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WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL  
LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND  
FREEDOM

1915 - 1938

A VENTURE IN  
INTERNATIONALISM



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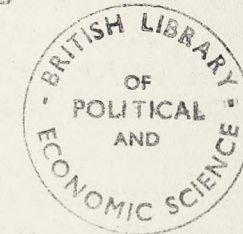
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FREEDOM

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A VENTURE IN  
INTERNATIONALISM

Maison Internationale  
12 rue du Vieux Collège, Geneva, Switzerland  
July, 1938

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"The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is made up of people who believe that we are not obliged to choose between violence and passive acceptance of unjust conditions for ourselves or others; who believe, on the contrary, that courage, determination, moral power, generous indignation, active good-will, can achieve their ends without violence.

"We believe that experience condemns force as a self-defeating weapon although men are still so disposed to turn to it in education, in dealing with crime, in effecting or preventing social changes, and above all in carrying out national policies.

*"We believe that new methods, free from violence, must be worked out for ending abuses and for undoing wrongs, as well as for achieving positive ends."*

A statement issued in 1920 by the Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

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# WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

1915 — 1938

## A Venture in Internationalism

BEGINNINGS: INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF WOMEN,  
THE HAGUE, APRIL 28 - MAY 1, 1915

In 1915 a small group of European women, led by Dr. Aletta Jacobs of Holland, felt that in view of the World War then raging there was urgent need for women from all countries to meet and take counsel together. The International Suffrage Alliance having given up as impracticable the Congress that it had planned for that year, this group came together in Amsterdam in February and prepared the International Congress of Women which met on April 28 at The Hague.

The delegates came from both neutral and belligerent countries, twelve in all, and were pleased to find how fully of one mind they were in spite of the isolation of war-time and exposure to opposed national propaganda. They were alike in the desire to stop the slaughter then going on and in the will to put an end, at last, to war.

In the United States women had already been active in seeking to stop the war. As early as September 1914 Rosika Schwimmer of Hungary and Carrie Chapman Catt of the United States, had presented to President Wilson an international petition asking him to call a neutral conference for mediation. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence came to the United States from England to speak on suffrage but eager also to work for a negotiated peace and joined Rosika Schwimmer in a lecture campaign.

In January 1915 a conference in Washington created a Women's Peace Party, of which Jane Addams of Hull House (who with Mrs. Catt had signed the call) was elected President. In response to the call from Holland, she, with over forty other American women, many of them members of the new organization, crossed the mine-strewn waters to attend the Amsterdam Congress over which she had been asked to preside.

Not all who wanted to come could do so. French women were not allowed by their government to attend. A Bulgarian delegate was refused a transit visa by the Hungarian government. One hundred and eighty British women were prevented from coming by the British government's suddenly closing the North Sea to traffic, but three who happened to be outside their country were able to take part. In Holland the interest was so great that a thousand people entered their names as Congress members.

The proposals adopted constituted a peace programme marked by insight and foresight. They were studied with great interest by President Wilson before drafting his famous fourteen points, and it is interesting to see how far these coincide.

The spirit of the gathering is reflected in what it said of the hoped-for Peace Settlement. "Since the mass of the people in each of the countries now at war believe themselves to be fighting not as aggressors but in self-defense and for their national existence, there can be no irreconcilable difference between them, and their common ideals afford a basis upon which a magnanimous and honourable peace might be established."

Four peace conditions were listed; viz.: *no recognition of right of conquest and no territory to be transferred without the consent of its men and women; no people to be refused autonomy and a democratic parliament; governments to agree to settle all international disputes by arbitration or conciliation with social, moral and economic pressure on any country resorting to arms; democratic control of foreign policies; equal political rights for women.*

Further it called for: disarmament; the taking over of manufacture of munitions and control of arms traffic on the ground that private profits in these hinder the abolition of war; liberty of commerce, free seas and trade routes open on equal terms to all; foreign investment at the risk of the investor; secret treaties to be void, future treaties to require legislative assent.

Four years before the League of Nations was set up, these women were asking also for a permanent International Court of Justice for justiciable disputes, and for a permanent International Conference (with women members included) to deal with matters of international cooperation and to formulate and enforce principles of equity and good-will in order to make a gradual adjust-

ment, under enlightened public opinion, of the interests and rights of weaker countries, subject communities and primitive peoples.

Most advanced of all was the demand for a permanent council to investigate and conciliate differences due to economic competition, expanding commerce, increase of population and changes in political and social standards.

The Congress stressed the need of so educating children as to direct their thoughts and desires toward constructive peace.

The most immediate objective of the Congress was the calling of a Conference of the Neutral Nations to carry on continuous mediation in the hope of finding a basis for a negotiated and early peace—a plan for which Julia Grace Wales of Canada, had already aroused very considerable interest in the United States. On the proposal of Rosika Schwimmer envoys were sent from the Congress to fourteen governments, belligerent and neutral, to consult them on this plan and to present to them the Congress resolutions.

The experiences of Miss Addams, Dr. Jacobs, and the other envoys were most enlightening and they were sometimes amazed by frank expressions of anti-war feeling from statesmen in the countries at war. But in spite of real interest in the plan in some responsible quarters it was wrecked by President Wilson's refusing to take it up. He doubtless felt that he could act better alone when the time came, but when it came he was no longer neutral but completely involved in the power politics of the Allies. The Congress provided for the continuance of its work by forming an International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace with Jane Addams as chairman, Dr. Jacobs as first vice-chairman, and an office in Amsterdam carried on by volunteers, which kept in touch as far as practicable with a committee of five women in each of the countries represented.\*

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\* The proceedings of this war-time Congress are still very interesting reading and may be had from many libraries or from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 12 rue du Vieux Collège, Geneva, Switzerland. For first-hand accounts of the Congress and the envoys' interviews see *Women at the Hague*, by Jane Addams and Others, Macmillan, 1915.

#### THE WAR YEARS: 1915 - 1918

Within seventeen months, in spite of war-time difficulties, the new organization had National Committees working, as actively as conditions allowed, in Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain and Ireland, Hungary, Italy, British India, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States, with members also in Belgium, Finland, Poland, Czarist Russia, China, Japan, South Africa, and Uruguay.

In warring England, France, Germany and Italy the women kept urging their governments to state their peace terms and not to refuse to consider any proposals for a just and honourable peace. As early as December 1915, Hungarian women asked their parliament to offer peace negotiations and when there were rumours, in 1917, of a separate peace with Russia they held a big meeting to protest and urge instead a general peace. British women protested against the idea of ruining Germany. Conscription was separately and spontaneously opposed in England and America and prevented by popular opposition in Australia and Ireland.

German women protested against the invasion of Belgium and the deportations of Belgians, against the participation of military men in peace negotiations, and against the injustice of the Brest-Litovsk peace with Russia. In the revolutionary crisis in Bavaria some of the younger women went through the armed front lines and endeavored to prevent the threatened fighting. In Hamburg, Weimar and Jena, women made similar efforts.

The difficulties of the French women, great enough at best, were increased by false accounts of The Hague meeting.

In the neutral countries work was equally intensive. Neutral mediation was persistently urged and a proposal that the Scandinavian countries should take the initiative in this got as far as a vote in the Swedish parliament.

In belligerent and neutral countries alike the women worked to educate public opinion and helped to prepare the way for the League of Nations. Unfortunately in the United States the League later became the plaything of bitter post-war politics and America was prevented from becoming a member and making the contribution she should have made to the appeasement of Europe.

The Russian Revolution in 1917 awakened great hope and great fear. The timid and reactionary were in a state of panic that by a strange confusion of ideas, led them to associate peace efforts (which in Allied countries had previously been called "pro-German") with the later bogey of Bolshevism. This confusion has led to continuing difficulties for those who advocate peace and it is not always in good faith that they are so preposterously identified with Communists.

At The Hague it had been agreed to hold a second Congress at the same time and place as the official meeting to make peace. It had not then been foreseen that the world would have to wait four dreadful years for the Peace Conference nor that, when it met, no private peace gathering would be allowed in the same city. The Women's Congress met while the official Peace Conference was sitting, but in Switzerland, not Paris.

#### THE FIRST ZURICH CONGRESS: MAY 12 - 17, 1919

Those who came to Zurich from countries which had been spared the worst ravages of the war were aghast at the evidence of bodily suffering from famine and cold in the faces of their friends, and realized how little even this suggested of the desolation and disruption wrought by the war.

The sober emotions of the occasion, combining tragic pity, relief and hope, culminated when on the platform French and German friends once more clasped hands.

One hundred and thirty-seven delegates had come from twenty-one countries. In Germany the hunger blockade was still doing its deadly work, as it was to do for many months to come, and at Versailles the delegates of the chief defeated power were that week called to listen to the terms imposed on them.

The Zurich Congress was thus able to be the first international body to condemn this "peace". They did so after careful discussion in which the women from the defeated countries chose not to join, thus helping to build up a tradition against any advocacy of the special interests of a speaker's own country.

The Congress held that the terms violated the principles necessary for a just and lasting peace "such as the democracies had come to accept". It held that these terms, by guaranteeing the fruits of

the secret treaties, recognized the right of victors to the spoils, sanctioned secret diplomacy and denied the right to self-determination, creating throughout Europe animosities certain to lead to future wars; that the disarmament of one side alone was contrary to justice and continued the rule of force, and that the financial and economic proposals condemning a hundred million people in the heart of Europe to disease and despair, were bound to breed hatred and anarchy within each nation.

A resolution called upon the Allied and Associated Powers to amend their terms to harmonize with the principles first enunciated by President Wilson which had been accepted as the armistice basis and "upon the faithful carrying out of which their honour depends."

This resolution was telegraphed to the Powers in Paris and was followed up by an urgent appeal to raise the blockade. To this President Wilson, alone, responded, telegraphing "Your message appeals both to my heart and to my head, and I hope most sincerely that ways may be found, though the present outlook is extremely unpromising, because of infinite practical difficulties".

The Zurich Congress was also the first international body to issue a considered criticism of the Covenant of the League of Nations, a copy of which document, then not yet promulgated, had been given to Jane Addams in Paris on her way to Switzerland. As to the Covenant, delegates differed, some feeling that its defects outweighed its advantages, others that its acknowledged shortcomings were more than counterbalanced by its promise of good. They finally agreed on a statement warmly welcoming the Covenant in many respects and at the same time deploring that it was not in full accord with the fourteen points and that it contained certain provisions likely to stultify its growth and omitted others essential to world peace.

This statement as to the League of Nations specified the following desires, among others:

Membership open to all States. Democratic election of the executive power of the League and easier amendment of the Covenant.

No recourse to military pressure or food blockade to enforce decisions of the League.

Immediate reduction of armaments on the same terms for all member States and abolition of conscription. Total disarmament by land, sea and air. An International Commission on war profits.

Provision for revision of treaties. Self-determination in matters of nationality and territorial adjustments.

Full minority rights. Right of minorities and dependencies to present their desires as to self-government direct to the League of Nations.

Abrogation of the Monroe Doctrine and other international engagements, so far as inconsistent with the Covenant.

All backward races now under tutelage to be under guardianship of the League.

Free access to raw materials on the same terms for all members of the League. Freedom of communication and travel. Agreement to abolish censorship.

Full equality of women.

Amnesty for political prisoners.

It may be easy, after the lapse of nineteen years, to smile at some of these hopes but if the powerful had then been as disinterested and as eager for the general good — and indeed as foreseeing — as were these powerless women how different would be the world outlook today.

The Zurich Congress changed the name of the organization to *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*, adopted a simple Constitution and unanimously elected Jane Addams as International President. The constitution provided for National Sections and stipulated that a minority people claiming the status of a separate nationality was also entitled to form a National Section. An International Congress, meeting every two years, was to elect an Executive Committee of nine; to its meetings National Sections might each send two Consultative Members. The "bureau" of the society was transferred from Amsterdam to "the place where the League of Nations has its headquarters," and Emily Greene Balch (U. S. A.) was made International Secretary-Treasurer.\*

\* For a full account see Report of the International Congress of Women, Zürich, 1919.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF HEADQUARTERS IN GENEVA: MAY, 1919

After this very successful Congress the "W. I. L. P. F." grew and strengthened.

The proposed new international office in Geneva was organized in June 1919 by the new Secretary with the invaluable cooperation of Marguerite Gobat and two very competent office secretaries. One of the first labors was preparation of the Report of the Zurich Congress in three languages.

Before long a picturesque old house was leased. This Maison Internationale, perched above a former city wall, with its garden and linden tree and hospitable atmosphere, still provides not only the necessary offices but a peace centre — including a "hostel" for members and others, and a big room, book-lined, for receptions, conferences and other peace meetings.

This has made it easy for leading members of the League to stay in Geneva, work with the Secretary, and confer and cooperate with other internationalists in Geneva. By delegations, petitions and informal contacts, fruitful relations are established with League of Nations circles and with other official and unofficial personages.

One of the early undertakings at Geneva was a Conference on "The New Education", which drew from eighteen countries and was followed up by its Norwegian President, Dr. Arnesen, with months of travel to rouse interest in international education against war, such as has since been so widely developed.

Still earlier post-war travels of members were two visits to Germany, still not yet easily accessible after the war isolation. Catherine Marshall was horrified at the reparations situation that she found and returned to urge on her government the necessity of definitely fixing the amount claimed. Miss Addams, and those with whom she went, concerned themselves specially with the famine and she returned to America to throw herself into the work for relief. This had for her a profound and, in a sense, mystical

significance far beyond the immediate alleviation of suffering. She not only conceived the insuring of the food of the household as the peculiar service of women through the ages, but she felt that if the League of Nations had some such responsibility toward the household of the world it would gain a reality and a place in people's affections that merely political functions could not give it.\*

Other Sections too did relief work, through the international "Save the Children Fund," the "Fight the Famine Committee" and otherwise, along with their direct work for peace. They too regarded this as a way of creating international good-feeling especially where children from war-rent countries were guests in their own homes. In the same spirit members of various Sections traveled and worked indefatigably for the repatriation of the hundreds of thousands of war prisoners stranded in Siberia, Turkestan and elsewhere, a task finally taken up and completed by Nansen.

#### EARLY POST-WAR YEARS, 1919-1921: NATIONAL SECTIONS

There were now eighteen National Sections, besides preliminary groups in South-Eastern Europe gathered by members visiting that disturbed and unhappy region, and the persistent, intelligent work done by these Sections and groups, either on their own particular problems or on those of general scope, were no less important than that initiated at Geneva. It is, however, impossible to give any adequate account of it all. Only a few pieces of work undertaken in countries which had been in the war and of special international interest will be instanced.

Gabrielle Duchêne of the French Section visited Germany, Austria and Czecho-Slovakia speaking everywhere, and Freda Perlen of Stuttgart joined her in France where, speaking together from the same platform, they had most friendly audiences.

The German Section, with forty-two local branches, did all in its power to develop the democratic and pacific character of the new Republic and to prevent or lessen militarism and violence,

\* See her *Peace and Bread in Time of War* (Macmillan, 1922), and *The Second Twenty Years at Hull House* (Macmillan, 1930) where she says (p. 144) "I firmly believed that through an effort to feed hungry people, a new and powerful force might be unloosed in the world."



notably in the Kapp "putsch" of 1920. They tried to get the government to set up a Commission to investigate abuses in occupied territory committed on order of German military authorities during the war, and also one to investigate the question of war guilt with a view to enlightening Germans, so long shut off from knowledge of facts by war censorship.

The British organized educational meetings on such aspects of foreign policy as British imperialism, the blockade of Russia, the rights of India and of Ireland, German reparations, disarmament, etc. They published valuable pamphlets and worked to reform the teaching of history. In 1920 they held the first of the long series of W. I. L. P. F. International Summer Schools at Jordans, in Buckinghamshire.

The Irish Section was concerned both with the national struggle for independence, then embittered by outrages under the "black and tan" regime, and the search for non-violent methods. The Irish question was also a subject of deep concern to other Sections. In the United States, Jane Addams headed a volunteer commission which did very useful work by inquiring into and making known the whole Irish situation. The British Section sent members to Ireland to make investigations on the spot and on their return made effective protest against what was being done in the name of England, and urged the Irish claim for self-determination, in the shaping of which English members played a part.

The Polish Section in all the exuberent happiness over newly regained independence took up the Lithuanian and Ruthenian problems, the right of self-determination of peoples, and the defense of national minorities, and pleaded (in vain) for the right of women to take part in the Vilna plebiscite.

#### VIENNA CONGRESS: JULY 10 - 17, 1921

In 1921 one of the great centres of post-war dislocation was in the "Succession States," which had been formed out of the old empire of Austria-Hungary, and in the Balkans. In view of this it was decided to hold the next Congress in Vienna. Austria was in the direst need and it was not until the next year that the proposed loan by the League of Nations was made. Among other causes of delay was the priority of the United States claim in the

matter of Austria's debts, and the American Section left no stone unturned in efforts to get their government to waive this priority, as it finally consented to do.

How bitter were the prejudices and suspicions left by the war was learned by the Secretary in her preliminary journeyings to arouse interest in the Congress. In one instance a promising gathering was broken up when one of the ladies present declared that she would rather see an only child die than take her to a doctor in Vienna. No one present was prepared to seem to take a less "patriotic" view.

Nevertheless, under the presidency of Jane Addams women from thirty countries came together in a fruitful meeting and new Sections were formed in Greece, Poland, and the Ukraine.\*

The President of the Austrian Section spoke of the gratitude of the Austrians, their freedom from bitterness, their courage and gaiety and their power of finding sustainment, in the midst of suffering, through music and art.

A group of American delegates had come expressly to induce the W. I. L. P. F. to require of its members a pledge of personal war refusal. After full debate it was decided not to do this. This decision, which was a matter of conscience for Quakers and others who disapproved on principle of pledges as to future conduct, cost the adherence of a body of devoted pacifist women in the United States.

One of the most interesting resolutions was that on "Cooperation Toward Ending Social Injustice" which reads: "Since the W. I. L. P. F. aims at the peaceful solution of conflicts between social classes as between nations" it is the duty of its National Sections and of its individual members "to initiate and support laws looking to the gradual abolition of property privileges (for instance by means of taxation, death duties, and land reform laws) and to the development of economic independence and individual freedom, and to work to awaken and strengthen among the members of the possessing classes the earnest will to transform the economic system in the direction of social justice."

\* See Report of the Third International Congress of Women, Vienna 1921.

This is quoted at length because it has been misrepresented as a vote against private property instead of one against privilege based on property and because it shows the concern over social wrongs, and for the duties of those who profit from the present system, which has always marked the W. I. L. P. F.

A very successful Summer School in Salzburg after the Congress dealt with Education for Internationalism.

DEVELOPMENTS, 1921-1924: CONFERENCE ON "A NEW PEACE",  
AT THE HAGUE, 1922

In the autumn of 1922 Vilma Gluecklich of Hungary was appointed International Secretary, Miss Balch having resigned on grounds of health.

As the reparations situation went from bad to worse there was so great a sense of impending European collapse that a special Emergency Conference was held in December at The Hague to consider "A New Peace" and to urge revision of the peace treaties.\* Jane Addams came from America to preside over this gathering which, called upon the initiative of the W. I. L. P. F., brought together representatives of various great organizations which together were estimated to be speaking for twenty million men and women members, in twenty different countries. The programme voted included: A Congress to deal with world economics, reference of reparations to an international court, and withdrawal of the armies of occupation still in Germany. It is to be noted that the French Section was consistent throughout in working for such withdrawal and in particular against the occupation of the Ruhr.

The points voted by the Conference were personally presented to several governments by messengers headed by Jane Addams, then about to start on a journey around the world. Her visits to India, China and Japan were the occasion of peace demonstrations and honours especially in Tokio. The Japanese group has since done distinguished service notably in securing the adoption, in schools throughout the country, of a text book celebrating world benefactors instead of military and feudal heroes as before.

\* See A New Peace; Report of the International Conference of Women at The Hague, 1922.

In 1922 the Geneva office was asked to organize a Summer School in Italy at Varese. A sudden invasion of the town by Fascist bands interrupted the preparations at the last moment. The school was suddenly transferred to Lugano in Switzerland, and an extremely interesting meeting, attended by Romain Rolland and Bertrand Russell among others, was carried through. That same season there were also Summer Schools in Czecho-Slovakia, England and Germany.

In 1923 various pieces of "peace mission" work were undertaken, notably by Danes and Germans in the part of Schleswig transferred to Denmark after the war. After this the teaching of Danish in the schools of the German-speaking districts was made non-compulsory. As a result the number of children learning Danish increased!\*

WASHINGTON CONGRESS, MAY 1 - 7, 1924

The year 1924 was marked for the W. I. L. P. F. by its Congress in Washington. Delegates numbered 85 — 49 from Europe, 9 from Canada, 4 from Japan and 1 from Australia — with visitors from China, Bolivia, Guatamala, India, Liberia, Mexico, the Philippines and Turkey. At its close a number were sent on a speaking tour which carried them, on a train called the "Pax Special", as far west as St. Louis, and concluded with a successful Summer School in Chicago on the subject of Human Factors in Internationalism. This gave a prized opportunity to know Jane Addams in her natural framework at Hull House.

In spite of growing appreciation in a considerable part of the press, increasing as the Congress went on, there was also marked hostility and opposition. Internationalism was then suspect, as such, and military gentlemen, especially, were offended by statements made in the Congress in regard to chemical warfare. It was painful to the American group not to be able wholly to protect their guests from disagreeable incidents which revealed to them the bitterness and gross misrepresentation from which Jane Addams and others in America had suffered so much during the war and which were still active.

The general subject of the Congress, "A New International Order," was dealt with, both in its ideal and in its practical aspects,

\* For account of similar efforts in other border districts see p. 24.

in reports in pamphlet form ("cahiers") and in speeches and discussions.\* Pan-American problems were given a whole day. Demands were formulated for: an international conference on the limitation of armaments, opposition to chemical warfare, compulsory jurisdiction of the World Court, enlargement of the League of Nations (which at this time was, in general, not open to the defeated nations), opposition to the Draft Treaties of Mutual Assistance, protection of minorities and outlawry of war. On this last subject Senator Borah made an important speech to the Congress.

As new National Sections there were admitted: Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, Haiti, and Japan.

#### THE STATE OF EUROPE, 1924 - 26

At this time it seemed as though the confusion which had beset the world since the war was clearing and that the leading statesmen — Briand, MacDonald, and Stresemann — were guiding Europe toward appeasement. The "Locarno Spirit" was a phrase to conjure with. For the W. I. L. P. F. it was a time of great and hopeful activity both at headquarters and, more than can be even suggested here, in the different countries.

In 1925, Vilma Gluecklich unhappily found herself obliged to resign as International Secretary. As such she had had actively kept up the traditions of Headquarters' activity, with its constant flow of correspondence all over the world and its political efforts. She had been concerned with questions such as reparations and the Italo-Greek conflict (Corfu) and with the need of studying psychological problems, including the effect of militarism on children. In 1927 she died, much mourned.

The third International Secretary, Madeleine Doty, one of the American delegates to the Hague Congress in 1915, was also known for her book on famine conditions in war-time Germany which she had studied on the spot at a time when accounts of such conditions generally met with cynical disbelief in Allied countries. She developed *Pax International* as the regular organ of the W. I. L.

\* See Report of the Fourth Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Washington, 1924. Also pamphlets on A New International Order.

P. F. and did much to make the Maison Internationale an active peace centre especially at the times when many are drawn to Geneva for the meetings of the League Assembly. That of 1924 in especial was a red-letter occasion for Mrs. Swanwick, Chairman of the British Section, was sent as a member of the delegation by Ramsay MacDonald. In 1929 she was again at Geneva as a League of Nations delegate from Great Britain.

One of the prime interests of the W. I. L. P. F. from the beginning has been its concern for equal opportunity for women which it holds to be inextricably bound up with the cause of peace. In 1919 the Zurich Congress had rejoiced in the recent national acceptance of the principle of woman suffrage in Ireland, Denmark, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Poland and some of the states of the U. S. A. Soviet Russia ought also to have been named. In Geneva the W. I. L. P. F. has done much work in this field, both separately and through international committees; notably in regard to nationality rights, as for instance, the right of a woman married to an alien to retain her nationality. It has similarly exerted itself to get the League of Nations to live up to the promise in Article VII of the Covenant that "All positions under or in connection with the League, including the Secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women."

The account of peace efforts must be so largely a story of hopes deferred that it is cheering to have successes to note. One of these was the defeat of the Boncour bill for mobilizing women in war-time, through the placarding of Paris against it by the French W. I. L. P. F. Among these successes, too, may be counted, in America, the evacuation of U. S. troops from Nicaragua and Haiti, the decision to liberate the Philippines, and the peaceful settlement of relations between the United States and Mexico, although at one time it had looked as though war were just about to break out. The U. S. Section, like others, worked actively and continuously for abandonment of political imperialism all along the line and the investigation and report of the unofficial commission which it had been instrumental in sending to Haiti (the proposal came from the International Executive Committee) and the unremitting pressure of its Secretary, Dorothy Detzer, on the State Department, played their part in the outcome.

The British and French Sections have also been persistent and constructive critics of the imperialism of their own countries whether in India or Africa or Indo-China. The French have opposed, for instance, actions of their Government in Syria, in Tunis and in Morocco during the Riffian War.

In the spring and early summer of 1926 the British Section, with the cooperation of twenty other women's associations, organized a huge Peace Pilgrimage on behalf of agreements to submit every issue to arbitration. From the remotest parts of England, Scotland, and Wales women marched to London for an enormous mass meeting in Hyde Park.

A dramatic act in the interest of rapprochement with France that occurred at this time was the presentation by German women of trees for planting in the devastated area. The trees were accepted by the Mayor of Arras for a new children's playground and the French press, including the *Temps*, spoke of this symbolic gift, for which even most precious personal mementos had been sacrificed. The German Section also helped the exchange of letters, and especially of visits, between German and French children.

#### DUBLIN CONGRESS, JULY 8 - 15, 1926, AND THE NEXT THREE YEARS

The Fifth Congress, held in Dublin at the request of the Irish Section, met once more under the presidency of Jane Addams and discussed "Next Steps toward World Peace." \* Although Italians and Ukrainians from Poland could not get passports, twenty nations were represented.

The Statement of Aims was reworded as follows: "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 cooperation, 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."

\* See Report of the Fifth Congress of the W. I. L. P. F., Dublin, 1926.

At the meeting of the International Executive in Liege, 1927, it was decided on the proposal of the Irish Section to send members to Indo-China and China proper to establish contacts, confer on pressing problems and develop interest in the W. I. L. P. F. Edith Pye (England) and Camille Drevet (France) visited the French colonies, where they first met the horror of opium conditions. They then went on to China, where they were joined by Mrs. Grover Clark, an American living in Peking, and to Japan. This visit did not result in W. I. L. P. F. organization in China, but was followed by efforts in Europe, made at the request of Chinese women, to stop the inflow of arms feeding the Civil War then going on and to get effective international action on opium, so tragic in its political as well as in its humanitarian aspects. The two Europeans, returning *via* the Pacific, addressed a series of meetings on their way across the continent of North America.\*

An "Interim Congress" of the W. I. L. P. F. met in Honolulu in 1928, with Jane Addams presiding. Among members present was Eleanor Moore of the Australian Section of the W. I. L. P. F. Like the China "mission" this meeting strengthened ties across the Pacific.

A generous and timely legacy made it possible to undertake some most useful conferences in 1929. One in January in Frankfurt-on-Main dealt with Modern Methods of Warfare,† and was a landmark in getting the public to understand what is being prepared in the way of scientific mass-slaughter and in showing it the futility of efforts to protect a whole population against air-attack. The conclusion was obvious; that the only way out is disarmament. A proposal was brought forward — independently from different countries — for a monster Polyglot Petition, every country to collect signatures and press disarmament upon its government. This was carried through on a large scale and helped prepare the public to do all in its power for the success of the League of Nations

\* See Report of the W. I. L. P. F. Delegation to China, edited in Geneva, 1928.

† See Die modernen Kriegsmethoden und der Schutz der Zivilbevölkerung. Dokumente der Internationalen Konferenz in Frankfurt a. M. Januar 1929.

Disarmament Conference which met in Geneva three years later, raising such high hopes only to disappoint them.

When a W. I. L. P. F. delegation appeared before the 1929 Conference on Naval Disarmament in London their documentation included 180,000 signatures separately gathered by Japanese women.

Another W. I. L. P. F. conference, a Study Conference on East European Problems, met in Vienna the same year. Fifteen countries were represented. Women from Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the far northeast corner of Europe, 60 hours' journey from Vienna, and women from Roumania came together with members from our Sections in Poland, the Polish Ukraine and Bulgaria; all these countries being on the borders of Russia. Representatives also came from the neighboring countries of Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Germany, and Austria, and from England, France, and Sweden. This conference continued the work which had been begun in preparation for the Vienna Congress and never dropped. Women who were for the first time at an international meeting were surprised to find that such embittered questions as problems of frontiers and minorities could be discussed in such good-will and friendliness.

Another special Conference was held by the British Section, dealing with Minorities.

In connection with the Briand-Kellogg Pact the year 1929 saw wide-spread efforts to get it ratified by every country and to use it as a means of educating public opinion for peaceful settlements in place of war.

Interesting pieces of work on national problems included New Zealand's campaign against a compulsory military training law under which 40,000 boys refused the training and some suffered brief imprisonments; German efforts to prevent the carrying of weapons by private persons, and, in the United States, the cutting down of a naval building programme from 71 to 15 cruisers.

Four Summer Schools, three at places on the Lake of Geneva and one near Birmingham, England, fell in this period (1926-1929). They discussed such diverse issues as relations between the white and coloured races and the characteristics of Fascism, Socialism, and Communism.

In the summer of 1927 Mary Sheepshanks put her "keen and highly-trained intelligence" at the service of the W. I. L. P. F. as International Secretary, succeeding Madeleine Doty.

#### PRAGUE CONGRESS, AUGUST 24-28, 1929; THE YEARS 1929-1932

This Sixth Congress was the last that Jane Addams was able to attend. She resigned as active President, but as Honorary International President she continued as long as she lived to make her priceless contribution of political and moral support, counsel, and influence.

This well-organized and well-attended meeting in Czecho-Slovakia centred on the question of "How to make the Kellogg-Briand Pact a Reality." It admitted a new Section in Tunis. It sent members to Vienna, where an internal clash was imminent, to press for reconciliation and these had extremely interesting talks with statesmen and business and party leaders, from President Miklas down. It sent a Swedish member to Palestine to report on the situation there, following earlier W. I. L. P. F. visitors. It again sent Camille Drevet to the Balkans, so long familiar to her.\*

A series of conferences on Opium, organized in London,† in Germany,§ and in Geneva,|| helped to focus opinion on the widely ramifying drug evil and its serious international implications, now (1938) so obvious and so stressed by Chinese friends a decade earlier.

Still another conference in Geneva in 1930, called attention to the problem of the Stateless who owing to changes in frontiers and laws found themselves in large numbers without political standing or protection, unable to get a passport (without which it is impossible to move from one country to another), in some places excluded from employment, from hospitals, from relief (however destitute), even from the right to send their children to school.

\* See Report of the Fourth Congress of the W. I. L. P. F., Prague, 1929.

† See Opium and Dangerous Drugs; Report of a Conference held at the London School of Economics, November, 1929.

§ See Internationaler Kampf gegen Opium und Rauschgifte. I. Konferenz in Deutschland, November, 1929, Berlin.

|| See Opium and Noxious Drugs; International Conference, Geneva, April, 1930.

A report of this conference was issued by the Geneva Office.\* Alas, since then tragic hosts of exiles, refugees and emigres have added their quotas of human wastage and misery.

A quite different type of conference, the International Conference on the World Economic Crisis, was organized in Paris in April, 1931. The grave financial situation in that early phase of the depression was illuminated by distinguished experts who discussed rationalization (or scientific management), the agrarian crisis, free trade and social and monetary policies.

The efforts of the W. I. L. P. F. and others to secure the Nobel Peace Prize for Jane Addams were successful in 1931 when the award was divided between her and Nicholas Murray Butler.

The chief international events of these years were the Manchurian conquest and the Disarmament Conference which after years of dilatory preparation was convened February 2, 1932. On the developments in the Far East public opinion could have little effect but the W. I. L. P. F. nevertheless did what it could to spread its point of view. Disarmament, however, was in the hands of representatives of countries most of them more or less democratic, who were capable of being influenced by proof of strong and persistent public feeling, and every effort was made to bring this feeling to bear.

The Prague Congress was followed by Summer Schools in Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia. Others were held somewhat later in Alsace, Silesia, Bulgaria,† and in Mexico City. Camille Drevet visited Mexico, in connection with the latter, and also Cuba, stimulating interest in the peace movement.

The Summer School held on the frontier of Silesia, where national differences were so bitter, was part of a whole series of efforts of German members to get into friendly relations with Polish members and to cooperate with them, by means of mixed committees, to alleviate grievances of national minorities on both sides of the boundary.

This meeting may be taken as a type of the so-called "Peace Mission" efforts which have been a feature of W. I. L. P. F. work throughout. These include visits to the Baltic countries—Finland,

\* See *The Problems of Statelessness*, Geneva, September, 1930.

† See *L'Ecole d'Été a Sofia en 1930*.

Lithuania, etc.—by Swedish members and others, Mary Sheepshanks' two visits to the Ukraine in 1931 and 1934, and very interesting joint work by Danish and German members on the Schleswig border already referred to. A Wiesbaden member did much to create friendly personal contacts between Germans and French people in the Rhineland during the occupation and perhaps a visit to the Saar at the time of the Plebiscite should be mentioned under this head. The efforts in Southeastern Europe have been many and various and include, besides the East European Conference of 1929, numerous special visits of which those by Gertrud Baer are the latest to date, and among the most fruitful. Visits to Palestine and Egypt might also be noted.

GRENOBLE CONGRESS, MAY 15-19, 1932; 1932-1934,  
"WORLD DISARMAMENT OR WORLD DISASTER"

The Seventh Congress came at a time when its subject—"World Disarmament or World Disaster"—was in everyone's mind and it was followed by increased efforts to secure a measure at least of real disarmament. Never had there been such widely organized cooperative action among peace forces. But in spite of monster petitions (one with twelve million signatures, some six million of them, it was estimated, secured by the W. I. L. P. F.) of demonstrations, deputations, books, speeches, newspaper articles, in spite of the devotion of the Chairman, Arthur Henderson, and every evidence of public concern, the Conference finally adjourned in 1937 "without date" and without result, save growing chaos.

The "slogan" of the Grenoble Congress was, alas, prophetic and the tide of disaster mounted.

It may have been putting the cart before the horse to try to get disarmament before the outstanding causes of dissension and conflict had been dealt with, but there were positive reasons for the failure in the pressure of financial interests, notably of munition makers and dealers, and in the rivalries of power politics in which none of the Great Powers was blameless. But the gravest fact was the spread of Fascism and Hitlerism with all that these signify. The rise of Mussolini had early put an end to peace work in Italy, where the W. I. L. P. F. had had a few early and devoted members, and left it to groups of Italians living outside their country to represent the Italian contribution. In Soviet Russia it has never

been possible to get any foothold. Nor would a Russian have been allowed to attend a Congress. In Germany W. I. L. P. F. members realizing as no outsiders could do the growing menace of Hitlerism, redoubled their efforts as long as any activity was possible and long after it had become dangerous.

In 1933 the establishment of the totalitarian Reich made it finally impossible to continue peace work there and among those who either could not or would not live under Hitlerism were many of the staunchest and ablest of the W. I. L. P. F. members. In happier countries the need of work for peace and freedom was the more keenly felt.

This took many forms. A conference arranged by the Dutch Section in 1934 had the interesting result that psychologists, physicians and other scientific men, in 35 countries, united to urge that science should not be put at the service of war, but should mean a pooling of intelligence for its prevention. In 1935 psychologists sent out an open letter to this effect. A highly important movement to organize science to throw its weight against the forces that are barbarizing the world seems now (1938) to be developing in a way that may mean more than political changes that are more conspicuous.

One of the most ambitious of peace undertakings was the British "Peace Ballot" of 1934 and 1935, for which over a million responses were gathered by an army of volunteers to which the W. I. L. P. F. contributed an active contingent. This huge vote in favor of League of Nations principles and internationalism seems to have had for a time a definite influence on English policies.

#### SECOND ZURICH CONGRESS SEPTEMBER 3-8, 1934, SUBSEQUENT ACTIVITIES

World conditions were so confused and alarming and, also, there was such need of clarifying and unifying W. I. L. P. F. policies that it was decided to hold a congress a year earlier than planned and for a second time to come together in Zurich.

This was a very important meeting,\* marked by discussion of basic problems—especially of the relation of work for peace to work for economic change and of the right attitude to violence

\* No printed Report of this Congress was issued.

involved in effecting such change. The conclusion was the restatement of the object of the organization in the following terms:

The W. I. L. P. F. aims at bringing together women of different political and philosophical tendencies united in their determination to study, make known, and abolish the political, social, economic and psychological causes of war, and to work for a constructive peace.

The primary objects of the W. I. L. P. F. remain: total and universal disarmament, the abolition of violent means of coercion for the settlement of all conflicts, the substitution in every case of some form of peaceful settlement, and the development of a world organization for the political, social and economic cooperation of peoples.

Conscious that these aims cannot be attained and that a real and lasting peace and true freedom cannot exist under the present system of exploitation, privilege and profit they consider that their duty is to facilitate and hasten by non-violent methods the social transformation which would permit the inauguration of a new system under which would be realized social, economic and political equality for all without distinction of sex, race or opinion.

They see as the goal an economic order on a world-wide basis and under world regulation founded on the needs of the community and not on profit.

This is still the official statement. At this Congress a Section in Yugoslavia was admitted.

A difference of opinion which had long been more or less felt, was on the question of the constitution of the W. I. L. P. F., as to how far it should be centralized and work on plans internationally agreed on, and how far the National Sections should work according to their own ideas. All agreed that they should, in any case, work within the framework of the principles laid down at Congresses and in the well-understood spirit of the W. I. L. P. F. As a matter of fact the work of the league continued as before, showing an impressive vitality and determination to stick to work in common.

On the financial side the situation of the W. I. L. P. F. was affected by the world depression, and the restrictions imposed by various governments on the sending of money abroad and by loss of territory through dictatorships. Associate memberships of one

pound sterling, or five dollars, a year (called in the United States "International Memberships") are the financial lifeblood of Headquarters activities and for a time it became harder to increase or even maintain their number, but this is happily now rising again. Rental is covered from the income given by Jane Addams from her Nobel Peace Prize. Other invested money, mainly from legacies, also helps. Nevertheless in 1934 the staff had to be reduced and the valuable services of Camille Drevet, who had been International Secretary since the resignation of Mary Sheepshanks in December 1930, dispensed with. In April 1934, Emily G. Balch came over again to Geneva and worked there as Honorary International Secretary till October, 1935. Through the devoted labours of Gertrud Baer, the Headquarters office was then reorganized, with Lotti Birch as Administrative Secretary and Louisa Jaques, who has been with the W. I. L. P. F. since 1922, as Financial Secretary. The demands on the Geneva office were lightened by having *Pax International* brought out in London under the generous and able editorship of Karleen Baker. But the central factor in carrying on the international work effectively is to be found in the responsible and untiring labours of the three International Chairmen: Clara Ragaz, Gertrud Baer, and Kathleen E. Innes (who followed Cor Ramondt-Hirschmann in 1937).

Only a few items of the international work of these years can be noted. The plan of a "People's Mandate to Governments to End War" was adopted by the International Executive Committee in London in 1935 and much energetic work put into it; it was later carried on by other bodies. It found signers and adherents all over the world to an estimated total of fourteen millions, counting in the membership of adhering organizations. There was also a growth of cooperation with other international movements in the peace field including the International Peace Campaign, better known in Europe as the R. U. P.

Active work was also put into the international campaign, finally successful, to secure the 1936 award of the Nobel Peace Prize to that heroic pacifist, Karl von Ossietzky.

Only too familiar is the statement of the diplomats "since we last met, the international situation has deteriorated." The period since the 1934 Congress has seen the end of the Disarmament Conference already spoken of, the conquest of Ethiopia with the

breakdown of the half-hearted attempt to apply sanctions, the civil war in Spain with the hypocrisy of non-intervention, the Japanese invasion of China with the futile Nine-Power Conference of February 1938 in Brussels, systematic persecution of the Jewish race, which in its cold-blooded cruelty and unreason seems as incredible as a night-mare and, most lately, the absorption of Austria by Germany and the threat to Czecho-Slovakia.

In Europe trust in the League of Nations and in international organization in general, suffered an inevitable set-back. In America there was danger that a spirit of national isolation might be fostered by efforts to avoid being drawn into war. In both Europe and America there was reason to fear a waning of that international spirit which alone can make a peaceful world practicable.

All the more in all countries where "the new unfreedom" did not prevent, W. I. L. P. F. members are continuing their efforts which they know to be more than ever needed. These are summarized in the accounts of their work given by National Sections to the Congress of 1937, occupying forty pages of the very interesting report of that meeting. The work to create intelligent and active peace opinion was recognized to be, as always, fundamental. There has been active opposition to increase of armaments, militarism in education, and the cruel farce of gas-masks and shelters as a protection against air-raids. Sober study was given to the question of how to make it possible for the League of Nations to fulfill its true functions, to the problem of how aviation can be made to serve peace and not war, of colonialism and imperialism, of refugees and the right of asylum, and of minorities. Mixed committees have been set up by our members to do everything possible to allay local international friction between Czechs and Hungarians and between Hungarians and Yugo-Slavs. Polish members have interested themselves in the national minorities in their own country and New Zealand members in the treatment of Samoa over which their country holds a mandate.

The United States Section has seen its efforts to secure a government investigation of munitions industries result in the appointment of the famous Nye Commission. The findings of this Commission, emphasizing the inherent dangers of traffic in munitions, had world-wide repercussions. In the United States a large



body of public opinion became convinced that the best guarantee against war was neutrality in the sense of refusing support to any and all belligerents. The United States Section (although not unanimously) endorsed this policy. This endorsement was given not in a spirit of isolation, and was accompanied by work for active international cooperation, economic and political.

A region where the W. I. L. P. F. would have been glad to do more work is Latin America. Although as early as 1920 a member of the U. S. Section had visited Mexico City on its behalf and the Section had followed this up with a series of efforts in Cuba, in Haiti, and in South America as well as in Mexico, it was a step forward when the Zurich Congress of 1934 gave Heloise Brainerd a mandate to work in the name of the W. I. L. P. F. as a whole in this field in which she had already done excellent work as a representative of the U. S. Section alone. The area in question is, however, a world in itself and as complicated as Europe, including as it does the entire continent of South America, the five countries of Central America, the island world of the Caribbean and, in North America, the great revolutionary nation of Mexico. These are not only vast, but too often beset by national and class antagonisms, by military tyrannies and by tensions between Indian and European races. The famous statue, The Christ of the Andes, is a symbol of the peace movements of South America, too little known outside.

NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, LUHACOVICE IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA JULY 27-31, 1937; AND SINCE \*

This latest Congress brought together 149 delegates and alternates from seventeen countries, with visitors from Spain and India and welcomed a new National Section in Egypt. It was held in the midst of great political tension in Europe as well as in Asia, felt especially when the burning problems of Spain, China and the policy of Neutrality were discussed. The problem of Neutrality was considered one of the most important of the day in its international as well as its national aspects. The passionate determination, now so widespread, to prevent a new world war by every possible means often found vibrating expression in the discussions.

The United States Section believed that, for America, a rigid embargo on war material to all parties was the best way of barring the contagion of war, and was indeed a mechanism of solidarity

\* See Report of the Ninth Congress of the W.I.L.P.F., Luhacovice, July, 1937.

for peace. They did not suggest that the European Sections should alter their stand on collective security.

The European Sections, on the other hand, were afraid that such a policy of reserve might, at a time of sudden military outbreak of Fascist governments into democratic states, greatly endanger the democracies of the world and their peoples. With the interdependence of world economics the existence of democratic-minded peoples is dependent on moral, economic, financial and political loyalty to one another and mutual support. As always since the foundation of the W. I. L. P. F., so also in Luhacovice, there was complete unity in the conviction that the W. I. L. P. F. would never support any military commitment and would make every possible effort to prevent the settlement of international conflicts through bloodshed and brute force.

The Congress elected Emily Greene Balch as Honorary International President, Lida Gustava Heymann continuing to serve as Honorary Vice-President. The three Joint Chairmen who together exercise the presidential functions are Clara Ragaz, Gertrud Baer and Kathleen E. Innes. The new Executive Committee was enabled by the recently created International Jane Addams Peace Fund to appropriate several thousand francs for Press work. The award of 2000 Norwegian Kronen from the Nobel Committee was much appreciated as an honour and a practical help.

A special feature of the Congress was the stress laid on the rapprochement of certain Sections in Eastern Europe which, up to now, had not found their way to practical cooperation. Memoranda on common work of the Yugoslavian, Bulgarian, Hungarian and Czecho-Slovakian Sections gave evidence of progress in the efforts for a better understanding in that part of the world.

The published REPORT, already referred to, is most readable and stimulating. It contains papers on different aspects of the problem of a New International Order, reports of the many-sided activities undertaken from the Geneva Headquarters, lists of Sections (with addresses), and names of Committees, Referents and representatives on international federated bodies, thus constituting quite a handbook of the W. I. L. P. F. It can be had from the Geneva Office for three Swiss francs.

## CONCLUSION

In this condensed survey only a small part of the material could be included \* but it is to be hoped that nevertheless the essential spirit and purposes of this body of peace-seeking women emerge clearly. In 1915 they met under all the strain of the war, unified by the desire to end the slaughter and prevent its recurrence. This unity doubtless veiled differences of opinion in other fields but if in quieter times these have sometimes made themselves felt it is significant that they have never been able to prevail against the wish to understand one another and to continue to work together, so that the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has never known a schism, nor the withdrawal of a group except where the heavy hand of political dictatorship has put an end to all possibility of work.

Some, especially among older members, like to name this spirit of the W. I. L. P. F. "the spirit of Jane Addams." Certainly no one can measure what she has meant since the beginning and still means. Her death in May, 1935, was a grievous loss—to individuals personally, to the W. I. L. P. F. as a body, and to the many other activities, both at home and abroad, in which she took an important and inspiring part and notably to her own Hull House. It was a loss, but it has also meant that her influence is felt in a new sense as an imperishable heritage. Lack of space has prevented mention of other leading spirits — some now dead, some alive and active — to whom the W. I. L. P. F. owes its quality. Personalities of very real significance are so many that while each omission is preposterous the inclusion of all is impossible.

As one relives in this meagre chronicle the years that have passed since 1915 one is impressed by the succession of terrible political and economic situations lived through—certainly not without great suffering and loss, but without experiencing the final catastrophe of a world war which has so often seemed about to overwhelm mankind.

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\* For further information consult reports of International Congresses and the various organs or bulletins of the British, French, Dutch, Scandinavian, American, and other National Sections.

See also Voelker Versoehnende Arbeit, published by the German Section, a History of the W. I. L. for the Years 1915-1929, published by the British Section, and an Outline History published in successive editions by the U. S. Section.

So long as this is avoided we may hope and expect that we are not merely enjoying a temporary respite but that growing good sense and good feeling are on the way to prevent its ever recurring.

It is shallow to be so impressed by the blatant victories of violence and unreason as to fail to recognize the more permanent and more significant forces which are constantly working in the contrary direction.

If the goal toward which the women at The Hague set out in 1915 in the midst of the horrors of war may now, twenty-three years later, look more distant than it looked then, this is because we now know better how immense is the task we are undertaking. But now we have a ground for confidence that we had not then, in the immeasurable increase of the conviction that war must be utterly repudiated. This wide-spread determination to put an end to war is a new thing in history.

This determination, as we well know, cannot be aroused by a mere choice between expediencies, nor made effective by political machinery alone. It demands active devotion to the vision of a world of peace, justice and friendliness, in which life not death is honoured, humanity not wealth is valued, love not hate prevails.

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