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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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Jane Addams, Honorary President

SECTION NEWS

Miss W. M. Hudson, who has been travelling in Canada, was able to attend meetings of the *Canadian Section* in Winnipeg and Vancouver and report to them on the Grenoble Congress.

The *Czecho-Slovak Section*, together with the Czech Peace Committee, drew up a Memorandum on an International Force which was sent to Dr. Benes and the Government and also to the newspapers. A public meeting on this subject will be held in January.

A meeting was held on November 11th in Prague with an excellent speech by Dr. Schustlerova against war. The Bratislava Group held a meeting on December 8th in the National Theatre.

The Section held an exhibition of books and antimilitaristic toys for children on December 17th to 24th.

The Section hopes to publish, in collaboration with teachers' organisations, a pamphlet on peace problems for teachers.

It is doing special work in Carpathian Ruthenia, getting addresses of schools there which will be given to Prague schools, so that each Prague school may be in touch with one school in Carpathian

Ruthenia, and send old clothes and books. The Section is also hoping to take up the sale of wooden toys and weaving from that part of Czechoslovakia and help to create work for the population.

The *Hungarian Section* reports that there is now a third woman member of Parliament in Hungary, Mrs. Lilla Melzer of the United Party (Government Party).

The Section's work in the last year has had to do mainly with extension of woman suffrage and the secret ballot, abolition of the death penalty and of martial law (the latter was the one successful campaign of the Section), work for equal nationality rights for women and for disarmament and peace. The Section has held many meetings with foreign and Hungarian speakers. On December 6th it held a meeting with Count George Apponyi, Dr. Eugen Gal, Anna Kéthly and Dr. John Vazsonyi as speakers who replied to questions as to the danger and causes of war, methods of preventing war and the work of their parties and themselves against war.

A Peace School of lectures will be held from January to March.

The *North Wales Branch* has been very active. It has distributed 4000 post cards regarding disarmament. Ten meetings on Traffic in Arms were addressed by Miss Woodman or Mrs. Thoday. Seventy-nine County, Town, Urban and Rural Councils were circulated with the resolution on Disarmament. As a result 19 councils notified that the resolution had been passed at meetings and sent to Sir John Simon. Sixteen other

meetings, (mainly religious or meetings of organisations), sent resolutions on disarmament. The Central Branch meeting was held at Bangor on December 9th with a discussion on "Germany Today". A new branch has been formed at Llandudno Junction with 20 new members: one meeting was held on the work of the W. I. L. with Mrs. Preston and Mrs. Mrs. Wynne-Griffith as speakers. The Charlotte Price White Memorial Collection of books on international subjects was opened on December 9th. This is a collection of books intended as a source of information for speakers and writers on public questions. 30 books, many pamphlets and £7 have been received.

The *United States Section* is concentrating its work on war industries and will try to have a bill introduced in Congress or a treaty on the question ratified.

On November 29th the Section sent a letter to President Hoover calling upon him to refrain from any use of armed force this winter against unarmed American citizens who come to Washington to petition the Government. Several hunger marches of the unemployed are being organised to move on Washington. The Section writes that "without minimizing the difficulties, nor underestimating the problem, we do, nevertheless, beg you at this time to pledge the country that Federal troops will never again be used against peaceful and unarmed citizens... We are confident that a policy of non-violence on the part of the Administration and police will insure the greatest security that the District of Columbia can have."

The Philadelphia Branch has "been campaigning against war like toys and for

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gifts that will help the child form his future".

Fenner Brockway spoke at a dinner on December 9th in Washington organised by the W. I. L., the People's Lobby, the Washington Council on International Relations and the Peace Committee of Friends.

REPORT OF THE COLONIAL COMMISSION

United States Section (Miss Balch)

The Section and, in particular, a group of women professors at Baltimore and members in Philadelphia and New York have given special attention to the situation in Cuba. The idea of a private commission of investigation (similar to that sent by the League to Haiti in 1926) had to be abandoned, but a conference was held in Washington on December 10th and devoted entirely to the problem of Cuba.

Liberia: an Interracial Committee has been formed, with a large proportion of negro members, and is studying the question with collaboration from Miss Graves.

Nicaragua: a promise has been obtained that the marines will be withdrawn.

Haiti: Miss Balch put herself in touch with the Haitian minister at Washington and, after consulting him, wrote a letter to the Secretary of State.

Philippines: The problem has been complicated by a question concerning tariff and the supposed danger of Japan's laying hold of the country, if the United States withdraws. Nevertheless it is to be hoped that the United States will engage to withdraw from the Philippines in a definite length of time.

British Section (Miss Pye)

The Section passed two resolutions on India, one on May 9th, the other on October 18th, 1932; the latter deplors the attitude of the British Government in suddenly interrupting attempts at mediation after the Poona agreement, and states its conviction that the new constitution cannot be drawn up without the cooperation of the largest political party in India.

Dutch Section (Mrs. Ramondt-Hirschmann)

The Dutch Section has found no special reason for taking action with regard to the colonies, except as far as the opium problem is concerned.

Tunis Section (Mme Richet)

The Tunis Section has continued its work:

1) in connection with young people, by trying to bring together varied and often hostile elements in the population (Arabs, Jews, Europeans) through monthly meetings, which are regularly attended by a hundred high school students and students from 16 to 25 years old.

2) in connection with Musulman women, by inviting them to take part in charity; but the Section meets with masculine hostility and feminine apathy;

3) in connection with the Musulman population, by trying to protect it: a) against abuse by the authorities or neglect of the administration; b) against usury. The Section is trying to collect signatures to a petition to be presented to the Resident who is at present studying, in the Grand Conseil, methods of doing away with this evil.

International work (Mme Drevet)

Mme Drevet brought together material on forced labour in French Africa and summarised it in an article which was sent to newspapers in different countries.

She has kept in touch with the Syrian movement and the Syrian League for the Rights of Man which has been founded in Geneva.

She is preparing an article on the disastrous events in Madagascar, based on material received.

The other Sections have not reported on their work.

The Chairman of the Colonial Commission has given special attention to the Indian question and has accepted, as a personal matter, to be a member of the Executive Committee of the Permanent International India Committee, founded last October in Geneva.

Madeleine Rolland,
Chairman of the Colonial
Commission.

ATTACKS AGAINST WAR INDUSTRIES

The German League for the Rights of Man celebrated, on January 1st, the 60th birthday of Otto Lehmann-Russbüldt whose name is inextricably associated with courageous work against the trade in munitions.

In the 4th edition of "War for Profits" which has just been published in German, there are new details and new texts on international trusts, in particular on the dynamite trust.

In France, a propaganda leaflet on the Comité des Forges and the working class, written by Zettem and entitled "Les

maitres de la France" gives details on the activity of the Comité des Forges.

Louis Launay and Jean Sennac have published, at Paris, a book on the international relations of war industries. This study is preceded by a valuable bibliography and contains important information.

The Independent Conference on Disarmament, meeting in Paris on November 11th, decided to publish, in the near future, a cheap booklet on munitions, for mass distribution. The Dooklet, edited by Mr. C. Vigué and Mr. Ganuchod has just appeared and can be obtained from us at 10 Swiss centimes the copy.

One of our Monday evening lecture series will deal with the question of war industries and we shall be grateful to any readers of *Pax* who send us recent material on the activity of international war industries, and suggestions as to methods of combatting them.

On November 15th, the Czech democratic paper "Prager Presse" published an account of the general assembly of the "Czech Association of Manufacturers of War Materials" with the ironic heading "War industrialists ask for the floor". This meeting was held at Armaz on November 11th, the anniversary of the armistice (celebrated by every man according to his lights). The chairman was Mr. O. Husak, general manager of the Skoda works at Pilsen, which, as is known, are controlled by Schneider.

According to the Prague liberal paper, the gentlemen decided as follows:

"In consideration of negotiations with a view to the conclusion of a commercial treaty with Germany;

"In consideration of the discussions at the Disarmament Conference;

"To form a strong organisation (In the original text: eine feste Organisation.)"

The meeting of munition makers then decided "to take collective action concerning frozen credits abroad" and to ask of the Czech Government "that the arms industry be represented by a judge in the commercial courts."

The meeting then elected as president of the association Mr. O. Husak, general manager of the Skoda works and representative of Mr. Schneider, of Creusot.

If we correctly understand the decisions taken at Armaz, it is evident: a) That since the Disarmament Conference is a "menace", a "strong organisation" must be built up in opposition to it; b) That in the commercial treaty which Czecho-Slovakia is preparing to conclude with Germany, the arms industry intends to

THE MILITIA SYSTEM A GUARANTEE FOR PEACE?

We want *disarmament* and not a militia. The *French plan* speaks of generalising the militia system and of rearming countries disarmed by the treaties. That is, the militarist regime would be renovated and perpetuated in the interests of war profiteers. Extracts from Professor Ragaz' brochure on this important question are interesting reading:

Again and again we find among non-militarists the opinion that the adoption of the Militia System would be the best solution of the Disarmament problem. This opinion is being reiterated with a certain obstinacy by a number of sincere friends of peace, as, for instance, Radicals, Socialists, and peace workers. Just for this reason we Swiss Pacifists feel urged to warn public opinion against this serious error:

We declare:

I. *The Militia System, far from having a particularly democratic character, constitutes today a real danger for democracy...*

The Militia System, can at its best only maintain the *illusion* that freedom still exists. Today also the Militia represents a nation torn asunder by terrible frictions. The proletarian, the employee, who have no plot to defend, and the farmer whose plot is dispossessed by debts — they remain uprooted, dependent, exploited, also in uniform. On the other hand, the ruling classes throng into the army in order to show their privileged position. From their ranks almost entirely the officers are being recruited, and they will take care that there can be no question of a democratic spirit within this army. Also, they themselves, are quite honest enough to say so, and to declare that in an army there did not and could not exist any democracy.

II. We would issue a special warning to *socialists*. It is a further dangerous illusion to think that a Militia may not become the tool of capitalist purposes. Our Swiss experiences teach us the very opposite. The Militia is by no means a protection against Fascism and civil war, as some of our socialists abroad seem to imagine. It was just our Militia

protect its interests, that is to make sure of furnishing arms to the Reich and of providing for Germany's rearmament.

Charles Reber.

(Extract from *La Lumière*, December 3, 1932.)

which — in the hands of reactionary leaders — repeatedly led the country to the brink of civil war and even a step into it. Also, never was there a standing army mobilised so quickly and so ruthlessly against striking workers as has been the case with our world famous Militia soldiers. Things are generally so organised that the peasant recruits are sent against the workers in the towns, which gives a tremendous impetus to class hatred. In face of such facts, the hope of some socialists that in a Militia also the revolutionary worker may learn the use of arms in order to employ them in a case of emergency against his class enemy, becomes an all too naive illusion. The bourgeois classes are not so foolish not to take care that army and armaments remain securely in their own hands. Each present day army, and the militia army perhaps more than any other, is according to its own character, a hostile power to labour. There is no worse delusion than that which makes socialists find refuge from militarism in the Militia System...

III. To the peace workers we would say the following:

There cannot exist any greater illusion than the idea of the Militia System as a protection against militarism, as an instrument of peace and as a solution of the disarmament problem. Rather is it in every respect the very contrary; it is education for militarism, it seriously threatens anew the spreading of a peace spirit, and it is a dangerous obstacle to disarmament...

(1) The Militia System... carries militarism into all the ramifications of the nation's life. The Officers Corps is represented everywhere. Apart from a few professional soldiers, the Militia officer is in his civil life a manufacturer, a merchant, a farmer (but never a small tenant!), but also a journalist, a teacher, a physician, a clergyman (for instance, an army chaplain)... They all feel urged to represent the interests of the "army". They do so at the Council, in the factory, in the newspaper, in the schoolroom and from the pulpit. And this is even more zealously done by women than by men. Thus the military viewpoint is carried by all ways and means into civil life. Military tendencies permeate, in this personal way and also by invested interests of all kinds (military supplies etc.), also the economic life. Teachers and clergymen, but also engineers, merchants and workers who are known for

their pacifism, are at once seriously threatened in their careers and in their livelihood. The daily press is kept under control and only in exceptional cases, dares to shake it off. It is a whole system which is continually and consciously being perfected to serve the *one* purpose; to make the militarist view point dominate all others...

Another feature of the Militia System, which prevents it from being an instrument of peace, is the fact that

it disguises the real meaning and purpose of the army.

It gives to the comparatively short periods of military training the character of a gay interval in the ordinary routine of life, which takes the worker and the employee from the factory and office into the open spaces, and the young peasant from the rural monotony into the town, all classes into different parts of their country, and thus giving them entertainment, change, and a welcome break. It cannot be denied that all this makes the system popular with the many unthinking people; the terrible reality of war, however, to which military service, after all, is to prepare, is only covered up by this pleasurable side and thus the whole system becomes one big lie.

And yet this system does not only introduce military thinking but military acting into the whole national life. The military training of the Militia soldier is supplemented outside the barracks. The so-called preparatory military instruction embraces the young, particularly the school boys, and endeavours to militarise them. Later on compulsory shooting drill is added to this, and becomes one of the chief features of national life...

Thus the Militia System, far from being a protection against militarism, is its strongest bulwark.

It is the militarisation of the whole national life.

If, therefore, one wants to make militarism *popular* — popular, not democratic — one should introduce the Militia System.

A glance at *history* will explain this state of things. The development which in the course of a century led to the militarisation of the world (so far particularly of the western world) and which is about to ruin us, set in with the extension of general conscription, which the France of the Revolution introduced and sent out to other nations. General conscription, however, is the main element of

the Militia System and becomes thus, before the tribunal of history, not a blessing but a curse.

(2) One has only to point out this fact in order to prove the absurdity of the assertion that the Militia System should be the best solution of the *disarmament problem*...

It is equally clear that a Militia System would become a mere pretence, for modern technical warfare needs a thoroughly trained soldier, and according to the greatest experts, Militia soldiers would, in a modern war, be mere animals for slaughter on a huge scale. The Militia System thus would only be a democratic smoke screen, hiding a military system which would be everything except a form of disarmament... It would not even diminish the *financial burden* of the present military system which threatens to squash the nations. On the contrary, it is the most expensive of all systems, because it is amateurish, and because the Militia soldier, who is taken from his civil profession for short periods only, has to be paid bigger wages than the soldier belonging to a conscript standing army. The Militia System represents a combination of the expenses for the standing and for the conscript army...

The Militia System, in reality, is based on the idea of linking up the military with civil life and with life in general...

At any rate it is clear that this system endeavours to maintain the belief in war as the permanent part of World order... This fact completely contradicts the assertion that the Militia army is merely an instrument of *defence*, for each army is, by its nature, a challenge to others, a source of distrust, an invitation for defensive measures and thus aggressive. Each

army has a share in this feature, be it ever so small. In this sense the Militia System is nothing new and not suitable for creating or embodying a new order, but an expression and confirmation of a belief in a condition which ought to be conquered. It is not only the best school of militarism and the strongest obstacle to an education for peace but also the gravest danger to disarmament, moral as well as material.

III. This latter fact we want to emphasize once more as a conclusion.

The Militia System is a trap put up by militarism on the road to disarmament.

This all will have to understand, democrats, socialists, peace workers. The militarists know that the *old* military system is no longer to be maintained. The revolt of public opinion against it is too strong. Therefore a reorganisation must take place, amounting to a masquerade with the purpose to deceive the peoples. For this purpose the Militia System is admirably suited. As pointed out above, care would be taken that it would only serve to camouflage the old system and that behind it a highly technical professional army would be built up to new formidable strength. For the disarmed nations it would be the most convenient and seemingly the most innocent way towards rearmament. It would begin with the smaller ones amongst them, with Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria; it would then be taken up in Germany, but finally, even the "victorious nations" such as Great Britain and the U. S. A. would follow suit.

And into this trap we democrats, socialists and pacifists should go? We should be so foolish?

No, not the Militia System and with it a new re-armament should be our goal, but a real and genuine disarmament consisting in the abolition of all armies, and in their place, a new order of law and humanity, and as its organ a national and international *police force* based on totally different foundations from that of any military system, including the Militia System. To fight against the existing military system, which has ruined the world, by introducing the Militia System would mean, on a huge scale and in a fatal way, to drive out the devil with Beelzebub.

*Official translation of the Centre.
Swiss Centre for Peace Action.*

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LATEST NEWS

Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins, international member of our League, founded an India Committee at Geneva which held its first meetings in our Maison Internationale (see November *Pax* 1932) and organised an international conference on the question of India.

On her return to India Mrs. Cousins was arrested and imprisoned. We immediately wrote to her expressing our sympathy and admiration. The British Section telegraphed to the Secretary of State for India and the Chairmen wrote to that office asking for details as to the arrest and imprisonment of Mrs. Cousins.

The Secretary of State for India has replied to Headquarters that he is making investigations.

The International India Committee tells us that letters can be addressed to Mrs. Cousins care of the Women's Association, Pantheon Street, Madras.

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