

# 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.

Published  
by the Women's International League for Peace  
and Freedom



International Headquarters :  
12, rue du Vieux-Collège, Geneva  
Jane Addams, Honorary President

## DEFENCE OF WOMEN AGAINST FASCISM

The W. I. L. P. F., at its Executive meeting in September 1933, decided to take the initiative in convoking for November 18th and 19th a purely private, consultative conference of women's international organizations for the defence of women against Fascism. More than 50 invitations were sent out on October 7th. About a dozen organizations and individuals replied. The others did not acknowledge the invitation.

The Women's Committee of the International Workers' Relief, the International Committee against War and Fascism, the World Youth Committee against War and Fascism, the Red Trade Unions, the Relief Committee for Victims of Fascism all accepted the invitation and were represented. The scruples of the other organizations compelled them to decline the invitation; thus, in place of the Conference, only a preliminary discussion could be held, in order to clear up the situation created by the attitude of the organizations invited. This meeting was held in Paris.

What were the scruples of the Women's International Organizations?

1. The purpose of the proposed Conference for Defence of Women against Fascism exceeded the bounds estab-

lished in the programs of the women's organizations concerned. If it had only been a question of defence of certain women's rights, endangered by the reactionary forces in all countries, the organizations could have taken part.

2. From two points of view the W.I.L. conception of «Fascism» does not represent the object which women's organizations as such wish to combat. From one point of view the conception is too narrow, for :

3. In their opinion Fascism only means Mussolini's system, which the organizations cannot and do not wish to fight, since they are politically neutral and not able to oppose any particular form of government alone; moreover, women from many of the organizations concerned live and thrive under Mussolini's Fascism.

4. From the other point of view, the conception of "Fascism" is too broad, since the Conference used this term to convey all forms of aggressive reaction which, in various countries, seriously endanger the interests and positions of women as well as all acquisitions in political, economic and social fields.

5. Consequently, the Conference planned to enter the political field where the organizations, whose sole duty it is to act

as conquerors and defenders in women's questions, could not follow, since they were politically strictly neutral and non-party or above all parties.

These interpretations of the W. I. L. invitation were given personal comment at the meeting on November 18th by "observers" who are close to the ideas and work of the International Federation of University Women, of the International Associations of Medical Women and of Women Lawyers, and of the International Cooperative Guild. The interpretations show clearly two facts :

1. Underestimation of the dangers with which the women of the world and with them the whole cultural life of the peoples are faced by the advance of Fascism.

In the opinion of the organisers of the Conference, Fascism is a system which is not limited to Italy. It is the modern form of capitalism, of big industry, of high finance. There lie its roots.

Its *economic form* : the corporative state, state monopoly.

Its *politics* seek and take support from the middle classes, the small bourgeoisie (small commerce, small industry, small estates).

Its *methods* for the achievement of its ends : arbitrary decisions based on the authority of the state, of the leader; brute force which unscrupulously clears away all opposition.

Its *weapon* : highly developed militarism (bringing prosperity to war industries as not the least of its consequences!).

Its *ideology* : Against Bolshevism, For Nationalism and Chauvinism, Autarchy. Appeal to the instincts, to the

### CONTENTS

Defence of Women against Fascism, G. — Gertrud Woker, G. — Section News : Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, United States. — Disarmament Conference. — The W. I. L. falsely charged with Communist Activity. — Pax International. — Erratum.

limited vision of the ordinary man whose support Fascism needs for reasons concerning election, tax, population and military policy. Incitement to opposition to cultural progress, such as equality for women or for labour.

The terminology, by playing up to the conceptions of the small bourgeoisie which are inimical to progress and freedom, allows Fascism in the different countries to take different forms: Hitlerism whips up anti-semitic and race instincts; Dolfussism uses clerical or pseudoclerical formulae; other dictators, or dictators-to-be employ still other expressions. Today we see a whole line of states in pre-fascist phases which bear minute resemblance to the phases Fascist states have passed through. We see them and severely criticise their symptoms from the first beginnings—despite the horrified opposition of certain elements which believe their country to have a charm against any form of Fascism, since it is based on free speech and would strongly oppose any kind of standardization of mind or body since its working class is well organised and its farmers want to live in peace.

2) The women's international organizations do not measure up to the task of combatting the assault made by a movement hostile to freedom, as, in 1914, the then existing women's organizations did not measure up to the task of opposing war. They were crippled by their self-imposed political neutrality, which did not permit of any stand against the horror of war, of any international protest or of any international front against the greatest crime of civilization whose consequences are bringing the world to destruction.

Timely opposition by women, organised throughout the world, would have made it possible to limit the progress of Fascism in certain spheres of social life. The women's organizations have

failed to take such a stand internationally,—partly because women have not recognised the true face of Fascism, partly because consciously and unconsciously they want to maintain the capitalist system and therefore, in all countries without exception, they are a prey to the spectre of Bolshevism. Every inch won by Fascism, under whatever guise, is ground lost to women. Difficult and lengthy social changes will be necessary in order to regain the lost positions.

When, in 1915, a very few women called for international protest and international opposition to the Great War, the majority of women's organizations inveighed against these women for "high treason" and "un-national" conduct. Nevertheless they went their way and were successful. Their peace demands of 1915 became the slogans of statesmen in the post-war period and of the women's organizations which took part in 1932 in the disarmament petitions. The political situation of 1933 resembles that of 1915. Only a minority of women sees the whole range of Fascist dangers, is inwardly and outwardly independent and logical enough to formulate them clearly, to expose them to shame and to propose remedies. A re-orientation among women will only come about slowly. It does not seem possible at present internationally, as the attempt in November showed. *The W. I. L. therefore appeals to all National Sections to follow the example of the Swiss women, who have united women of all shades of opinion, from Catholic-Conservatives to Social-Democrats in defence of Democracy against Fascism. If this is possible in Switzerland it should be in other countries.*

The Women's International League is an organization for Peace and Freedom. Whoever attended the session in Zurich 1919, when the name of the W. I. L. was chosen, knows how passionately

freedom for women and political and social freedom for all oppressed were advocated. The Women's International League is a non-party organization. In such times as the present it should be the intermediary in bringing together all forces which are opposed to violence. No sacrifice is too great to achieve this—in comparison with the enormity of the danger which threatens us all. In giving in to Fascism, one robs oneself of freedom. In giving in to Fascism one allows oneself to be driven, hands bound, mouth gagged, into the next holocaust. Women arise: against Fascism and against War!

The following points served as the basis for the discussions at the Paris Conference and may possibly be useful to W. I. L. Sections:

Defence of the material and moral conditions of existence already won, especially interests, rights and claims of women;

Support of those who in the countries under the Fascist yoke are working to bring this regime to an end, and, above all, in the countries which are yet only threatened,—especially in those countries called "democratic" where liberties still exist—, work to maintain or re-establish:

Freedom to work (free access to the professions); The right of holding meetings and demonstrations; The right to freedom of thought; The right to freedom of speech; The right to freedom of the press; The maintenance of personal liberty; The liberty of Government and other employees to hold opinions freely; The right of asylum; The right to organize in trade unions; The right to strike.

More energetic work than ever against nationalist and militarist propaganda (education of children);

of spirit and truth in Berlin—at the same time the "Führer" is making peace speeches to foreign countries; Professor Bause, who was made a professor by the Hitler regime, in spite of his books being banned, is further inciting German students to war; at the same time Norwegian students are having a separate publication made in Danish of Gertrud Woker's contribution to the volume of the Inter-parliamentary Union; at the same time Switzerland is doing herself honour by appointing one of her finest women, professor in the capitol itself. G.

Encouragement to the greatest degree possible and even promotion, in the respective countries, of cooperation with all those who wish sincerely to contend against Fascism, not forgetting, in doing all this, that it is not enough to attack the effects of Fascism but that it is even more important to attack the causes.

## SECTION NEWS

### Czecho-Slovak Section.

The Czechoslovak Section has been working for revision of school text books. The Prague and Brunn groups have been particularly active in this work.

A meeting on the inadequacy of protection of the civilian population against air attack was held on November 11th. Dr. Woker was to speak but as she could not be present her lecture was read in Czech and has now been sent to the local groups. The meeting aroused lively discussion in the press.

Armistice Day was remembered as in past years. Prof. Hromadka spoke in Czech and Prof. Wiechovsky in German at a public meeting.

A conference was held on December 11th of representatives of peace and educational societies to discuss the crisis in Pacifism.

Work has become more difficult in Czechoslovakia but encouragement can be found in the slackening of high tension between Germans and Czechs.

### Swiss Section.

Last May the Swiss Section asked different women's organizations to collaborate in a joint preliminary conference to discuss work against fascism. Representatives of these organizations met together on June 18th at Zurich. Mme Dr. Dünner spoke on "Women and Democracy", there was animated discussion and a committee of 8 women was formed to 1) prepare for the Swiss national celebration on August 1st an appeal to Swiss women reminding them of the significance of democracy for Switzerland and drawing their attention to the way in which democracy is endangered; 2) prepare a conference of Swiss women which would attempt to draw up a united program of work in order to enlighten the public, especially women, on the absolute necessity of safeguarding the Swiss traditions of liberty and democracy.

The appeal was published on August 1st, signed by the presidents of 20 women's organizations including the Swiss Union of Catholic Women and the Union of Women's Jewish Organizations.

The Conference was held on October 28th at Berne. A program was discussed and accepted by the representatives present but as they were not authorised to take final decisions, the program will have to be ratified by the organizations. The Berne meeting was so united, however, that it is to be hoped that many organizations will accept the program.

The Conference made plans for a propaganda campaign for January and February, to be carried on especially in small towns and villages, and to show women the dangers of fascism and to bring home to them that defence of democracy is one of the most urgent and "patriotic" duties of the day.

The discussions showed a great desire on the part of the women to find common ground for action; the meetings were well prepared and the representatives displayed great tact and tolerance. If work can be continued in the same spirit, it will be possible to reach those circles which most need to be on their guard against fascism; that is, those people who are still convinced democrats but do not perceive the dangers which threaten freedom of speech, of thought and of the press in Switzerland.

(Summary of a report by Clara Ragaz.)

### United States Section.

The Maryland Branch took immediate action with regard to the lynching of George Armwood, a Negro, at Princess Anne, Maryland, October 19th. Dr. Mary W. Williams, chairman of the Legislative Committee of the Maryland Branch, sent a letter to Governor Albert Ritchie demanding prompt persecution of the guilty parties and urging the passage of a State Anti-Lynch Law. Esther J. Crooks conferred with the editor of the "Afro-American". Dr. Williams represented the W. I. L. P. F. on a deputation to the Governor. The "Baltimore Sun" gave a summary of her speech on this occasion under the name of the W. I. L. P. F. Representatives of many organizations including the W. I. L., attended a special meeting and formed the Maryland Anti-Lynching Federation. A mass meeting was held on October 27th. Dorothy Detzer wrote to President Roosevelt urging him to initiate and support Federal anti-lynching legislation in the next session of Congress.

In a communication sent to President Roosevelt on October 21st by the U. S. W. I. L. responsibility for the present complication delaying world disarmament was laid to the failure of the Allied Powers to keep their treaty pledges.

Dorothy Detzer wrote to President Roosevelt on November 6th urging termination of the financial control of Haiti on behalf of private bondholders in the United States. Miss Detzer pointed out that the so-called Presidential Accord which was concluded between Haiti and the United States when the Haitian Congress was not in session was a "deliberate attempt to circumvent the will of the people", and, on behalf of the W. I. L. P. F., asked that before the Montevideo Conference this agreement be liquidated.

Arrangements were made by the New York State Branch through the Postal Telegraph Company to secure cabled messages from women peace leaders on Armistice Day, which were received at a large Mass Meeting held in Washington Square. They were relayed to other cities where Armistice Day meetings were being held. The messages were sent in reply to a cable from Jane Addams:

"On behalf of American peace organizations uniting in a mass meeting on November 11, Armistice Day, we urge you to send us a greeting expressing your views on world peace and the means of attaining it and ask you to subscribe to the resolution addressed to President Arthur Henderson: "We, citizens, of the world, united against war, will uphold you in your efforts toward world disarmament, and pledge ourselves to urge our respective governments to co-operate in securing the success of the Disarmament Conference through the conclusion of a treaty providing a measure of immediate disarmament, and guaranteeing continuance until ultimate universal total disarmament is achieved."

We have heard that messages were received from Lucie Dejardin, Belgium; Marianna Hainisch, Austria; Soong Ching Ling, China; Eleanor Roosevelt, U.S.A.; Agnes MacPhail, Canada and from Dr. Naima Sahlbom, Sweden on behalf of the Permanent Joint Committee of Swedish Peace Organizations which is composed of 16 societies.

## DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Headquarters has received three letters from Mr. Henderson in kind acknowledgement of communications sent to him as President of the Disarmament Conference. In one of these letters Mr. Henderson asked particularly that his thanks be conveyed to members of the W. I. L. P. F. who had sent him messages.

## GERTRUD WOKER

Dr. Gertrud Woker, head of the Chemico-Biological Laboratory of the University of Berne, has been appointed Professor at the University of Berne.

In scientific circles in all countries (we found her books in almost all the universities and colleges in the U.S.A. which we visited) she has become particularly well known through her four volume work "Die Katalyse" and through "Methoden zum Studium der einzelnen Verdauungssäfte".

Her wide studies led Dr. Woker more and more to the profound conviction that a new war would mean the destruction of all life, all culture and all civilization. "Der kommende Gift- und Brandkrieg" set forth the methods of chemical warfare in all their horror. Pacifist Germany repeatedly appealed to this woman, so courageous in her work for peace and her warnings against war, to speak at great public meetings. The biggest halls were filled to overflowing, even not more than a year ago.

National-Socialist students have now burned Prof. Woker's book at the stake

## THE W. I. L. FALSELY CHARGED WITH COMMUNIST ACTIVITY

It will be remembered that in October 1928 the Entente against the Third International mentioned the W.I.L.P.F. as an "auxiliary organization of the Komintern" in a "Chart representing the Soviet Organizations working for revolution in all countries". It will also be remembered that since the publication of this document, numerous attacks have been made in the press on the W. I. L. P. F. and on certain of its members (G. Duchêne and C. Drevet). The "Journal de Genève" played an important part in this campaign.

In 1929 (see "Pax" for February 1929), Miss Sheepshanks took certain steps. The League chose Me. Picot as its lawyer. The following letter from him to the W. I. L. brought matters to a close at that time :

(Translation)

"Mesdames,

"I have the honour of informing you that, Mr. Aubert having been approached, he told me that he considered the Entente had given you sufficient satisfaction in the statement which appeared in the February "Pax". If the Entente published a rectification in its publications, it could only contain the same elements and reservations.

"As I explained to you at the beginning of our interviews, Mr. Aubert is one of my personal friends, and though I deemed that his organization had made a grave mistake concerning you, I could not constitute myself lawyer against him and his organization. If you wish to con-

tinue to demand more complete amends from the Entente, I shall be obliged if you will apply to one of my confrères. I am at your disposal if you wish to be introduced to one of them and wish me to give him all useful information. Needless to say, the papers which you entrusted to me, are at your disposal.

... (signed) *A.-M. Picot.*

None the less, in January 1933, Mr. Aubert, secretary of the Entente against the Third International, wrote to Mrs. Hilja Rupinen in Finland : "We marked the W. I. L. P. F. among auxiliary organizations of the Komintern, because the activity of its leading members warranted our doing so.

"The term "cellules" shows that the organization as such is not officially affiliated to the Komintern. When we published our charts, the central office of the League threatened to take the matter into court, but when the League's lawyer took cognizance of our documents, he was obliged to withdraw the complaint lodged against us, for he became convinced that the activity of certain members of the League has a distinctly Bolshevik tendency."

Miss Sheepshanks was informed of this letter and wrote on April 6, 1933 :

"I have read the letter from Mr. Aubert to Mrs. Hilja Rupinen, dated January 18th, 1933.

"I was myself general secretary of the League at that time, and I am obliged formally to contradict what Mr. Aubert writes. I attended all the conversations with Mr. Picot, our lawyer, and he assured us that if we wished to take the case to court, we would be sure to win in the Federal Court at Berne. He himself did

not wish for personal reasons to take charge of the case (he was related to certain persons on the other side in this affair). But he declared himself ready to give instructions to a colleague of his who could take charge of the affair. But the Committee, not wishing to devote the time and money necessary for extended court proceedings, and having received from the Entente assurance that in future it would no longer print and spread the accusation against our League of being a cell of Moscow, did not wish to carry the matter any further.

(signed) *Mary Sheepshanks.*"

---

## PAX INTERNATIONAL

The state of finances at W.I.L.P.F. Headquarters makes necessary a change with regard to "Pax International". Great efforts have been made but it has not been possible under present conditions to balance the "Pax" budget. The Executive Committee therefore decided that from January 1934 on "Pax" should appear only in English and only 8 times a year. Subscribers to the French and German editions, whose subscriptions are paid up, can receive, on request, a typewritten "Pax" until the expiration of their subscriptions.

As soon as financial conditions permit, there will be modification of these emergency measures.

---

## ERRATUM

The date of the letter from the International Committee of the Red Cross was incorrectly given in the October "Pax". This letter was dated June 1st but should have been dated June 21st.

# PAX INTERNATIONAL

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE  
FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

published by the Headquarters Office of the  
W. I. L. P. F., 12, rue du Vieux-Collège, Geneva.  
International Secretary : Camille Drevet.

The undersigned.....  
wishes to subscribe to *Pax International* for one year begin-  
ning ..... Please send the English,  
French, German edition (cross out those not wanted).

Signature : .....

Address : (please write legibly) .....

Subscription price: 2.50 Swiss francs, 50 cents or 2/6 a year.