to secure the abolition of the manufacture of armaments and the establishment of effective international supervision for all manufacture of and trade in arms, has been drawn up for signature by prominent people in each town. In this case the idea is not to obtain large numbers of signatures but rather a small number of telling names.

It is hoped to cover all the constituencies of England and to present copies of the petition with a covering letter, or better still by deputation to the local M. P. s. Copies will also be sent to the Prime Minister, the President of the Disarmament Conference and the local press.

An attempt is being made to put the disarmament issue before candidates

.....
appreciated her as an intelligent, forceful, courageous and warm-hearted woman.

In these new hours of danger, as we stand on the threshold of another heroic period, may the spirit of Frida Perlen, whose collaboration is irreplaceable, enter into us all.

at every By Election. A special Election Leaflet has been brought out and when ever a By Election occurs a contact is made with any supporters or members in the district. All those willing to help are supplied with leaflets which they distribute throughout the area and wherever possible questions are asked of the candidate which will oblige him to state his views on the question of Peace and Disarmament.

The questions have been framed in such away that it is not possible to give a vague and general reply in favour of peace.

The **Danish Section** held its annual meeting, with three hundred women attending, in the largest hall of Herning, Jutland. One of the many interesting features of the meeting was discussion on "The civilian population and the Gas Mask Industry". It was voted to ask the drug stores to refuse to sell gas masks. 350 have been approached and almost all have agreed to refuse.

One of the public meetings was attended by about 800 persons. The subject dealt with was "South Jutland and Peace". The speakers were a well known Danish bishop and a woman representing the "Young Frontier Guard". This is an organization of young people who have formed a nonviolent guard against the Nazi movement and for maintaining their free northern culture.

Attempts are being made to raise money by a drive on the "men-folks".

The Danish Section has invited the other four Scandinavian Sections to a summer meeting to be held in July at Elsinore in the historic castle of Kronborg.

Thora Daugaard writes that the political situation is calm and the number of unemployed decreasing but adds that "according to an old Danish proverb: 'You can only have peace as long as your neighbor wants you to'".

The **Norwegian Section** has recently had a series of lectures on armament industries and in February it is hoped to have a series of radio lectures on international questions, for which permission has finally been given by the broadcasting company.

The Section is happy to have secured a number of young members who are an encouragement in the work of the Section.

From the **United States Section** we learn the interesting news (which we have had no chance to print before) that on November 25th Maxim M. Litvinov received a delegation from the W. I. L. headed by Mrs. Gerard Swope, Chairman

of the Manhattan Branch. Support of Mr. Litvinov's proposal for complete world disarmament was pledged by the delegation, which urged that he seek the cooperation of the United States in this undertaking and assured him that the W. I. L. would do all in its power to bring this about.

Mr. Litvinov told the delegation that he was well acquainted with the W. I. L., which has always cooperated in his endeavours for disarmament in Geneva. "We shall continue to work for our common aim", he said, "The situation in Geneva has strengthened our conviction that the only possible method of disarmament, which would be not only effective, but also easily carried out, is complete disarmament."

Miss Mabel Vernon, Campaign Director of the League, expressed the hope of the organization that Mr. Litvinov would invite the President of the United States, with whom he had established such cordial relations, to join him in pressing for total disarmament. "You said last night", Miss Vernon continued, "that you would put forward this idea at every opportune moment. We hope that all times will be opportune. If these two 'giants', the United States and the U. R. S. S., will join together to work for complete disarmament as their first mutual undertaking, they can win the support of the world. Disarmament does not depend on the outcome of the Geneva Conference. With the United States and Russia working together, a conference could be called in Washington or Moscow that would surely get results."

Mrs. Gerard Swope expressed the deep gratification of the W. I. L. at the U. S.' recognition of the U. S. S. R., for which the League has always worked.

Dr. Esther Crooks, of Goucher College, chairman of the W. I. L. Cuban Committee, spent her Christmas vacation in Cuba getting first hand information.

Anne Guthrie, who has worked for the W. I. L. in *Latin America*, attended the Montevideo Conference and was given credentials by Geneva Headquarters as the official W. I. L. Delegate.

The Pennsylvania Branch is urging contributions of old gold, etc., as a way to mitigate financial trials. The Branch is very busy with inter-racial work, action against lynching, a study course for Peace speakers, propaganda in favour of writing to President Roosevelt insisting that the tax-payers' money be used to "Build Schools not Battleships", and in organising W. I. L. groups in the field.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN CENTRAL EUROPE

Extracts from a report by Wally Heller

Czechoslovakia

Legally women have the same rights as men, but practically they are not always allowed the same rights, partly because the economic crisis has prevented women from giving the necessary time to assuring their political equality. Also men are making a firmer stand against women because of economic competition.

There are 7 women among 150 Senators, 10 among 100 Deputies. In Prague there are 9 women among the 100 members of the Municipal Council. There are many women in the professions, schools, academic posts, more doctors than lawyers. There is agitation on the question of whether a married woman may keep her post; men desire to take posts away from married women and this would mean great injustice and hardship to couples whose marriages are based on the two partners earning.

The German and Czech women teachers have put through a good ruling in the primary and lower schools: in every school there must be both men and women teachers. In boys' schools, where there is an even number of posts, half must be given to women, half to men; where there is an odd number, the odd post is held by a man. In girls' schools the odd post must be held by a woman. The head of boys' schools is a man, of girls' schools, a woman. In mixed schools, where there is an even number of posts, men and women have equal grades; where there is an odd number, the odd post and the head are given to the teacher who has longest been at the school, thus in most cases to men.

There are many active women's organizations, in particular professional organizations. The Czech organizations are affiliated through the Czech National Council of Women to the I. C. W. The German organizations, though representing a minority, have no voice in the I. C. W.

In general the woman's legal position is on an equal basis with the man's. In marriage, man is the head of the family, but is obliged to support his wife adequately. The wife must have her residence where her husband's is and must obey him. The woman has the same right to study and to work as the man. The woman takes the husband's nationality. Marriage does not entail community of property. (Others legal details are given.)...

Poland.

Information given through Mme Jadwiga Krawezinska, through a report by Mme Szelagowska, and numbers of the "Femme Polonaise".

Conditions very similar to those in Czechoslovakia. Women given free entrance to the higher schools and the polytechnical schools and are well treated. Limited numbers of students are accepted in the medical faculties of the five Polish universities, and almost the same limitations apply to men as to women. Scholarships are given out very justly. Opportunities for work are equally difficult for men and women. An attempt was made to make it impossible for married women to continue teaching, but the attempt was not successful thanks to opposition from the Left.

Women doctors have equal rights with men doctors and there are several outstanding women doctors and scientists, in particular Curie-Sklodowska. There are few women lawyers.

A year ago a new civil code was drawn up, unifying and changing the old Austrian, Russian and Prussian codes. A civil marriage can now be dissolved on the sole demand of the wife and the fortune is divided as justly as possible. Protection of unmarried mothers and pregnant women is still slight. The father must help in bringing up the child.

In Polish **Ukraine** there is still great suffering. Most of the women work on the land and few study though those who do are talented and usually politically active. Some of the women farmers are politically enlightened, others reactionary, usually embittered by suffering.

The women have equal political rights with men. Pilsudski is friendly to women as are many men in different parties; they have not forgotten women's great part in building up Poland. Polish women have worked for 200 years for Poland's freedom; only after that was achieved did they do special feminist work. There are 15 women delegates in the State council. Understanding for women's duty in political life is only beginning and there is need for a strong organization to make women cease being simple tools. Women are represented in all the Parliamentary Commissions; they have no special club but often vote together and do good work. They have put through some good legislation. Poland includes women in its delegations to the L. of N. and the I. L. O. Eugenia Wasniewska is in the latter delegation and instituted a "commission of correspondence" in the I. L. O. for questions concerning women's work. She put for-

ward in 1930 the resolution on women as factory inspectors because she believes women alone are experts in questions of women's and children's hygiene and women's and children's work.

The International Federation of University Women met in Lwow in 1932 and passed resolutions: 1) that taking work away from married women often destroyed the family; 2) that posts should be given to persons only because of their qualifications and not for reasons of sex or social standing. The Congress protested against all attempts to solve unemployment by withdrawing women from work, and urged women to be alive to the danger.

There are 283 women in municipal councils, 18 in provincial administrations. Since 1922 the Polish Council of Women has been affiliated to the I. C. W. and since 1920 the "Club des femmes progressistes" cooperates with the W. I. L. **Rumania**

In principle women have equal political and civil rights with men since the Constitution of Greater Rumania. Since 1928 only have women had political rights in practice. There are women mayors, assistant mayors, women in municipal councils, prefects. Since 1930 women have had equal rights with men in trade, and can run their money affairs and business without consent of the husband. They can be elected to and elect members of Chambers of Commerce and can be bank directors (there are two). Women receive equal pay with men and have recently begun to receive high official posts, directors of offices, etc. Working women are admitted without distinction to trade organizations. But there are not enough women in the Commissions of such organizations primarily because they don't fight hard enough for such positions.

Recently a movement to keep women from positions and in the home has been noticeable, this is a result, as elsewhere, of the crisis and unemployment. But Rumanian women are awake and hope to prevent this anti-feminist movement. **Hungary**

Women do not have quite the same rights as men. Women can vote at 30 years, having been a Hungarian citizen 10 years, lived in the same place 2 years and gone through 6 elementary grades; or having finished 4 classes, being independent and running an independent household; or can vote before 30 if they have finished higher studies, and have a diploma. After 30 years women can be elected as men can. They cannot be on Juries nor be judges.

Women reach their majority on marriage, men at 24 years. Divorced women

or widows do not lose their majority. A foreign woman takes on Hungarian nationality on marriage, and a Hungarian woman loses Hungarian nationality, on marriage with a foreigner. In all family questions, even education of the children, the man rules. The woman is legally independent after marriage and can manage her own fortune. In the case of divorce, if the woman is innocent, the man must pay her alimony for the rest of her life. (Further such details given.)

Secondary schools, universities, etc., are open to women but only a very limited number of girls are allowed. A sort of silent numerus clausus exists. Girls are not admitted to Law, Theology and Polytechnical studies.

Work is hard to find, both for men and women and, as elsewhere, there is a tendency to push women out of the positions they have achieved and close new ones to them. Here as elsewhere there is a movement against married women. Women have protested against this but the result is doubtful. Women are paid less well in all positions except professors, teachers, doctors and members of state or municipal services. In particular small officials and factory workers are paid less well than men, even when the women have the best qualifications. Unfortunately some women find this natural.

The above report seems to indicate that women have achieved very much in the last decades and, if it had not been for the depression, would have achieved still more. Let us hope for more and better things in future!

TWO YEARS LATER

Two years ago the Disarmament Conference opened and the peoples of the world waited and hoped. Two years later no reduction in armaments has been accepted. The re-armament of Germany is being discussed and statements as to the necessity of national defence are being made. The Disarmament Conference has had the floor for two years with no results. The peoples of the world must declare emphatically their firm will to disarmament.

In two years Fascism has spread over the world. Fascist propaganda grows more intensive. What is still more serious, many young people in all countries are willing to give up their liberties to follow dictators. Every day we hear young people say: Liberty is an 18th century ideal, a Utopia; we are realists and want order. We follow dictators because they promise order and ask us to collaborate with them.

Young people believe in dictators because they hate a world which has given them no chance to work and eat.

We must try to understand young people and recognise that, in the name of Liberty, millions of men and machines have been enchained, whole peoples have been colonised and terrorised, and part of the world has been thrown into the slaughter-house of war.

We must say to these young people: It is true that you have been lied to and that the conditions of life you complain of are not liberty. Liberty is emancipation for all people through a social and economic reorganization which will allow the masses to live. Liberty is man set free from the industrial regime which

makes a slave of him, from the banking system which bleeds him, from imperialism which degrades him and from militarism which turns him into a criminal. The first step towards liberty is work for total disarmament and the effort to transform the world into a real union of peoples.

But you young people, who are fascinated by dictatorships, do you really hope that dictators will give you the liberty necessary for this work? The greatest deception the dictators practice is to pass themselves off as liberators. Is history going to begin these cruel tricks over and over again?

You young people must have your place in the sun to live. Give your strength, not to dictators, but to the masses of men, to the men who are struggling. You need an ideal. What struggles are more worthy of your heroism than those in which humanity is engaged today? Why do you give up the struggle? Look at the thousands of young people who follow dictators. They march in closed ranks, they shout, they salute, they do military exercises, they wear badges and uniforms. They are a great army of sleep-walkers, under a spell, marching behind their tyrants towards Death.

Will they not wake from the nightmare and break the spell? Young people of all countries, will you not, at last, throw yourselves into the only way of life: work for a disarmed and freer world? C. D.

BOOKS

1934 Peace Year Book, published by the National Peace Council, 39 Victoria Street, London S.W.1, price 1/6. The Year Book contains articles on International Affairs by W. Arnold-Forster, G. D. H. Cole, G. P. Gooch, and others; a review of the Disarmament Conference with summary by K. D. Courtney; chapters on the Peace Movement at Home and the Peace Movement Abroad which include directories of peace and kindred organizations in all countries; and Appendices on Armaments, the Traffic in Arms, the Cost of War and Peace, Bibliographies, Reference Libraries, Peace Press Directory, The Nobel Peace Prize-winners.

New Wars for Old by Mrs. H. M. Swanwick, published by the Women's International League, 55 Gower Street, London, W. C. 1, price 7d. post free, a brilliant and forceful argument against an International Police Force.

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